



Dome of the Rock

# Al Aqsa



Al-Aqsa Mosque

Quarterly

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## To Begin...

*"Glorified is He Who took his servant by night journey from the Masjid al Haram (in Makkah) to the Masjid al Aqsa (in Jerusalem), the precincts of which we have Blessed..."*

Holy Qur'an Al Isra 17: 1

... In bringing the Prophet Muhammad [saas] to al Masjidul Aqsa during meh'raj, Allah besides signifying many other attributes to al Masjidul Aqsa linked the first two houses of Allah into the hearts of Ummah.

In a hadith quoted by Sahih Muslim on the authority of Abu Dharr [ra] it is stated, I asked the beloved Prophet Muhammad [saas], which was the first mosque on earth? 'The Sacred Mosque in Makkah,' he said. And than which, I asked? 'Masjidul al Aqsa,' he replied. I further asked, what was the time span between the two? 'Forty years,' the Prophet [saas] replied.

The Ummah's debt to the Sahabis in clarifying fine details can never be repaid. Theologically, we have the right to lay claim to al Masjidul Aqsa as being the second house of Allah, built only forty years after the Kabbah. Many scholars have deduced from this that like the Kabbah al Masjidul Aqsa was first built by Prophet Adam [as] and only later renovated by Prophets' Ebrahim [as], Daud [as] and finally completed by Sulayman [as].

Our heritage also goes further than the claim made by Jews, who only link Jerusalem and the site of al Masjidul Aqsa from the time of Sulayman [as].

We as Muslims consider the site of al Masjidul Aqsa as sacred from almost time immemorial. The love we have for it is not only because of the links it has with past Prophets [as] but because Allah [swt] Himself has blessed the area around it - *'the precincts of which we have blessed'*.

## Highlighting Palestinian issues

The last few months has seen a flurry of activities, in order to highlight Palestinian issues, headed by Friends of Al Aqsa.

Early in May the second national conference, gathered lecturers and concerned individuals from throughout the country. The lecturers included Shaykh Yusuf Patel (South Africa), Shaykh Riadh ul Haq, Dr Azzam Tamimi, Rev Stephen Sizer and Tim Llewellyn.

The conference message was clear and called for a united action by all in order to halt the apartheid policies of Zionist regimes. The delegates were concerned at the slow pace of the peace process and the absence of justice in the peace process. The delegates pronounced, Zionism as a crime against all humanity, it is a worse form of apartheid than that which existed in former South Africa. It was emphasised the need to build a power-base against Zionism.

Practical measures of boycotting companies supporting the Judaisation of Palestinian Lands was advocated and hands on approach towards bringing Peace with Justice was sought.

Later, in the month a Ladies only Bazaar held in Leicester saw over 2,000 visitors. Besides the many stalls, they were shown a photographic exhibition of the situation in occupied Palestine and Sisters' Salma and Hajira gave lectures on the facts on the ground and the centrality of Al Aqsa Masjid in Islam.

Both the events attracted world wide media attention, with coverage in the national Muslim

Press, local radio and international, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Bahrain and Saudia Arabian Press.

The media coverage gained further momentum when Ismail Patel, Chairman of Friends of Al Aqsa was refused entry into Israel to attend an international conference.

Br Ismail Patel, was planning to attend a conference in Jerusalem exploring strategies for the protection and promotion of human rights. But, after being interrogated for an hour at the airport he was asked to board the next flight back to UK. Neither the Israeli authorities on the ground nor the Israeli Ambassador in London have given any reasons for the refusal of entry.

Friends of Al Aqsa, is grateful to the many who wrote sympathising with Br Ismail. Most letters pointed to the fact if any thing, this action by the Israeli's shows Friends of Al Aqsa must be doing something right. May the Almighty accept our efforts!

### In the month of...

- Jan 1919:** Versailles Peace Conference decides that the conquered Arab provinces will not be restored to Ottoman rule.
- 7 Jan 1919:** The first Palestinian conference was held and Palestine was considered a part of Syria.
- 10 Jan 1919:** The peace conference was held in Paris to lay out the new charts of the world after the First World War.
- 15 Jan 1921:** The British ministry of settlements took over the authority in Palestine from the foreign affairs ministry.
- 25 Jan 1935:** The first conference of the Palestinian scholars was held and was presided by Mufti Al Haj Ameen Al Husseini.
- 04 Jan 1938:** The British deputy in Palestine was notified by the minister of the settlements that the latter had sent a delegation to Palestine to consider the feasibility of the division resolution.
- 06 Jan 1938:** A massacre was carried out by the Israeli forces in the village of Atteel. Several women and children were killed, mosques were violated, and copies of the Holy Qur'an were torn up.
- 01 Jan 1948:** Another massacre was committed by the Israeli forces in Safad.
- 25 Jan 1948:** The arrival of the first troops of the Rescue Army led by Fawzy Al Qaweqjy.
- 25 Jan 1949:** David Ben Gurion became the first Prime Minister of Israel.
- 01 Jan 1956:** Al Azhar Mosque issued a fatwa considering peace with the Israelis illegal and taboo.
- 18 Jan 1974:** The forces separation agreement was signed as a result of the Ramadan War.
- 15 Jan 1988:** Israel police fire tear gas into al Aqsa wounding over 40 worshippers.
- 21 Jan 1988:** Isa'ac Rabin, the Israeli Minister of Defence, announced his policies of violence and beating against the Palestinian Intifadah.
- 12 Jan 1989:** The third curfew under Israeli rule in East Jerusalem remains in force all day as police continue to search houses in Silwan arresting 20 people.
- 1 Jan 1990:** Israel forces demolish unfinished home on grounds that stone-throwing incidents took place nearby.
- 17 Jan 1991:** Israel imposes curfew on West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza.
- 06 Jan 1996:** Yahya Ayyash, the leader of the martyr troops of Ezzul Deen Al Qassam Brigades, was assassinated, after a four-year chase, by Al Shabak agents. They detonated an explosive in his mobile phone.
- 15 Jan 1997:** A partial agreement signed by Israelis and the Palestinian Authority, regarding the deployment of forces in Hebron after it had been divided between the two sides.
- 3 Jan 1996:** A new settlement of 1,100 housing units near Beit Hanina announced.
- 29 Jan 1997:** Israeli Interior Minister Eli Suissa tells the Knesset that the Ministry has seized over 600 Jerusalem ID cards from Palestinians.

### History of al Masjidul Aqsa

After the great battle of Yarmuk in 636, the Muslim army advanced towards Jerusalem.

The Muslims encamped outside the gates of Jerusalem and requested, as normal, for inhabitants to surrender. However, the inhabitants under the leadership of Sophronius requested for the Khalifah Umar to come in person and guarantee their safety.

If the Muslim army had wished they could have destroyed the inhabitants of Jerusalem with force and capture all the wealth. But as the object of the Muslims was not to gain material wealth they complied with the request and wrote to Umar [ra].

Umar [ra] with only one companion promptly set out for Jerusalem.

Umar [ra] the Great thus arrived at Jerusalem on foot while his companion was riding the horse. This is in marked contrast at the flamboyance, bloodshed, torture and mutilation witnessed by the inhabitants of Jerusalem when the Romans and Persians captured Jerusalem.

In a humble and simple manner Umar [ra] thus entered the great city of Jerusalem.

Before his entrance he drafted the famous peace treaty or covenant of Jerusalem, ensuring the inhabitants safety of their belongings, houses, farms, churches and persons. Those who wished to migrate were also given an assurance of safe passage.

## HEADLINERS

**Arafat Rejected:** Arafat, Palestinian leader, is coming under intense pressure from close advisers to reject the offer of a Palestinian state Israel is expected to make soon, and even postpone his own declaration of statehood. Palestinian officials said the offer by Ehud Barak, the prime minister, of statehood would be "a trap", since Israel intended to postpone any decision on the future status of Jerusalem, where Mr Arafat wants to locate Palestine's capital, and the 3.6m refugees. 12 May 00 FT.

**Barak Vs Arafat:** Ehud Barak, Israeli prime minister, today embarks on a diplomatic offensive aimed at winning support for a US-hosted summit between himself and Arafat, Palestinian leader. "Barak and Arafat have hard decisions to make," said a diplomat. In preparing public opinion, Mr Barak is well ahead of Mr Arafat. 5 Jul 00 FT.

**Sun Yuxi Supports Palestinians:** Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi said today that China has always been supportive to Palestine's just cause and respected any decision made by Palestine that favours the peace process in the Middle East. 4 July 00, New China News Agency

**Israeli Soldier shoots at BBC car:** During the withdrawal from Lebanon near a village of Adaissi, an Israeli tank fired a shell into a BBC car used by correspondent Jeremy Bowen, killing his Lebanese driver, while Israeli helicopters almost hit a car-load of Lebanese journalist near Blat. 24 May 00. Independent.

**Rabbi declares Temple Mount:** For the first time, a chief rabbi of Israel has declared that the Temple Mount [al Aqsa Haram Sharif] should remain under Palestinian administration even after the permanent settlement is signed. 24 June 00. Ha'aretz.

**US forces Israelis to cancel \$3bn radar sale:** Bowing to pressure from America, Israel yesterday cancelled its lucrative contract to sell an advanced airborne early warning radar system to China. 13 July 00. The Times.

**London to Jerusalem car rally organised by JNF:** The 3rd London to Jerusalem rally organised by Jewish National Fund raised quarter million pounds for the Besor Reservoir in the Negav [water only for Israeli citizens]- a JNF project that began in 1996. The rally which went through 8 countries included Jordan. 7 July 00. Jewish Chronicle.

### **Israeli MP's try to storm Al Aqsa Haram Sharif**

The work of renovation within the grounds of Masjid al Aqsa by Waqf has upset some Israelis.

A Likud Knesset member who tried to enter the al Aqsa said they wanted to know more about what he described as 'illegal construction' by Waqf. He is calling upon the Israeli government to intervene and halt the renovation.

Gideon Avni told Reuters, 'the damage that was done there starting four months ago is massive. That huge hole was just ripped up, obliterating several strata of archaeological material dating back to pre biblical times'.

The reactions seems strange as the Israelis have dug several tunnels under the al Aqsa not only damaging archaeological strata but weakening the foundation of al Aqsa and endangering the Mosque buildings.

Muslim security guards moved all the intruders from the sensitive areas within the al Aqsa Haram Sharif.

The Muslims stated, 'what we are doing is renovation and maintenance work. We simply have reopened the gates that have existed here for hundreds of years'.

### **Remembering Jerusalem Neighbourhood - Al Walajeh**

I was only 18 years old when we fled from our home. My father worked as a farmer on our land. I still remember when our village was attacked at sunset. We were so afraid of the future. We fled, but did not know where to go. No one took anything with them. When we arrived at Beit Jalla, we took shelter under trees for one month. Our life was disastrous, families had left their houses to live under trees, children were hungry and the elderly were sick. No one dared return to their homes. We did not even go over the borders drawn in accordance with the Zionist treaty, because some were killed in trying to do so.

There was a shrine called Mrs Cary located on top of a hill. The British gave this to the Zionist and they therefore had control over all the villages in the vicinity. Many people fled to major towns like Bethlehem and Jericho. Al Walajeh was green and full of water springs like mountains of Lebanon. It had 28 water springs. Its gardens and groves were marvellous.

Al Walajeh in 1945 had a population of 1,650 and was situated 8.5 km from Jerusalem with land holdings of 17, 708 dunams. The village was attacked on the night of 21 Oct 1948. The Jewish settlement of Emendaf was built in its place in 1950.

## **India, Israel tie a pact of friendship**

The foreign ministers of Israel and India agreed yesterday to hold a joint forum for combating terrorism. The decision was made during a meeting between the two in Jerusalem where Foreign Minister David Levy hosted Indian Foreign Minister, Jasvant Singh, who is currently paying an official visit to Israel. According to an Israeli source, the cooperation revolves around sharing intelligence information and assessments but not operational activities.

The Indian minister said that there is a "band of terrorism" that he says stretches from the southern Caucasus to parts of western China. Singh emphasized that "radical movements taint Islam" because of their terrorist activities. The two ministers discussed further cooperation on technology, culture, economics and strategy. Levy promised to raise the issue of limiting the restrictions, which Israel imposes on Indian programmers working in the high-tech industry in Israel.

In a show of solidarity Israel has sold a radar system to India, which is used for warning of ballistic missile launches. Although the deal has upset US, Israel seems not bothered. The US is concerned that Israeli technology will intensify the already tense situation between the two nuclear rivals on the Indian subcontinent, India and Pakistan.

### **Turkey quenches Israel's thirst**

While Palestinians are having to seek water from old contaminated wells and a few fortunate have access to mains water for only a few days a week, the Israeli's who have continuous running taps have further increased their water source from Turkey. Turkey has agreed to supply Israel with over 50 million cubic metres of water over next few years. According to human rights organisations, the average Palestinian citizen receives an annual water share of 140 cubic metres while the average Israeli receives 560 cubic metres.

### **URGENT APPEAL**

**We are compiling a file of all individuals refused entry into Israel.**

**Your Help Is Needed!**

**Have you been refused entry into Israel?**

**Do you know of any one who has been refused entry into Israel?**

**Please get in touch with us with your details.**

**E-Mail:** [info@aqsa.org.uk](mailto:info@aqsa.org.uk)

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