

## AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON PROPHETIC GUIDANCE ON MIGRATION, REFUGEES AND COMPASSION IN TIMES OF CRISIS

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### ABSTRACT

*Migration (Hijrah) profound spiritual, historical and legal significance in Islam. It is most famously associated with the Prophet Muhammad's migration from Makkah to Madinah in 622 CE. It occurred when Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) and his followers faced persecution in Makkah for their beliefs. In Islam, Muslim is enjoined to migrate during crisis for the safety of his/her religion, soul, property and so on, as prophet commanded his companions to migrate from Makkah first to Abyssinia and ultimately to Madinah and he migrate also to Madinah. Therefore, there are many guidance ascribed to the Prophet on migration and refugees, he (prophet) offers ethical, spiritual, and social guidance. The life of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) and the Qur'an provide enough principles that emphasize compassion, justice, hospitality, protection, and dignity for those who are displaced. Showing compassion means recognizing their suffering, understanding their experiences, and responding with empathy, kindness, and support. Therefore, the aim of the paper is to analyse the prophetic guidance on migration, refugees and compassion in times of crisis. The paper uses only library method as a source of data collections. The findings show that the prophetic model shows how Compassion, integration and solidarity should work in any society receiving refugees, and Compassion towards refugees is a vital expression of our shared humanity, this has to be emulated by the current government, armed forces who are in charge of IDPs camp and remaining people as well, people should also copy the prophetic strategy and adopt when migration.*

Keywords: Refugees, Migration, compassion, crisis, IDPs.

### INTRODUCTION

Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) was an Arab, religious and political leader and the seal prophets and messengers of Allah. He was the prophet who was divinely inspired to preach and confirm the monotheistic teachings of other prophets who were before him. Prophet Muhammad was sent as a messenger to all of mankind, not just to the Arabs or to a specific group people. The glorious Qur'an emphasizes that he was sent as a mercy to all the worlds and all creatures, and as a guide to lead people from darkness into light, signifying that his message is relevant and beneficial to everyone. The purpose of his prophet hood was to guide people away from ignorance and into the light of God's truth. During from Hijra Makkah to Madinah, the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) guided his companions by carefully planning the migration, ensuring their safety and well-being. He delegated tasks, chose trusted individuals for specific roles, and maintained a calm behaviour in the middle of crisis, demonstrating leadership and reliance on Allah's guidance. Thus, prophetic guidance during the Hijrah served as rules and regulations in Islam since that time, up to the end of the world on whom so ever migration become mandatory. Therefore, this paper examines the prophetic guidance during Migration on refugees and compassion in the times of crisis.

### MIGRATION IN ISLAM

**Migration in Islam** refers to the act of moving from one place to another, primarily for the sake of preserving one's faith and practicing Islam freely. The most significant example of migration in Islamic history is the **Migration** of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) and his companions from **Makkah to Madinah** in **622 CE**. When the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) and his followers faced severe **persecution** in Makkah. They migrated to **Madinah**, where they were welcomed and allowed to practice Islam freely. Allah says:

**Indeed, those whom the angels take in death while wronging themselves the angels will say, 'In what [condition] were you?' They will say, 'We were oppressed in the land.' The angels will say, 'Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to emigrate therein? (Surah An-Nisa:97)**

This verse highlights that **migration is a duty** when one's religion is under threat and they have the ability to move to a safer place. Hijrah is a concept that applies to Muslims throughout history, and even today. Depending on the circumstances, migration can be mandatory to preserve one's faith, recommended for spiritual growth, permissible for various reasons, or forbidden if it leads to neglecting religious duties. Many jurists insisted that there is a permanent and lasting obligation upon every Muslim to migrate from the abode of unbelievers (dār al-kufr) to the abode of Islam (dār al-Islām). However, some reports attributed to the Prophet assert that the obligation to migrate was abrogated upon the defeat of Makka and its entry into the Islamic fold (lā hijrata ba'da al-fath). In other words, while some Muslim jurists insisted that Muslims should permanently reside only in the abode of Islam, other jurists negated this obligation contending that the duty to migrate expired shortly before the death of the Prophet. Others argued that the duty is to migrate from the land of inequity (dār al-fisq) to wherever justice reigns (dār al-`adl). Especially in mystical Sufi orientations, the duty to migrate was interpreted in entirely spiritual and internal terms: hijra.<sup>1</sup> And Hijrah is not just a physical relocation but also a spiritual and social transformation, that is why it can be both physical and spiritual or either of the two:

- **Physical Migration:** Like that of the Prophet (s.a.w.) and the companions, for safety and freedom to practice Islam.
- **Spiritual Migration:** Leaving behind sin, bad habits, or corrupt environments for the sake of Allah. The Prophet (s.a.w.) said:

**The Muhajir (migrant) is the one who abandons what Allah has forbidden.**

(Sahih al-Bukhari)

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF HIJRAH IN ISLAM

The Hijrah is a multifaceted event that laid the foundation for Islamic history, culture, and the development of Islamic civilization. It continues to inspire Muslims worldwide to strive for moral excellence, social justice, and a deeper connection with their faith. The major message of Hijrah is one of transformation, both inner and outer, for Muslims in the context both of religion and exit physically from unacceptable conditions, just as it also meant a symbolic refusal to lose hope in the face of persecution. The moral of Hijrah is that religious persecution is a violation of religious freedom as stated in the Glorious Qur'an, Allah says:

Those who believed, and those who migrated and fought for the sake of Allah-those look forward to Allah's mercy. Allah is forgiving and merciful. (Suratul Baqarah: 218).

Hijrah has also impacted the language and style of the Qur'an and the manner how Muslims were to relate with other communities and nations.<sup>2</sup>

#### REWARD FOR THOSE WHO MIGRATE IN ALLAH'S CAUSE

In Islam, migration (Hijrah) is highly rewarded, particularly when undertaken for the sake of Allah and His religion. Those who migrate for Allah, whether they die in the process or not, are promised a goodly sustenance and a place of entrance they will be well pleased with in the afterlife. The Hijrah symbolizes the formation of the Muslim community (Ummah) and the establishment of a just society, Allah says:

And those who migrate in the cause of Allah and are then slain or die, certainly will Allah provide them with a goodly sustenance, and verily Allah is the best of providers. (Surah Al Hajj :58)

Certainly He will admit them into a place of entrance which they shall be well pleased with; and verily Allah is All-Knowing, Most Forbearing. (Surah Al-Hajj :59)

<sup>1</sup> **Hassan, S. F.** (2020). *Migration and Islamic ethics: Issues of residence, naturalisation and citizenship* (Vol. 2). Pp. 2589-3947.

<sup>2</sup> **Kamali, M. H.** (n.d.). The significance of Hijrah in Islam 122-124

At the advent of Islam when the Muslim emigrants came into Madinah, some of them died with a natural death, while some others suffered martyrdom. At this time a group of the Muslim believers considered the virtue of martyrdom utterly for the martyrs; the above-mentioned holy verse was sent down and introduced both of them as the bearers of the best blessings of Allah.<sup>3</sup>

Some commentators have said that the Qur'anic phrase *Rizqan hasana* here refers to some blessings that attract the person when he sees them so that he cannot look at anything other than them, and it is only Allah who can give a man such a sustenance.<sup>4</sup>

### PROPHETIC GUIDANCE ON MIGRATION (HIJRAH)

Migration (Hijrah) holds a special place in Islamic teachings, particularly because of the Prophet Muhammad's own experience of migrating from Makkah to Madinah. His guidance on migration is deeply spiritual, practical, and timeless, especially for Muslims facing oppression or seeking to live according to their faith. Some of the Prophet's (s.a.w.) guidance are as follows:

#### 1) Migration for the Sake of Allah

The Prophet (s.a.w.) emphasized that **intention (niyyah)** is crucial in migration and everything rather. He says:

*Actions are judged by intentions, and every person will get what he intended. Whoever migrates for Allah and His Messenger, his migration is for Allah and His Messenger... (Bukhari & Muslim)*

The above Hadith shows that Hijrah is not just about physical movement, but a spiritual journey towards greater obedience to Allah as the second type of Hujrah means (i.e. spiritual Hijrah as explained above).

#### 2) Patience in the Face of Persecution

The Prophet (s.a.w.) endured **13 years of persecution** in Makkah before migrating. He instructed his companions to remain patient, trust in Allah, and not retaliate with violence until commanded. This is to say that muslim should not always be in haste to migrate, until there is no any possible way out. The prophet (s.a.w.) told a man who wanted to leave his home out of hardship:

Be patient for your reward is guaranteed.<sup>5</sup>

#### 3) Seeking a Safe and Just Society

The Hijrah to Madinah created the foundation for an Islamic society built on **justice, mutual respect, and faith-based governance**, the Prophet (s.a.w.) however endorsed the **Constitution of Madinah**, allowing Muslims, Jews, and other communities to coexist peacefully.

#### 4) Seeking Support

The Prophet (s.a.w.) praised the **Ansar (Helpers)** of Madinah who warmly supported the Muhajirun (Emigrants), shared their wealth, and became like brothers, he also guided Muslims with his saying that:

*“None of you (truly) believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”*

(Bukhari & Muslim)

This highlights the importance of **solidarity, hospitality, and brotherhood** among believers.

5) Migration (Hijra) from Makkah to Madinah was a carefully planned operation, not a spontaneous flight and not impulsive, this taught the importance of **wisdom and planning** in times of crisis. It involved several stages:

1. Early Emigration to Abyssinia: Faced with increasing persecution in Makkah, the Prophet initially advised some of his companions to migrate to Abyssinia (Ethiopia of today) where a just Christian king (Negus) ruled, the early emigration, motivated by the desire to preserve their faith and escape harm, was a preliminary step in the larger plan.
2. Guiding Muslims to Madinah: After the second pledge of *Aqabah*, where a group from Madinah pledged their support, the Prophet directed Muslims to migrate to Madinah secretly.
3. Gradual Migration: Following the pledge, Muslims began migrating to Madinah in small groups to avoid attracting the attention of the Quraysh, who were becoming increasingly hostile.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Qurṭubī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad. (1964). *Al-Jāmi‘ li-Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*. P. 4480

<sup>4</sup> Al-Baḥrānī, Hāshim ibn Sulaymān. (1955). *Al-Burhān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*:103

<sup>5</sup> Bukhari: 7313

4. The Prophet's Own Departure: Knowing the Quraysh planned to kill him, the Prophet and Abu Bakr left Makkah in the middle of night.<sup>6</sup> They travelled secretly, taking a less direct route to avoid the main roads and potential pursuers.<sup>7</sup> Instead taking Madinah route directly they took Yemen route.<sup>8</sup>

This kind departure was the result of his careful planning, ensuring his survival and the continued success of the Muslim community in the new community.

5. Madinah's proximity to Makkah was also an important factor, that prophet (s.a.w.), used in order safeguard the Muslims lives so that they reach the destination easily, quickly and safely.

6. During the migration, Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) relied on a trustworthy guide to reach Madinah safely.

The Hijrah became a significant turning point not only in Islamic history but also in world history. Muslims were able to practice their religion freely. In Madinah, the Prophet (s.a.w.) established a bond of brotherhood between the Muhajirun (Emigrants) and the Ansar (Helpers) and founded a new Islamic state based on the Constitution of Madinah. The migration laid the foundation of Islamic civilization and contributed to the spread of the religion. This article examines the Hijrah, along with its causes and consequences, based on classical sources and scholarly research.<sup>9</sup>

### PROPHETIC GUIDANCE ON REFUGEES

Prophetic guidance on refugees is deeply rooted in the teachings, actions, and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), especially as reflected in the **Hijrah (migration)** to Madinah and his treatment of those who were displaced, oppressed, or seeking protection. Here are some of prophetic guidance on refugees:

#### 1. Compassion and Support for Refugees

The Prophet (s.a.w.) consistently emphasized **mercy** and **support for the oppressed and displaced**, He said:

**“Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or is being oppressed.”** The companions asked, “We understand helping someone who is oppressed, but how do we help an oppressor?” The Prophet replied: **“By stopping him from oppressing.”** (*Bukhari*)

The hadith expresses the emphasis to help **anyone in need**, including those displaced by oppression, injustice, or crisis rather.

#### 2. The Hijrah Model: Muhājirūn and Anṣār

The Prophet himself was a **refugee** forced to flee from Makkah to Madinah due to persecution. The **Muhājirūn**, were received and supported by the people of Madinah, the also Prophet established **brotherhood** between the Muhājirūn and Anṣār, ensuring refugees were not isolated but **integrated into society**, he also redistributed wealth, food, and homes so that **no refugee was left in hardship**.

This model remains a timeless example of **Islamic solidarity** and **inclusive community building**.

#### 3. Universal Protection and Safety

The Prophet extended protection not just to Muslims, but also to **non-Muslims** seeking safety, he said:

**“the pledge/protection of the muslims is one; the lowest of them may give it, and the rest must honour it.”**<sup>10</sup>

This shows that **asylum** and **protection** are not restricted to any one group but are a **universal right** in Islam.

#### 4. No Coercion and Respect for Dignity

Prophet (s.a.w.) never forced beliefs on refugees or the oppressed. Based on the principle of:

**“no compulsion in religion”** (Qur'an 2:256).

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyah*, vol. 1, p. 482–483

<sup>7</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah*, vol. 1, p. 489

<sup>8</sup> Al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah*, vol. 2, p. 477, see also Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyah*, vol. 2, p. 233

<sup>9</sup> Avci, C. (2025). The Prophet's migration from Makkah to Madinah with its causes and consequences. Pp. 16–27.

<sup>10</sup> **Abū Dāwūd, Sulaymān ibn al-Ash‘ath al-Sijistānī.** (Hadith:2751), *Kitab al-haraj*.

The Prophet ensured that all people, regardless of status, were treated with **honor and dignity**, whether migrants, refugees, or locals.

### 5. Advocacy and Justice

Prophet Muhammad actively **defended the rights of the vulnerable**:

“The most beloved of people to Allah is the one who brings the most benefit to others.”<sup>11</sup>

Supporting refugees is not just charity, but a **form of justice** correcting wrongs and restoring the dignity of those displaced.

Islam requires believers to assist and protect vulnerable people and offers a number of mechanisms for their care and support. According to Islam, individuals have the right both to seek and to be granted asylum in any Muslim state. Furthermore, it is the duty of Muslims to accept and protect refugees as long as they seek protection. (High Commissioner’s Dialogue District).

### EMPHASIS ON HOSPITALITY AND PROTECTION ON THE REFUGEE

The Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) emphasises on **hospitality and protection of refugees, the following are some of his traditions on that:**

#### 1) The Constitution of Madinah

A documented treaty written by the Prophet to establish peace between the **Muslims, Jews, and other tribes** in Madinah, this Protected the rights of **refugees**, minorities, and emphasized **mutual aid**. (Lings)

#### 2) Brotherhood Between Migrants and Locals (Mu’ākhāt),

The Prophet established brotherhood between the Muhajirun and the Ansar...<sup>12</sup>

**Prophet (s.a.w.) said alot on Hospitality, such as:**

**Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should honor his guest.**<sup>13</sup>

**He also said:**

**Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or the oppressed...**<sup>14</sup> When asked how to help the oppressor, the Prophet replied: “**By preventing him from oppressing others.**

The review of the Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammed through authentic ahadith collections establish that there are more than 850 hadith specifically dealing with protection and assistance matters. The right of all humanity to enjoy protection and assistance, and the concomitant obligation to protect and assist those in need, including forced migrants, is one of the preeminent institutions of Islamic Law which can be distilled both through literal interpretations of the language of the Sharia and by qiyas (analogy).<sup>15</sup>

### RIGHTS OF REFUGEES IN PROPHETIC TRADITION

The **Prophetic tradition (Sunnah)** of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) strongly upholds the **rights of refugees**, grounded in **compassion, dignity, protection, and justice**. Here is a clear summary of those rights:

#### 1) Right to Protection and Safety (Amān):

The Prophet granted protection to vulnerable groups, including those fleeing persecution.

He welcomed persecuted believers from Makkah into Makkah during the **Hijrah**, setting a precedent for granting refuge.

Prophet (s.a.w.) said:

Whoever gives refuge to someone without harm to a Muslim, Allah will guarantee him Paradise.<sup>16</sup>

#### 2) Right to Hospitality and Dignity:

The **Ansar** of Madinah opened their homes and resources to the **Muhajirun** this was encouraged and blessed by the Prophet(s.a.w.), **Who said:**

<sup>11</sup> **Al-Tabarānī, Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad.** (1952). *Al-Mu’jam al-Awsat*. Hadith: 5787

<sup>12</sup> (*Sahih al-Bukhari, Book 58, Hadith 143*)

<sup>13</sup> (*Sahih al-Bukhari, Book 76, Hadith 482; Sahih Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 74*)

<sup>14</sup> (*Sahih al-Bukhari, Book 43, Hadith 624*)

<sup>15</sup> **Zaat, K.** (2007). *The protection of forced migrants in Islamic law*. Paper No. 146, pp. 7–8.

<sup>16</sup> (*Sunan Abu Dawud, Hadith 2626*)

They give [the Emigrants] preference over themselves, even though they are in poverty...

*Qur'an, Surah Al-Hashr (59:9) (this endorsed and taught by the Prophet)*

- 3) **Right to Equal Treatment and Brotherhood:** The Prophet established **Mu'ākhāt** (brotherhood) between refugees and locals to remove social inequality and ensure social integration.  
**For instance:** He paired each emigrant with a resident of Madinah, granting them equal status and support.
- 4) **Right to Justice and Non-Oppression:** Refugees were not treated as burdens or outsiders but were granted full rights and responsibilities, **Prophet(s.a.w.) said:**  
“Help the oppressed and the oppressor.”<sup>17</sup> (Here, “helping the oppressor” means stopping them from oppressing others.)
- 5) **Right to Asylum even for Non-Muslims:** The Prophet extended asylum even to non-Muslims who sought protection, setting a precedent of universal humanitarian values, **Allah says:**  
If one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of Allah... *Qur'an, Surah At-Tawbah (9:6)*  
(Practiced by the Prophet)

## WHY COMPASSION MATTERS TO MIGRANTS IN ISLAM

Compassion holds a central place in Islamic teachings and is especially emphasized in the treatment of **migrants (muhājirūn)** and **refugees**. Islam promotes empathy, kindness, and support for those who are forced to leave their homes due to oppression, conflict, or hardship. This principle is deeply rooted in the Qur'an, the Sunnah (Prophetic tradition), and the lived example of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.).

- **Prophetic Model of Compassion for Migrants**

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself was a **migrant** he and his followers migrated from **Makkah to Madinah** due to persecution. His experience as a migrant shaped his empathy for all who are displaced.

Here are prophetic examples:

**a. Brotherhood Between Migrants and Locals (Mu'akhah):** Upon arrival in Madinah, the Prophet established a unique social system known as **Mu'akhah (Brotherhood)** between the emigrants and the residents of Madinah:

**The Prophet established brotherhood between the Muhajirun and the Ansar...<sup>18</sup>**

This act created deep bonds of compassion, sharing of wealth, homes, and responsibilities a profound model for integration and support of migrants.

**b. Reward for Hosting and Helping Migrants**

The Prophet said:

**Whoever relieves a believer's distress of the distressful aspects of this world, Allah will rescue him from a difficulty of the difficulties of the Hereafter...<sup>19</sup>**

This hadith highlights that **relieving the suffering of the displaced** and vulnerable is not only moral but spiritually rewarding.

**c. Emphasis on Mercy**

The Prophet's mercy was not limited to his companions but extended to **all creation**, especially the vulnerable.

Migrants often fall into the category of the oppressed, the poor, and the stranger all of whom the Prophet urged Muslims to treat with **Rahmah (mercy)** and **Ihsan (excellence)**.

In Islam, compassion for migrants is not an optional act of charity it is a **divine obligation**, rooted in faith and demonstrated through the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He not only modeled the life of a migrant but also built a society based on mercy, solidarity, and justice for all, including those displaced and in need.

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<sup>17</sup> *Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith 2444*

<sup>18</sup> *(Sahih al-Bukhari, 3781)*

<sup>19</sup> *(Sahih Muslim, 2699)*

## CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

Migration and the plight of refugees are pressing global issues today. Islam, through the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), offers a profound framework grounded in **compassion, justice, and dignity**. This prophetic guidance remains highly relevant in addressing contemporary humanitarian crises.

### Here are some keys of the Contemporary Relevance:

- a. **Refugee Crises Today:** More than 100 million people globally are forcibly displaced.<sup>20</sup> Refugees from Syria, Palestine, Sudan, and Rohingya Muslims face hardship and xenophobia.
- b. **Lessons from the Prophetic Model: Welcoming Refugees:** The Prophet's model encourages societies to **welcome and integrate refugees** as brothers and equals.
- c. The Prophet (s.a.w.) advised early Muslims to migrate to **Christian Abyssinia**, praising the just ruler (the Negus). This underscores interfaith respect and the right to seek asylum in a safe place.

## CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Migration in Islam is both a **physical act** for the preservation of faith and a **spiritual concept** that calls believers to leave behind all that distances them from Allah. The Prophet Muhammad's (s.a.w.) guidance on migration and refugees is not just a historical narrative, it is a **living model** of compassion, solidarity, and justice. In a world torn by conflict and division, these teachings offer **ethical direction** and **spiritual wisdom** for building inclusive and caring communities. Compassion towards refugees is a vital expression of our shared humanity. Refugees are individuals and families who have been forced to flee their homes due to war, persecution, or violence. Showing compassion means recognizing their suffering, understanding their experiences, and responding with empathy, kindness, and support. It is recommended that:

- **Governments** should ensure safe and dignified asylum policies.
- **Communities** should emulate the Ansār in generosity and empathy.
- **Individuals** should not ignore the suffering of displaced people.
- Countries with Muslim majorities are reminded of their prophetic legacy in offering **shelter towards refugees**.

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