

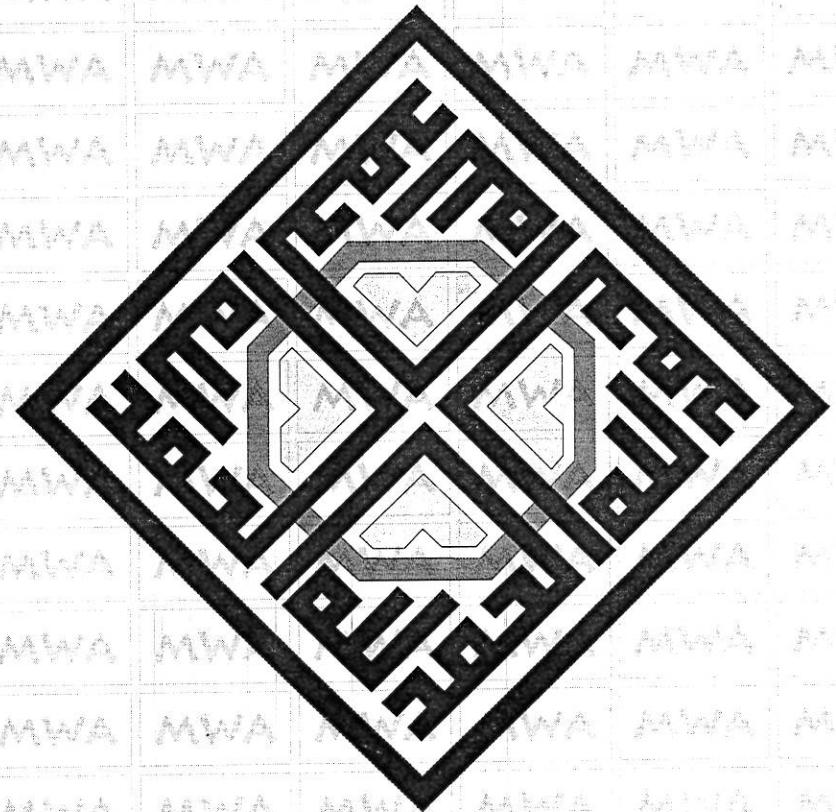
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All Correspondence should be sent to our new address
The Muslim Women's Association
P. O. Box 6119, LONDON SW20 0XG



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NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY 9 MARCH 1997
at The Islamic Cultural Centre
146 Park Road, London NW8 7RG
Time: 4.30 pm

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Articles, letters and other matter appearing in this publication do not necessarily express the official views of the Executive Committee of The Muslim Women's Association.

Meetings of the MWA take place on the second Sunday of each month

EDITORIAL

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

On Sunday the 8th of December we had our monthly meeting at the Islamic Cultural Centre when we welcomed a distinguished Scholar from Scotland who spoke about the Masjid-Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem and its importance in Islamic History.

Jerusalem is not only the homeland of the three major Monotheistic religions, but it is also a Spiritual home for a large percentage of the world's population. Allah has chosen it as a location to send many of his Prophets and they have received the Divine message there through the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) (Alaihis Salaam).

The Masjid-Al-Aqsa is a place dear to the heart of Muslims as our beloved Prophet Mohammed (Peace be on him) was taken on a journey on the night of Mi'raj to a celestial visit as is mentioned in Surah Al-Isra which was recited at the meeting by Dr El-Awasi.

The meaning of the Surah is to be absorbed into one's soul.

"Glory be to Allah who did take His servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque (Ka'aba) to the furthest mosque (Masjid-Al-Aqsa) whose precincts We did bless in order that We might show him some of our signs for He is the one who heareth and knoweth all things".

The Masjid-Al-Aqsa is a place where human earthly experience meets the world of Spirituality and Immortality; where the body and soul are reunited in the presence of Allah, and where Allah's Peace and Love for all His creation has been revealed to His messengers. Hence it is the duty of all who believe in Allah to preserve the Peace, Tranquillity and Holiness of this city and its precincts until the Day of Judgement.

Let us pray that Allah may give us the strength of purpose to bring Peace & Justice to all the world and particularly to this area of the world. Ameen.

Dr. Zubeda Osman

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JERUSALEM IN ISLAM

Dr. Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi*

The history of this blessed city of Jerusalem is an ancient history whose roots go back into the depths of time. Its land is one of humanity's oldest homelands, both in prehistoric times and in successive historic ages. In addition, it has witnessed numerous civilisations that arose in it. God chose it above all other parts of the Earth. It was, for example, one of the oldest places in the world in which there was monotheism and divine messages were revealed. Noble prophets and messengers of God walked on its soil. Gabriel came down to it from Heaven bringing the divine commands to give to the people through these messengers and prophets. On its soil they preached the monotheistic faith. Feelings often run high over Jerusalem. It has always been and will continue to be a major concern for: Jews, Christians and Muslims.

The history of Jerusalem has suffered distortion, falsification and alteration. Most of our historical researches, specifically those related to the history of Jerusalem before the Islamic conquest, are limited to biblical and orientalist studies.¹ Hence, this lecture is an attempt to offer a glimpse of the Islamic perspectives on Jerusalem. It depends on the Holy Qur'an and the commentaries on it, as well as books of the Prophet Muhammad's traditions, Islamic historical sources and other sources or secondary references. Throughout this paper I have chosen to use "Mushaf al-Madinah An-Nabawiyah, The Holy Qur'an and the English translation of its Meanings and Commentary" which revised and edited by the Presidency of Islamic Research, Ifta, call and Guidance in Saudi Arabia.

It should be noted that this lecture is not a study of the history of Jerusalem. This lecture deals with the reasons for Muslims' having close links with Jerusalem, their intense concern for it, and their action to save, care for and preserve it, by demonstrating Jerusalem's special character, moral qualities and status in Islam.

THE STATUS OF JERUSALEM IN ISLAM: Jerusalem is regarded as a distinctive – if not the most distinctive – place on the Earth that differentiates it from any other places. This is because God has set it apart from all other places on Earth, especially honouring and glorying it. God has mobilised the souls, feelings and emotions of believers, attached their hearts to Jerusalem and made them yearn towards it. Jerusalem has been linked to the Muslims' faith, and it has come to represent a living image in their minds and conception as a result of the numerous verses that were revealed about it in the Holy Qur'an, and because of the frequency with which the Prophet Muhammad spoke about it, enumerating its virtues and special features.

THE BLESSED LAND: One of the most comprehensive, of these virtues mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad's tradition is that al-Sham (historical Syria) in general and Palestine in particular is regarded as a blessed land:

1. About the Prophet Abraham, the Holy Qur'an states: "But We delivered him and

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- (his nephew) Lut (and directed them) to *the land which We have blessed for the nations*". (21: 71)
 2. "Glory to (Allah) who did take His Servant for a Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the *Farthest Mosque whose precincts We did bless*". (17: 1)

Blessedness, here, as scholars have stated, is both physical and moral. Physical blessedness is represented – for example – in its exceptional strategic geographical location, the variety of its geographical features, and its numerous fruits. Its moral blessedness is represented – for example – in the fact that angels descended there and that the prophets preached and were buried there. It is the country where noble prophets such as Jesus, David and Solomon were born, grew up and had their missions, or to which other prophets migrated, like Abraham and Lot, or where they were buried, as in the cases of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses. It is the country where the Prophet Muhammad prayed with the other prophets, as their Imam in Al-Aqsa Mosque on the night of his night journey and ascension, as Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal related in his Musnad, quoting Ibn 'Abbas.

It is also the place where angels descended. Gabriel used to descend there from Heaven bringing divine instruction to God's prophets and messengers, so they would preach to humanity. Other angels used to descend there as messengers to carry out a specific task.

In brief, the Prophet Muhammad described this moral blessedness, according to Al-Tirmidhi in his Sahih, quoting Zaid Ibn Thabit Al-Ansari, in the following words: "I heard God's Messenger say, 'How blessed is Syria (al-Sham)! How blessed is Syria!' 'And how is that, O Messenger of God?' People asked him. 'Those angels of God have spread their wings over Syria,' he answered".² "The prophets built Jerusalem," Ibn 'Abbas added. "And the prophets lived in it. There is not an inch in it where a prophet has not prayed or an angel has not stood."

Among the aspects of this blessing, both physical and moral, and the monuments to it, are: the place where the Prophet Abraham migrated, the Holy land, the land of the night journey and ascension, the land to which Muslims first turned when praying, a land for sacred struggle for God's cause, a land of promise, the centre for the future Islamic Caliphate, and the place where people will be raised from the dead and assembled on the Day of Judgement.

ONE: THE PLACE WHERE THE PROPHET ABRAHAM MIGRATED: In the time of Canaanite sovereignty over Palestine, the Prophet Abraham (who was an Amorite from the Arabs who established the Babylonian state in Iraq) migrated to it when his people wanted to kill him. He left his country, Ur in Iraq, around 1805 BC, together with his nephew Lot and others, to try to spread his message. Abu Dawud quoted 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar as saying, "I heard God's Messenger say, 'There will be migration after migration. The best of the inhabitants of the Earth will live in the place where Abraham migrated, and the evil inhabitants will remain elsewhere on Earth'".³

TWO: THE HOLY LAND: Namely, the purified land, because it was purified from idolatry and made a dwelling-place for prophets and believers, their shrine and burial-place. This description is contained in Qur'anic verses and traditions of the Prophet.

It has also been called the holy land because of the Islamic holy places that it

contains, like Al-Aqsa Mosque, which Islam regards as one of only three places desirable to visit. Al-Bukhari and Muslim, in their Sahih collections of the Prophet's traditions, quoted Abu Hurayra as saying that God's Messenger said: "Set out deliberately on a journey only to three mosques: this mosque of mine (in Madina), the Sacred Mosque (in Makka), and Al-Aqsa Mosque."⁴ In another tradition, he described the virtue of living near Al-Aqsa Mosque and praying in it. Al-Tabarani and Al-Bazzar quoted Abu al-Darda' as saying that the Prophet Muhammad had said: "A prayer in the Sacred Mosque is worth 100,000 prayers, a prayer in my mosque is worth a thousand prayers, and a prayer in Jerusalem is worth five hundred prayers" in any other mosque.⁵

The history of Al-Aqsa Mosque, according to one of the prophet's traditions (Hadith), goes back to the time of Adam when he first built the Aqsa Mosque after 40 years of building the Ka'ba in Makka. Abu Dharr stated: "I asked God's Messenger about the first mosque on Earth. 'The Sacred Mosque' (in Makka), he answered. 'And then what?' I asked. 'Al-Aqsa Mosque,' he said. 'And how long was it between them?' I asked. 'Forty years,' the Prophet replied.⁶ Then it was renovated—the first time – by the Prophet Jacob, and then – for the second time – by the Prophet David. The building was completed by the Prophet Solomon. Ka'b Al-Ahbar – who was one of the great Jewish scholars in pre-Islamic times and then became a Muslim – mentioned that "Solomon built Jerusalem on ancient foundations. 'Al-Zarkashi" wrote on page 30 of his book A'lam Al Masajid that "Solomon renovated Al-Aqsa Mosque, he did not found it."

THREE: THE LAND OF THE NIGHT JOURNEY AND THE ASCENSION

(AL-ISRA' AND AL-MI'RAJ): The Prophet Muhammad travelled to Jerusalem by night from Makka (the Sacred mosque), and ascended from there to the highest heavens. Jerusalem was the centre point for his earthly journey (the night journey) and the heavenly one (the ascension). It was the place where his night journey ended and his ascension began.

FOUR: THE LAND OF THE FIRST QIBLA (DIRECTION OF PRAYER): The Muslims used to turn towards Jerusalem when they prayed. This continued for 16 or 17 months, until the direction of prayer was changed from Jerusalem to the Holy Ka'ba, in the middle of the month of Sha'ban, or possibly during Rajab, in the second year after the Prophet migrated to Madina.

FIVE: THE LAND OF STEADFASTNESS AND SACRED STRUGGLE

(RIBAT AND JIHAD): There are many traditions of the Prophet Muhammad to the effect that a person who lives in Jerusalem is like one who struggles or is garrisoned there for God's cause. These include:

1. Mu'adh Ibn Jabal quoted the Prophet as saying: "O Mu'adh! God Almighty will enable you to conquer Syria after my death, from Al-'Arish to the Euphrates. Their men and women will be garrisoned until the Day of Judgement. Whoever from among you chooses one of the coasts of Syria or Jerusalem is in the sacred struggle (jihad) until the Day of Judgement".
2. The Imam Ahmad related in his Musnad that Abu Umama Al-Bahili quoted the Prophet as saying: "A group from my community (Umma') are still knowledgeable about the truth, they are vanquishing their enemy, and those who

disagree with them cannot harm them until Almighty God's command comes to them. They are thus." "O Messenger of God," he was asked, "where are they?" "In and around Jerusalem," the Prophet replied.⁷

3. With regard to the decisive battle on the banks of the River Jordan, Ibn Hajr Al-'Asqalani related that Abu Idris Al-Khaulani heard from Nahik Ibn Surim Al-Sakuni that the Prophet Muhammad said: "You will fight the pagans until the remnant of you fights on the River Jordan, you to the east of it and they to the west of it." Al-Saukuni said that he did not know where on earth the Jordan was at that time.⁸ This means that this battle which the Prophet foretold will take place on the two banks of the River Jordan. The Muslims camp will be on the East of the river, where the state of Jordan now is, and the other forces will have their camp west of the river, namely in Palestine.

SIX: THE LAND OF PROMISE ⁹: God has promised His servants who believe in Him and do good that they will defeat their enemies, will be established firmly and will be appointed to rule Jerusalem. (17: 4-7)

SEVEN: THE CENTRE FOR THE FUTURE ISLAMIC KHILAFAT¹⁰: Jerusalem is the centre and headquarter for the future Islamic Khilafa (Caliphate) at the time when sufferings and strife intensify at the end of time. On this subject, the Prophet Muhammad stated:

1. Ibn 'Asakir quoted Yunus Ibn Maysara Ibn Halbas as saying that the Prophet had stated: "This matter (namely the Khilafa) will be after me in Madina, then in Syria, then in the Jazira, then in Iraq, then in Madina, then in Jerusalem. If it is in Jerusalem, its home country is there, and if any people expel it, it will not return there for ever."¹¹
2. Imam Ahmad, Al-Hakim and Abu Dawud quoted 'Abdullah Ibn Zughb Al-Ibadi who heard from 'Abdullah Ibn Hawwala Al-Azdi that: "The Prophet put his hand on my head, and then said: 'Ibn Hawwala, if you see that the Caliphate has taken its abode in the holy land, then the earthquake, the tribulations and great events are at hand, and the Last Hour on that day will be closer to people than my hand is to your head.'"¹²
3. Ibn Sa'd quoted 'Abd Al-Rahman Ibn Abi 'Umayra al-Mazni, "There will be an oath of allegiance according to guidance in Jerusalem."¹³

FINALLY: THE LAND WHERE THE DEAD WILL BE RAISED AND

GATHERED: This terminology can be found in many of the Prophet Muhammad's sayings, including:

1. Imam Ahmad in his Masnad quoted Maymuna daughter of Sa'd, a client of God's Messenger, as having said, "O Prophet, give us a pronouncement (fatwa) about Jerusalem." "The land where they will be raised and gathered," he answered.¹⁴
2. The Holy Qur'an says: "And listen the Day when the Caller will call out from a place quite near". (50: 41) Commentators say that the nearby place from which the Israfil will blow his trumpet is the rock in Jerusalem. In this land people will be gathered on the Day of Judgement, according to theological scholars.

To sum up, the Muslims' devotion to Jerusalem is not a result of earthly or colonialist aims, or a material desire to expand their rule and domination, nor is it

based on false racist nationalist claims. It is this combination of special moral qualities that constitutes the main and fundamental reason and the motivation for Muslims to be extremely concerned for Jerusalem, and to work to save and preserve it throughout the ages.

THE MANIFESTATIONS OF THIS STATUS

This special status of Jerusalem has been expressed and apparent in the concern shown by the Prophet Muhammad, his companions and followers to save it, preserve it and care for it to the utmost extent, in the following ways:

1. By establishing spiritual importance in the miracle of the night journey and ascension experienced by the Prophet Muhammad on 27 Rajab two years before the Hijra.¹⁵ In the word of the Holy Qur'an, "Glory to (Allah) who did take His Servant for a Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque whose precincts We did bless". (17:1) Thus the Sacred Mosque of the Ka'ba in Makka was closely linked with Al-Aqsa Mosque, and Jerusalem and its surrounding area were linked with the Muslims' creed and hearts.

This happened at a harsh and critical time when the Prophet and the oppressed Muslims were enduring all kinds of injury and persecution, especially after the death of his beloved, caring and trusting wife Khadija; and his protector and guardian uncle Abu Talib. The Prophet had also gone to Taif to seek help from Tha'qif. He despaired of any good from Tha'qif, because they incited their fools and slaves to insult him, shout at him and throw stones at him, injuring his feet so that they bled. So, after his disappointing visit, Muhammad met with a new prophetic experience. In Jerusalem he met with the prophets where he led the prayer.

2. The preparations for the campaign to conquer Jerusalem, through action to safeguard the edges of Syria from the danger of the Byzantines and to destroy their prestige. This occurred through three events in the Prophet Muhammad's lifetime, which were: the battle of Mu'ta¹⁶ in 8 AH (629 AD), the raid on Tabuk¹⁷ in 9 AH (630 AD), and Usama Ibn Zaid's mission in 11 AH (631 AD).
3. The campaign to conquer Jerusalem which was launched by Abu Bakr¹⁸, and crowned with the conquest of Jerusalem by 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab in 15 AH (636 AD). This conquest was a radical turning point in the history of the Islamic Arab East.

After 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab arrived in Jerusalem, he agreed with its inhabitants on surrender terms and wrote for them the famous peace document which is known as 'Umar's Assurance. In this he guaranteed them their persons, property, churches and crosses. Through his Assurance, 'Umar granted them religious liberty, and the freedom to remain there or leave. He also preserved their holy places.

On the other hand, 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab did not oppose a provision in his Assurance – as requested by the inhabitants of Aelia – that "none of the Jews should live in Aelia with them." This guarantee was in conformity with the Jews' position in Jerusalem, which had been decided since the Emperor Hadrian issued his decree in 139 AD forbidding the Jews to enter Jerusalem, live there, come near it or even look at it from afar.

'Umar renewed the decree of Hadrian, but allowed them concessions, that they could look on, and visit the city. This they did, and according to Encyclopedia Judaica (article on Jerusalem) seventy Jewish families were allowed to live there. 'Umar's ruling insured that, during the period when it applied, Jews had no sovereignty over Jerusalem. It certainly seems that it was not long after the beginning of Muslim rule that Jews did settle in Jerusalem again after 500 years of prohibition.

The Muslims did not take Jerusalem away from the Jews, or conquer it when Jews were living there. They received it from the Romans. The survey of history invalidates the Jews' claims and allegations or what they call their historic right to Palestine. History confirms that the Jews, as other groups and peoples, entered Jerusalem for a period of time and then left it. Their city disappeared conclusively, having been destroyed at least three times since the Prophet Solomon. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city, and the Temple, around 586 BC. Then the Romans destroyed the city twice and effaced even its name. Titus destroyed the city and burnt the Temple around 70 AD, as did Hadrian in 135 AD.

THE STATUS OF JERUSALEM AFTER 'UMAR'S CONQUEST

Since 'Umar's conquest of Jerusalem, it has acquired a purely Islamic character. Its taxable land has become land of Islamic charitable trusts through generations of Muslims, which cannot be ceded, sold or mortgaged. As Al Mawardi has stated.¹⁹

Before land in Palestine became an Islamic charitable trust following 'Umar's conquest, part of it became a charitable endowment in the Prophet Muhammad's lifetime. Solid evidence, including information attributed to the Prophet himself²⁰ indicates that land in Hebron was the first Islamic charitable endowment in Palestine, indeed the first charitable endowment in Islam. The Prophet endowed it to the companion Tamim Ibn Aws Al-Dari, his brothers and successors until the Day of Judgement. Tamim was the first inhabitant of Palestine to be converted to Islam. By making this endowment to him, the Prophet was in fact staking Islam's claim to legitimate ownership of Palestine. Accordingly, a Muslim believes that Jerusalem does not belong to the Palestinians or Arabs only but to all Muslims and that "giving up any part of the country is like giving up part of one's religion".²¹

5. The building of mosques, foremost of which is Al-Aqsa Mosque – in 18 or 21 AH – on the orders of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab. This was followed by 'Abd Al-Malik Ibn Marwan beginning the construction of the present Al-Aqsa Mosque – on the site of the mosque which 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab had ordered to be built – and whose construction was completed by his son Al-Walid in 90 AH (708–709). The Muslims considered Al-Aqsa Mosque as symbolic of the Islamic nature of the land.
6. The soil of Jerusalem was moulded with the blood of a large number of the Prophet Muhammad's companions, who died as martyrs on its blessed ground, and who helped to save it, care for it and preserve it.²² A large number of the Prophet's companions also set out on journeys to visit Jerusalem. The number of those who entered Jerusalem with 'Umar is estimated about 4,000 companions.

The graves of some of the companions can still be seen in Jerusalem, like those



”لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تَحِبُّونَ وَ مَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ“

“You shall not attain righteousness unless you spend on others of that which
you love, and whatever you spend, verily God has knowledge of it.”
(The Qur'an 3:92)

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in Need of Care in London**

AN APPEAL

MADINA HOUSE is a Muslim home for children in need of care, established in 1981 under the auspices of the Muslim Women's Association (a registered charity which has been functioning since 1962).

From its inception the organisers worked closely with the Department of Health and Social Security and all other Social Services Agencies in order to comply with the current guidelines on the running of Children's Homes. Subsequently Madina House was registered by the Department of Health & Social Security under the Child Care Act.

Aim - The main aim of Madina House is to provide an alternative home for children who for whatever reason, are temporarily unable to live with their parent/s. At Madina House we provide a stable, caring background, founded on Islamic principles and practices. Since its founding we have cared for over 400 children.

The present home does no longer comply with today's regulations and we have been asked to find more suitable accommodation. Thus, we are in desperate need of finance to buy an appropriate building. Failing to do so, the future of Madina House is in question.

Please help us by giving generously to continue to care for our children in need.

Donations, whether by Cheques or Banker's Orders would be greatly appreciated.

of the two companions 'Ubada Ibn Al-Samit (who died in 34 AH/ 654-655) and Shaddad Ibn Aws Ibn Thabit Al-Ansari (who died in 58 AH/ 677-678)²³ in Al-Rahman cemetery in Jerusalem, or that of Tamim Al-Dari in the northern part of Bayt Jibrin near Hebron.

7. A large number of followers, theologians and ascetics travelled to Jerusalem.²⁴ Some of these left their countries of origin, to live near Al-Aqsa Mosque.
8. Religious schools, teaching hospices, and lodging quarters for theological scholars who thronged Al-Aqsa Mosque for worship, to acquire blessings, as visitors, or to write and teach, like Hujjat Al-Islam Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali. He visited Jerusalem in 489 AH/ 1095, stayed there, and wrote his most famous book, *Ihya 'Ulum Al-Din*. During his time there were more than 63 theologians in Jerusalem.
9. Theological scholars refer to these special qualities and status of Jerusalem when exhorting Muslims to remain in it, discouraging them from leaving it, establishing them in it, defending it and repelling aggressors from it. The fine qualities of historical Syria (al-Sham) and its people were one of the main factors used by the theological scholar Ibn Taymiya in exhorting the Muslims to attack the Tatars, commanding them to stay in Damascus, forbidding them from leaving it to go to Egypt, in his appeal to the Egyptian army to come to Syria and in making the Syrian army stand firm there.²⁵
10. In order to help provide scholarly information, and express enthusiastic feeling towards the blessed land, a number of books – and theses on the noble qualities of Jerusalem have been written.

After studying the various Qur'anic verses, prophetic traditions and the Islamic history of Jerusalem, one could not deny that it is of extreme importance and significance to every Muslim.

In conclusion, a researcher may note that the history of Jerusalem, according to the Muslim historians, has passed through three distinctive and obvious ages:

1. The age of formation and construction: 2500-1184 BC, from the time that the Canaanites settled there until it underwent an invasion from overseas (by groups of the Philistines), and another invasion at the same time from the direction of the desert (the Jews).
2. The age of strife, troubles and disturbances: 1184 BC-636 AD, from the end of the age of formation and construction to the Islamic conquest of Jerusalem.
3. The age of construction and development: 636-1917, from the Islamic conquest of Jerusalem until Britain issued the Balfour Declaration and occupied Jerusalem after that.
4. The age when strife, troubles, destructive and savage wars returned: 1917 to the present day.

Thus conspiracies, wars and destructive and savage battles were only, according to Muslim accounts, stilled in Jerusalem after the Islamic conquest in the time of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab. Everyday life in the Islamic age – the age of construction and development – was marked by stability. During it people enjoyed security, safety and peace – with the exception of the period of the Crusades (1099-1187). There was scholarly activity on a wide scale. It was a period when schools, mosques and hospitals were founded. It was a centre of learning from which a large number of scholars graduated. It enjoyed the care of the Khalifas and the Muslim rulers.

On the other hand, Israel, now, is taking steps and practical measures every day by which it is trying to determine the future of Jerusalem well in advance, and to impose a policy of fait accompli to consolidate its control over the city before arriving at the final stage of the negotiations. In this context, the occupation authorities are making intensive and urgent efforts to Zionise the city and give it a Jewish character and appearance. Their rushed measures to bring about demographic changes in the composition of the population in Jerusalem, to strengthen the process of colonial settlement, and build settlements in and around it are simple examples of their attempts to change Jerusalem's identity, character, and the nature of its civilisation and its population.

In addition, they plan to build a third Temple under al-Aqsa Mosque. One simple example of this plan that there are at least four tunnels, not one, being dug under al-Aqsa Mosque. Shaikh Ra'id Salah, Mayor of Um al-Fahim (north of the country) revealed that "during the last four (now six) months, a Zionist scheme to build a third Temple under al-Aqsa Mosque was revealed. The plan is to convert the Marwani Mosque, in the eastern basement of al-Aqsa, into a Jewish synagogue which would be linked with the Wailing Wall (al-Buraq Wall) through a tunnel under al-Aqsa Mosque". Mayor Salah pointed out that the Israeli television showed a documentary film which presaged a natural collapse of al-Aqsa Mosque in – a period from two months to two years as a result of the dazing under it.²⁶

The "Jerusalem 3000" celebrations organised by the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem are designed to affirm a claim to permanent, exclusive Israeli control of the city. History has proven that there can never be peace nor stability without justice. The solution of the issue of Jerusalem is the key to a just peace in the region.

Against this background the Islamic Research Academy (IRAP) was founded to mark the 1400th anniversary of the Islamic conquest of Jerusalem by the second Khalif 'Umar Ibn al Khattab in 15 AH (636 AD). This was a radical turning point in the history of the Islamic Arab East. IRAP was established to advance Islamic education and research, with special reference to the promotion of the studies and research into Islamic Jerusalem. The five founders have concern and academic interest over Islamic Jerusalem. The Academy has been recognised as a charity since June 1996.

IRAP AIMS TO FULFIL THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

- i. To become a national and international platform for the discussion of studies on Islamic Jerusalem and provide a focus for research in Islamic Jerusalem studies with special reference to advance the study of the significance and the centrality of Jerusalem to the Islamic faith and the Muslim identity.
- ii. To advance better understanding, mutual respect and tolerance, good relations, dialogue, and co-operation between Muslims and other non-Muslim institutions, bodies and individuals whose aims are compatible with the aims of the Association.
- iii. To organise a programme of occasional lecture-seminars, study groups, workshops, conferences, publication and film making.
- iv. To support and encourage younger scholars, and to initiate and support fieldwork, writing and research
- v. To advance cordiality with the people of Scotland and the United Kingdom by organising or/and hosting cultural events from time to time, as appropriate, such

- as exhibitions, costume and folkloric display.
- vi. To co-operate and form links, and exchange knowledge with educational bodies and institutions in Britain and abroad for the purpose of serving the objects of the Association.
- vii. To research relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in Jerusalem.
- viii. To promote and provide for the educational, academic, cultural and administrative interests of the Muslims religious institutions, such as Palestine 'Ulama' League.

The Committee wishes to invite any person who supports the aims of the Academy, irrespective of nationality, race, religion, sex or disability, to apply to the Management Committee for membership of the Academy on payment of an annual subscription.

For any further information about the Academy do not hesitate to write to us. Islamic Research Academy (IRAP), P.O.Box 15002, Dunblane FK15 OZA, UK. Fax: 0044 - 1786 - 824 370

Although Jerusalem is the most delicate issue of dispute between the two conflicting parties, I would like to conclude by saying: let us hope and pray that the peace will come back to the land of peace, Jerusalem.

FOOTNOTES

1. "It is quite hard for those who have grown up in culture, strongly influenced by one of them to stand away from their heritage and to take an objective look at the issue; indeed, a reading of the available literature on Jerusalem might well lead one to believe that it is impossible. Nevertheless, it is worth trying ... Seeking to establish a widely accepted common ground of historical understanding is not just an academic exercise, for the past is constantly invoked in situations of conflicts to justify present practice and future objectives of nowhere is that more true than Jerusalem". The question of Jerusalem: Historical perspectives, CAABU briefing, No. 40, November 1995, p. 1.
2. Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani, *Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Sahihah*, (al-Maktab al-Islami, Beirut), 2nd edition, part two, p.5, Hadith No. 503.
3. Abu Dawud, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, (Dar al-Fikr, Beirut), part three, p.4, Hadith No. 2482.
4. Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Hijr al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari Li Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, (al-Maktabah al-Salafiyah, Cairo), part three, p.63; and part four, pp.73, 241.
5. Ibid, part three, p. 97.
6. Imam Muslim, *Sahih Muslim wa al-Jami' al-Sahih*, (Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 1978), 2nd edition, part one, p.370.
7. Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad*, (al-Maktab al-Islami Lil Tiba'a wa al-Nashir, Beirut), part five, p.269.
8. Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Hijr al-'Asqalani, *al-Isaba fi Tamiyyz al-Sahaba*, (al-Maktabah al-Tijariyah al-Kubra, Cairo, 1939), part three, p.545.
9. See Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, *Al-Bisharat Al-Nabawiya bil-Khilafa Al-Islamiya Al-Qadima*, (Dar al-Hasan, Hebron, 1991), pp. 23-33.
10. Ibid, pp. 33-48.
11. Ibn 'Asakir, op.cit., part one, p.42.
12. Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, op.cit., part five, p.288; see also Abu Dawud, op.cit., part three, p. 19.

13. 'Ala' al-Din al-Hindi, op.cit., part 14, p.148, Hadith No. 38199.
14. Muhammad Nasir Al-Din Al-Albani, *Takhrij Ahadith Fada'il Al-Sham wa Dimashq li 'l-Rab'i wa ma'hu Manaqib Al-Sham wa Ahlihi li Shaikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiya* (Al-Maktab Al-Islami, Beirut, 1403 AH), Fourth Edition, pp.14-16.
15. Ibn Hisham, *Al-Sira Al-Nabawiya*, Part Two (Dar Al-Rayan lil-Turath, Cairo, 1987), pp. 47-53; Ibn Kathir, *Al-Sira Al-Nabawiya*, Part Two (Dar Ihya' Al-Turath Al-'Arabi, Beirut), pp.93-112.
16. The village of Mu'ta lies 12 kilometres south of Karak.
17. Tabuk lies between Madina and Damascus, 700 kilometres from Madina and south-east of Aqaba. The raid on Tabuk is also known as the raid of the hard time, because the Muslims had a hard time due to heat and drought, although it happened in the season when fruit ripens.
18. The Battle of the Yarmuk on 27 Jumada al-Thani 13AH (634AD).
19. Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali Ibn Habib Al-Mawardi, *Al-Ahkam Al-Sultaniya* (Mustafa Al-Halabi Press, Cairo, 1958), pp. 136 -137.
20. See Shaikh Muhammad Bakhit Al-Muti'i, Copy of the Ruling by His Eminence Shaikh Muhammad Bakhit Al-Muti'i, former Mufti of Egypt, on the Waqf of the Prophet's Companion Tamim Al-Dari and his successors, issued on 7 Rajab 1350, No. 275, p. 99, Part 7 (Islamic Vocational Orphanage, Jerusalem, 1984); Muhammad Ibshirly and Muhammad Dawud Al-Tamimi, *Awqaf wa Amlak Al-Muslimin fi Filistin*, (Centre for Researches in Islamic History, Arts and Culture, Istanbul, 1982), which contains an investigation and presentation of one of the land registers in the Ottoman state in which all the Muslims' waqfs and properties in the five provinces of Palestine: (Jerusalem, Gaza, Safad, Nablus and 'Ajlun) were registered. These had been kept in Turkey since the tenth century AH (the sixteenth century AD), that is, since the Ottoman conquest of Palestine in 922 AH (1516 AD) in the time of Sultan Selim I, in the Ottoman Records House of the Turkish Prime Minister's office in Istanbul. See, also, Najm Al-Din Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Al-Ghayti, *Al-Jawab al-Qawim 'an al-Su'al al-Mut'alliq bi Iqta' al-Sayyid Yamim* (investigation by Hasan 'Abd Al-Rahman Al-Silwadi) (Islamic Research Centre, Jerusalem. 1986), pp. 44-45.
21. Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, "The conceptual approach of the Muslim Brothers towards the Islamic Umma", unpublished paper.
22. See the names of some of the Prophet's companions who entered Jerusalem in: 'Arif Al-'Arif, *Al Mufasssal fi Tarikh Al-Quds*, Part One (Al-Andalus Library, Jerusalem, Shawwal 1380/April 1961), pp. 95-100; Mujir Al-Din Al-Hanbali, *Al-Uns Al-Jalil bi Tarikh Al-Quds wal-Khalil*, Part One, (Al-Muhtasib Bookshop, Amman, 1973), pp. 260-267. The number of those who entered Jerusalem with 'Umar is estimated at about 4,000 companions.
23. The Prophet Muhammad told Shaddad Ibn Aws: "Syria will be conquered, and Jerusalem will be conquered, and you and your offspring will be Imams there if God wills."
24. See the names of some of the leading followers, scholars and ascetics who settled in Jerusalem in: 'Arif Al-'Arif, op. cit., pp. 102-104; Mujir Al-Din Al-Hanbali, op. cit., pp. 285-302.
25. See Muhammad Nasir Al-Din Al-Albani, *Takhrij Ahadith Fada'il Al-Sham*. p. 69.
26. Palestine Times, November 1996, p. 16.

POETRY

THE FOOD OF THE SPIRIT

PRAYER

O God who art without peer, show favour! Since Thou hast bestowed on (our) ear this discourse as an ear-ring,

Take hold of our ear and draw us along to the assembly where the joyous revellers drink of Thy wine.

Forasmuch as Thou hast caused a waft of its perfume to reach us, do not stopple the head (mouth) of that wine-skin, O Lord of the Judgement!

Whether they are male or female, they (all Thy creatures) drink from Thee: O Thou whose help is besought, Thou art stintless in giving.

O Thou by whom the unspoken prayer is answered, who bestowest at every moment a hundred bounties on the heart,

Thou hast limned some letters of writing: rocks have become (soft) as wax for love of them.

Thou hast scribed the *nūn* of the eyebrow, the *sād* of the eye, and the *jīm* of the ear as a distraction to a hundred minds and understandings.

By those letters of Thine the intellect is made to weave subtle coils (of perplexity): write on, O accomplished Calligrapher!

At each moment Thou shapest beautifully pictured forms of phantasy, suitable to every thought, upon (the page of) non-existence.

On the tablet of phantasy Thou inscribest wondrous letters-eye and profile and cheek and mole.

I am drunken with desire for non-existence, not for the existent, because the Beloved of (the world of) non-existence is more faithful

He (God) made the intellect a reader of those figured characters, that thereby He might put an end to its contrivances.

From: Mathinawi, Book V

KITCHEN TALK

HARIRA (Moroccan Soup)

Ingredients:

350g or (3/4 lb.) Lamb cut into 6 mm or (1/4") cubes
 1 Spanish onion peeled & coarsely grated
 1 medium can tomato puree
 225g or (1/2 lb) lentils soaked overnight and drained
 225g or (1/2 lb.) chick peas soaked overnight and drained
 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
 1/2 tsp. powdered ginger
 1/4-1/2 tsp. powdered cinnamon
 1 packet saffron or (heaped 1/2 tsp. powdered saffron)
 chicken stock or (2 chicken bouillon cubes, crumbled)
 100g or (1/4 lb.) rice + salt to taste
 50g or (2 oz.) flour mixed to smooth paste with water
 3 tblsp. chopped fresh green coriander
 3 tblsp. chopped flat-leafed (Italian) parsley
 2 eggs beaten
 1 lemon quarters

Method

1. To prepare broth in a large saucepan or casserole combine all the ingredients up to end including 1.5 litres or (2 1/2pt.) water.
2. Bring to the boil skimming all broth from the surface as water begins to bubble then turn down heat and simmer soup for 1 1/2 hours adding a little more water from time to time as necessary.
3. To prepare rice bring 900ml or 1 1/2 pints water to the boil in a saucepan; add rice and salt to taste. Cook rice in the usual manner until tender but not mushy. Drain rice reserving liquid and add cooked rice to soup.
4. To finish soup dilute flour paste with a little of the reserved rice liquid in a small saucepan and stir in chopped coriander and parsley. Simmer, stirring from time to time for 15 minutes then add to soup. Whisk in beaten eggs, seasoning, and simmer immediately with lemon quarters. Guests squeeze a little lemon juice to taste into each serving.

Serve 6-8.

Swadeka Ahsun



EID UL FITR DINNER

OUR ANNUAL EID DINNER
WILL BE HELD ON

SUNDAY
16th March 1997

at

THE
ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE
146 PARK ROAD
LONDON NW8 7RG

TIME
6.30 pm for 7 pm

MWA BUSINESS - December 1996

MINUTES OF MWA MONTHLY MEETING

The M.W.A. monthly meeting was held on the second Sunday in December (8.12.96). The meeting was held in the Committee Room after Maghrib. The meeting was opened by a recitation of the Quran Sura Asra.

Mrs. Khanam Hassan, the President, introduced Dr. Abdul Al Awaisi, Lecturer in Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Sterling. Dr. Awaisi gave a speech on "The significance of Jerusalem in Islam". Mohsin Khilby presented a slide show to accompany the talk. In all 58 people were present to hear the informative speech, which was then followed by question time. Dr. Zubeida Osman gave a vote of thanks. Tea was then served.

There will be no meeting in January or February 1997 because of Ramadan and Eid. The next meeting will be on the second Sunday in March, 9.3.97.

EID MUBARAK TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

From, Shirin Hasan, Membership Secretary

MWA NEWS

Congratulations to our Secretary, Nabila Saeed, on the birth of her baby daughter. May Allah Bless the baby and her parents and family.

Our heartfelt condolences to our member, Mrs. Shakir, on the passing of her husband. May Allah Almighty have mercy on him and give the courage to bear their loss.

We are very sad to hear of the death of the mother of Farida Ahmed (our member). May Allah Bless her soul.

All our best wishes go to Mrs. Shakir for a speedy recovery as she has not been very well recently.

Congratulations to Nazia Shaikh one of our life members and her daughter Khadijah, who has got a place at Cambridge University.