



## Synopsis of Friday Sermon

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IONA  
REPENTANCE  
REVITALIZATION OF FAITH  
RENEWAL OF COVENANT

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

### Synopsis of Friday Sermon

## The Sacred Lessons of the Hijri Year

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢١٨﴾

*“Indeed, those who have believed and those who emigrated and strove in the cause of Allah, it is they who hope for the mercy of Allah. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” [al-Baqarah, 2:218]*

### The Importance of the Hijri Year

Muharram, the first month of the Hijri calendar, is a sacred calendar rooted in faith, sacrifice, and spiritual purpose.

The Hijri year begins not with celebration of conquest or birth, but with migration (Hijrah), the moment when the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his companions left their homes in Mecca for the sake of preserving their faith, building a just society, and seeking the pleasure of Allah (SWT).

The Hijrah event was so significant that it marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar. But the Hijrah was not simply a change of location, it was a transformation of purpose, society, and the Ummah itself.

Why did the early Muslims migrate, what do we learn from it, and how it continues to guide us today? Allah says in the Qur'an, *“Indeed, those who have believed and those who emigrated and strove in the cause of Allah, it is they who hope for the mercy of Allah. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” [al-Baqarah, 2:218]*

The Hijrah was not just a change in location. It was a transformation of history. It marked the birth of the Muslim community (ummah) where belief, justice, brotherhood, and equality were established as core values. The early Muslims migrated from Mecca to Medina for reasons deeply rooted in the preservation of faith, the establishment of justice, and the practice of Islamic values. The Muslims of Mecca, in order to escape persecution, had to migrate to Medina, then Yathrib. The Muslims in Mecca were severely persecuted for their beliefs.

### Islam as a Threat to the Religious Order of Quraish

The Quraysh, the dominant tribe in Mecca, were custodians of the Ka'bah and profited greatly from the city's religious status. Mecca was a center of idol worship, and pilgrims from across Arabia visited to venerate idols housed there.

Islam's strict monotheism directly challenged this polytheistic system. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) called for the destruction of idols, declaring that only Allah (SWT) should be worshipped. Wealthy merchants feared the economic consequences of losing pilgrim trade and disrupting established power dynamics. This was seen as an existential threat to the religious and economic order of Mecca.

Islam challenged the political system in Mecca. The Prophet Muhammad's message challenged the Quraysh's authority. Accepting his message meant accepting his prophethood and leadership, which the Quraysh refused. His growing followers represented a parallel leadership they could not control.

Persecution was used to intimidate and deter others from converting. Noble companions were persecuted and tortured simply for embracing a new faith that calls for the Oneness of Allah, *La ilaha illa Allah*. Sumayyah bint Khayyat (RAA) was the first martyr in Islam. As a slave and one of the earliest converts, she was tortured and ultimately killed by Abu Jahl for refusing to renounce Islam. Bilal ibn Rabah, a black Abyssinian slave, was tortured by his master Umayyah ibn Khalaf, who laid him on burning sand and placed rocks on his chest. Despite this, Bilal kept saying, “Aḥad, Aḥad” (“One, One”), affirming Allah's oneness. ‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan, a wealthy nobleman from the Umayyah clan, was tortured by his own tribe after embracing Islam, despite his high social status, proving that even noble converts were not spared.

The early Muslims were persecuted because Islam radically disrupted the social, religious, and political norms of Meccan society. Their resilience, however, laid the foundation for the eventual establishment of the Muslim Ummah in Medina after the Hijrah.

The early Muslims were tested severely. Muslims all over are tested. Allah said, *“Do people think that they will be left to say, ‘We*

*believe, and they will not be tested? Indeed, We have tested those who came before them so Allah will know who is the truthful from the liars.*" [al-'Ankabūt, 29:2,3]

The first lesson we learn from the noble companions' persecution is, "Steadfastness in Faith (Thabat)". The early Muslims, like Sumayyah, Bilal, and 'Uthman among other companions remained firm in their belief in One God despite intense torture and pressure. We must hold on to our principles and faith, even when it's unpopular or difficult.

The second lesson is, "Equality and Human Dignity". Islam uplifted the status of the poor, the enslaved, and women, those who were oppressed by society. True Islamic values honor the dignity of every human being regardless of race, gender, or status. *"Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you."* [al-Hujurat, 49:13]

The third lesson is, "Patience in the Face of Injustice (Ṣabr)". Despite persecution, the early Muslims did not retaliate with violence in Mecca. They endured with patience and prayer. Patience is a strength, not a weakness, especially when facing trials for standing by the truth. *"O you who believe seek help through patience and prayers, surely, Allah is with the patient."* [al-Baqarah, 2:153]

The fourth lesson is, "The Power of Moral Courage". Bilal's cry of "Aḥad, Aḥad" ("One, One") became a symbol of resistance against tyranny. Speaking the truth in a hostile environment takes moral courage, and that courage can inspire generations. *"As for those who struggle in Our cause, We will surely guide them Our ways. And Allah is certainly with the good doers."* [al-'Ankabut, 29:69]

The early Muslims were harassed for abandoning idol worship and affirming *tawḥid* (monotheism). They had no freedom to worship Allah (SWT) openly or live in peace. Furthermore, they were boycotted socially and economically. The social and economic boycott of the Muslims in Mecca was one of the most intense forms of persecution they faced.

After failing to stop the spread of Islam through threats and torture, the Quraysh of Mecca decided on a more extreme measure, a complete boycott of the Muslims and the clan of Banu Hashim (the Prophet's tribe). This boycott began around the 7th year after Prophethood and lasted for 3 years.

The Quraysh wrote a formal agreement and hung it in the Ka'bah. The terms included no buying or selling with Muslims or Banu Hashim. They were not allowed to marry from their clans. No socializing and no alliances or protection. This was a form of total isolation—social, economic, and political.

The Prophet (SAW), his followers, and his clan were forced to live in a valley outside Mecca. They suffered severe hunger, eating leaves. Cries of hungry children could be heard from the valley. Only a few Meccans secretly sent supplies out of sympathy.

The Effects of the boycott were severe. Many Muslims became weak and ill. His wife Khadijah (RA) and uncle Abu Ṭalib died shortly after the boycott ended and that year was known as the Year of Sorrow ('am al-Ḥuzn). The Prophet's grief during this time was immense, yet he remained steadfast.

### **Lessons from the Boycott**

1. Standing Firm in Faith Despite Hardship: Muslims endured starvation and isolation but never gave up their faith. Lesson: True belief is not just in times of ease, but especially in times of difficulty.
2. Economic Pressure as a Tool of Oppression: The Quraysh used economic means (sanctions) to try to crush the new faith. Lesson: Injustice isn't always violent—it can also be economic. Muslims must stand against all forms of oppression.
3. Support from the Righteous: Some non-Muslims, like Muṭ'im ibn 'Adi, opposed the boycott and helped bring it to an end. Lesson: Justice-minded individuals from all backgrounds can play a role in resisting tyranny.
4. The Power of Collective Endurance: The unity of the Muslims and Banu Hashim kept them from being broken. Lesson: Community support is crucial during trials. We must care for and stand with the oppressed.
5. Divine Relief Comes After Hardship: After 3 years, the boycott document was miraculously destroyed by insects—except the part that said "In Your Name, O Allah." Lesson: Hardship does not last forever. Allah sends relief at the right time. *"Verily, with hardship comes ease."* [al-Inshirah, 94:6]

*"And they resented them only for believing in Allah, the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy."* [al-Buruj, 85:8]

The Prophet (SAW) was invited to Medina (then Yathrib) to serve as a mediator between warring tribes (Aws and Khazraj) and to lead a new community. The Treaty of 'Aqabah (the second 'Aqabah pledge) allowed Muslims to migrate and live freely under a new system based on justice and faith.

Migration was not just a strategic choice; it was ordained by Allah (SWT). Migration becomes necessary to preserve one's faith and practice Islam. *"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?'"* [al-Nisa', 4:97]

The migration to Medina, a place where they could worship Allah freely, was compulsory upon all Muslims. The Hijrah was a step toward freedom of religious expression and freedom from religious persecution. In Medina, the Muslims could pray publicly, organize the community around Islamic teachings, and teach and spread the Qur'an without fear.

Medina offered a unique opportunity. It welcomed the Prophet (SAW) as a leader and peacemaker. With the Hijrah, the Prophet (SAW) was able to establish the first Islamic state built on justice, equality, and mercy, build a brotherhood between the Muhajirun (emigrants) and Anṣar (helpers), and create the Constitution of Medina, guaranteeing rights for Muslims, Jews, and others.

The Hijrah was also about establishing a society where truth could triumph over oppression. Mecca was dominated by tribal arrogance

and injustice. Medina offered a chance to live by Divine law (Shari‘ah), moral ethics, and accountability before God.

The Hijrah was not an escape, it was a strategic move toward the future of Islam. It marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar, because it signified the moment Islam moved from persecution to establishment.

### **Why does the Hijri Calendar Matter to us?**

The Hijri calendar matters to us because it is the calendar of our ‘ibadah (worship). Our fasting, Hajj, Zakat, and many religious occasions, such as Ramadan, Dhul-Hijjah, and ‘Ashura’, are all determined by the Islamic lunar calendar.

The Prophet (SAW) said, “Time has returned to its original state which it had when Allah created the heavens and the earth. The year is twelve months, four of which are sacred...” (al-Bukhari) Among these sacred months is Muharram. The Prophet (SAW) referred to it as “The month of Allah, Muharram.” (Muslim) This shows its high status. And the 10th of Muharram (‘Ashura’) is the day Allah saved Musa (AS) and the Children of Israel from Pharaoh. When the Prophet (SAW) heard this, he proclaimed, “We are more entitled to Musa than them,” and he fasted that day and ordered the believers to fast the 10th of Muharram. (al-Bukhari) Fasting ‘Ashura’ expiates sins of the previous year.

### **Hijrah – A Timeless Example**

The Hijrah teaches us sacrifice. The companions left behind wealth, homes, and families to preserve their deen. It teaches us trust in Allah. The Prophet hid in the cave and told Abu Bakr (RAA) “*Do not grieve, Allah is with us.*” [al-Tawbah, 9:40] Tawwakkul alone is not sufficient. Tawwakkul must be accompanied by action. The Prophet (SAW) did not wait for a miracle. He planned, traveled by night, used strategy, yet fully relied on Allah (SWT). This balance between effort and trust is crucial for our lives today.

The Hijrah also reminds us of those who are displaced for their beliefs. In our own time, our brothers and sisters in Palestine, Gaza, and other oppressed lands are being forced from their homes, yet hold firm to their identity, just as the early Muslims did. Let us remember the millions who are forced to migrate, refugees from war-torn regions like Syria, Sudan, and beyond. Their suffering echoes the early Muslims' We must stand in solidarity, offer du‘a, and support them however we can.

With the Hijrah, the Muslim community moved from persecution to power, from survival to revival. It was in Medina that Islamic law, society, and culture flourished. Thus, the Hijrah marks not just a date, but the birth of a civilization.

Today, we may not be called to physically migrate, but we are all called to make a spiritual Hijrah. A hijrah from sin to obedience, from heedlessness to awareness, from injustice to justice.

Let us not remember Hijrah only as history, but as a living legacy that calls us to renew our commitment to Islam, strive for justice, and support the oppressed.

Let us maintain the spiritual rhythm of our lives based on the Islamic calendar. Our rituals, fasting, zakat and hajj revolve around the Islamic calendar. Let us begin this new Hijri year with renewed sincerity, repentance, and purpose. Let it be a turning point.

Ask yourself, am I making Hijrah away from sin and toward Allah? Am I honoring the Islamic calendar, or have I forgotten it? Am I supporting those who are forced into Hijrah, refugees, the displaced, the oppressed?

*“Indeed, those who believed and emigrated and struggled in the path of Allah with their wealth and lives are greater in rank in the sight of Allah.”* [al-Tawbah, 9:20]

Let us revive the Hijri year in our homes, our masjids, and our hearts. Let us teach our children the value of Hijrah, not just as an event, but as a principle: to always choose faith, justice, and truth over comfort and conformity.

May Allah grant us the courage to make our own Hijrah and strengthen our communities as Medina was strengthened.

O Allah, make this Hijri year a year of goodness, victory, guidance, and steadfastness. Ameen.

END