

Where Is The Exact Location Of Bayt Al-Muqaddas And Masjid Al-Aqsa

Exact Location Of Bayt Al-Muqaddas & Masjid Al-Aqsa - Islamic Queries 13



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**Translated by
Saleem Bhimji**

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Where is the exact location of Bayt al-Muqaddas and Masjid al-Aqsa

Answer Provided By

The Porch of Wisdom Institute

Under The Guidance Of **Ayatullah Shaykh Hadavi Tehrani**

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Question

Where is Jerusalem – known in Arabic as *Bayt al-Maqdas* (also pronounced *Bayt al-Muqaddas*); and what is the Furthest Mosque – known in Arabic as *Masjid al-Aqsa*?

Brief Answer

The city of Jerusalem, which was known as Urshalim (أورشليم) and Iliya (إيليا) before the dawn of Islam, is one of those cities which Islam, Christianity, and Judaism all recognize as holding special significance.

There is a hill in this city called the Mount of Moriah – known in Arabic as Muriyya (مريّا) – and a fence was erected in the upper area of this Mount. The Muslims refer to that entire area as the Holy Sanctuary – *al-Haram al-Sharif* – and can be seen in the following image outlined in red (in Figure 1a and 1b):

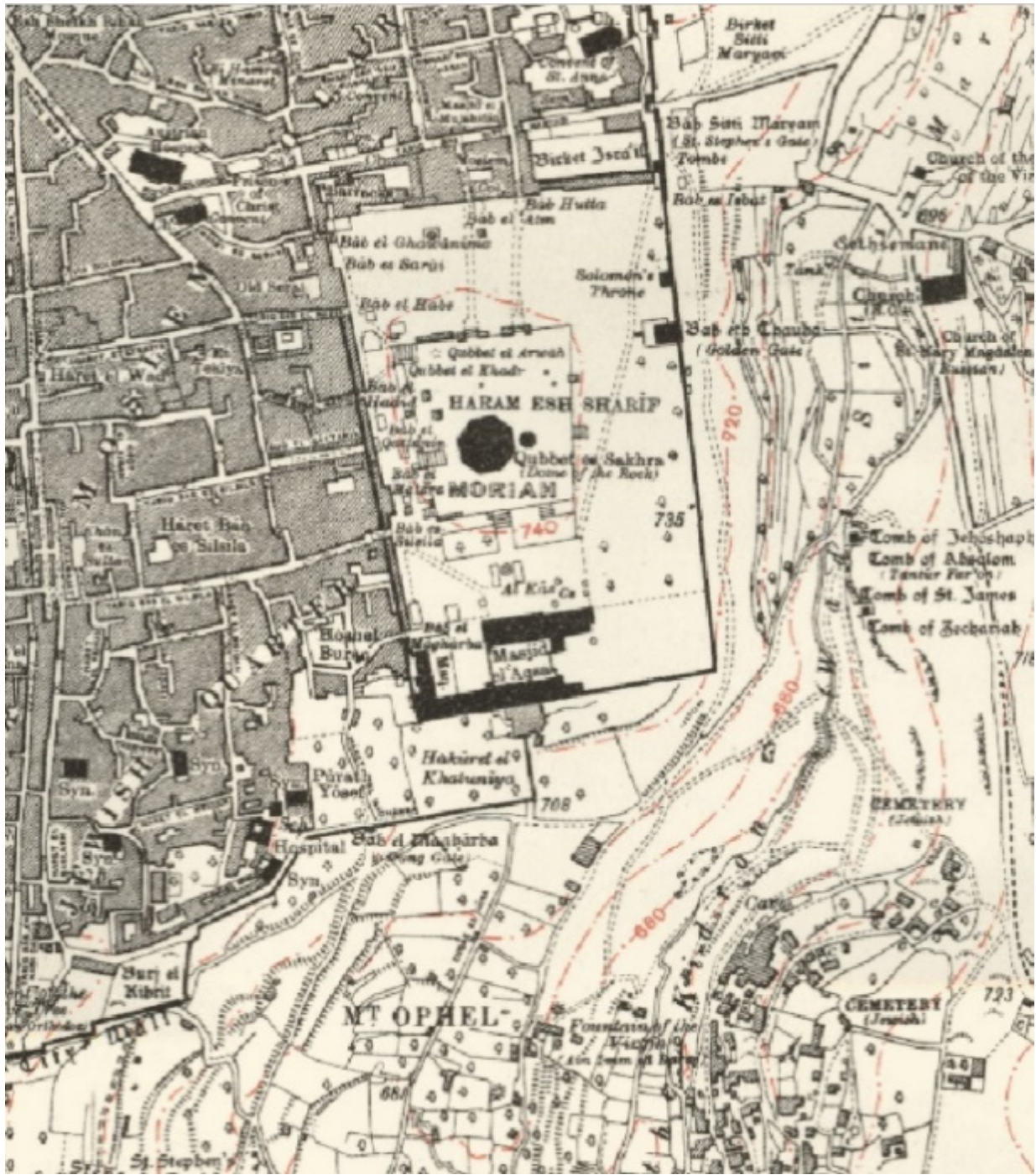


Figure 1a1

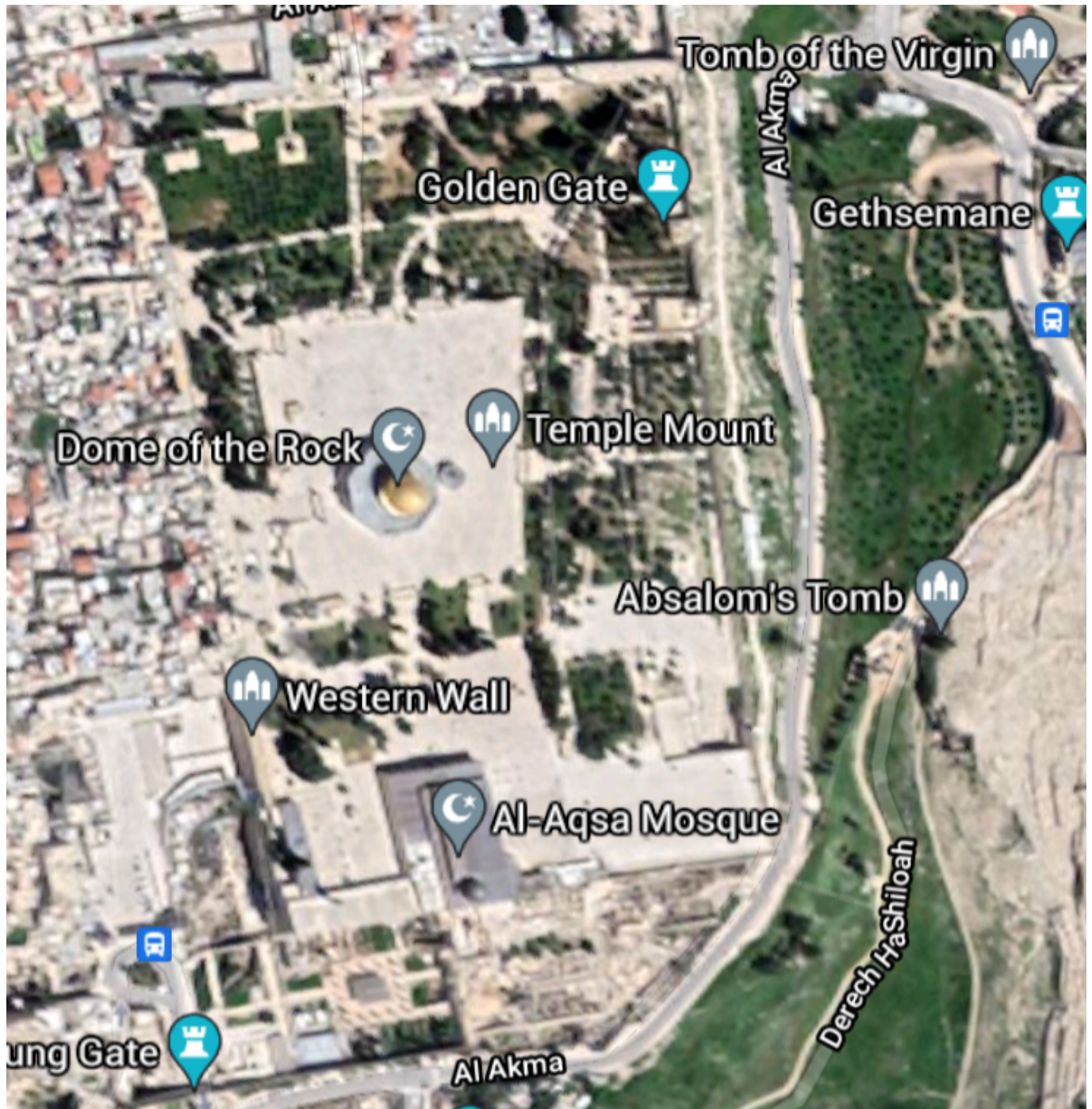


Figure 2b2

This entire Holy Sanctuary has many pilgrimage (*ziyarah*) sites, and according to the religious evidences, this whole area is that same section referred to as *Masjid al-Aqsa* in the Quran.

It should be noted that there is a *masjid* in this enclosure which is named *Masjid al-Aqsa*, however the *Masjid al-Aqsa* mentioned in the Quran which was the first *qiblah* of the Muslims, and which Allah (SwT) has said in the Quran that He has blessed that area³ is a reference to the entire *Al-Haram al-Sharif* area and **not** the *masjid* which presently stands in that location today. Undoubtedly in Islam, Jerusalem is mentioned as a holy place and there are various verses of the Quran which relate to that city, including the verse of the Quran in regards to the miraculous Night Journey (*Me^{er}aj*) of Prophet Muhammad (S),⁴ as well as verses which speak about the change in the *qiblah*⁵ of the Muslims once

they moved to Medina, in addition to the numerous narrations (*ahadith*) on the virtue of this area which we will refer to in the detailed answer below.

Detailed Answer

The city of Jerusalem, even before the coming of Islam, was known by various names such as Urshalim (أورشليم) and Iliya (إيليا), and it is a city which Islam, Christianity, and Judaism give a special sanctity to.

There is a hill in this city which is known as the Mount of Moriah (مريّا), and a fence has been erected in the upper area of this Mount, and Muslims refer to that entire fenced-area as the Holy Sanctuary – *al-Haram al-Sharif* (as seen in Figure 1a and 1b).

This area has many places of religious pilgrimage (*ziyarah*), some which are more important than others, and in this article we will highlight those which are the most sacred parts of the city for Muslims [although there is much more history in this city which we will not speak about in this article].

In the southwestern part of the Holy Sanctuary, there is a Wall made of large stones which is very sacred to the Jews. They believe that this Wall is the only remains of the temple of Prophet Sulayman (Solomon) (‘a). This place is open to visitors all of the time, and the Jews pray and mourn next to it, and for this reason they refer to it as **The Wailing Wall** – referred to in Arabic is referred to as *Haḥit al-Mubakka* (حائط المبكى) – or **The Western Wall** – referred to in Arabic is referred to as *Haḥit al-Gharbi* (حائط الغربي).

Within the Islamic tradition, it is reported that on the night of the miraculous heavenly ascension, the *Meḥraj*, Prophet Muhammad (S) let his steed, *al-Buraq*, rest here – and for this reason, some people also refer to it as The Buraq Wall – *Haḥit al-Buraq* (حائط البراق). However, we have not been able to find any proof for this attribution in the Islamic traditions (*ahadith*). Indeed, the only thing we have seen in regards to Prophet Muhammad (S) and his interaction with *al-Buraq* on the *Meḥraj* is where it has been noted that: “The Prophet himself tied *al-Buraq* to a ring which the Prophets of the past tied their animals to (in order to keep them from wandering away).”⁶

In any case, this particular Wall holds more significance to the Jews than the Muslims, and as such, the Jews consider this place very sacred and valuable.

The image of the Wailing Wall can be seen below, marked in red:



Figure 37

However, Christians consider another place in Jerusalem, referred to as the Church of the Resurrection – referred to in Arabic as *Kanisa al-Qiyamah* (كنيسة القيامة) or the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (كنيسة القبر المقدس) – to be the holiest place in the city for them, and it is where Christians believe that Jesus was crucified and ascended to heaven, an image of which is below:



Figure 49

Now, in order to clarify the Muslim pilgrimage areas on the Mount of Moriah, we will examine the different sections of it individually.



Figure 510

The Holy Sanctuary: *Al-Haram al-Sharif*

As noted previously, a fence had been erected in the upper area of the Mount of Moriah, and that entire fenced–area is referred to by Muslims as *al-Haram al-Sharif* (indicated in the yellow–boxed in area on the image above).

This shrine–area has many areas of pilgrimage (*ziyarah*), and according to the evidence that will be mentioned later, this entire shrine–area complex is the same *Masjid al-Aqsa* mentioned in the Noble Quran in Surah al-Isra^ق (17).

There is a *masjid* in this area which is also called *Masjid al-Aqsa*, however according to the religious proofs available, the *Masjid al-Aqsa* mentioned in the Quran which happens to be the first *qiblah* for the Muslims about which Allah (SwT) said: “We have blessed its precincts...”¹¹ is a reference to the entire area on the Mount of Moriah, and **not** the building which is called *Masjid al-Aqsa*.¹²

There are other opinions which state that the *masjid*, which is currently in that location, is the **actual** *Masjid al-Aqsa* which is spoken about in the Quran¹³. However we feel that there is ample evidence to

debunk this opinion:

The building which is now known as *Masjid al-Aqsa* and is within the walls of the Holy Sanctuary (*al-Haram al-Sharif*) was built **after** the coming of Islam, and many years after the death of Prophet Muhammad (S). Before the advent of Prophet Muhammad (S) and his miraculous night ascension (*Me'raj*), there was no building on this land which bore this name – neither in the early years of Islam, nor during the 63 year-life of Prophet Muhammad (S). Historical references clearly show that the present *masjid* which is on that land was ordered to be built by the Caliph, [Abd al-Malik Marwan](#).¹⁴ Therefore, the meaning of *Masjid al-Aqsa* in the Quran cannot be considered as the present building, as it had no external existence at the time of revelation of the Quran.

Some commentators of the Quran have explained that the phrase *Masjid al-Aqsa* found in Surah al-Isra¹⁵ actually refers to Jerusalem – Bayt al-Maqdas¹⁵ – the entire city. In pre-Islamic literature, Jerusalem referred to the site of the Temple of Prophet Sulayman ('a) at the top of the Mount of Moriah, and as we previously mentioned, today there is a Wall in the western part of the Holy Shrine referred to as the Wailing Wall or Western Wall, which the Jews believe is all that remains from the Temple of Prophet Sulayman ('a). Thus, Jerusalem is a larger area than what is now regarded as *Masjid al-Aqsa*, and therefore Jerusalem cannot be considered as being limited to the place which is today called *Masjid al-Aqsa*. Rather, the meaning of *Masjid al-Aqsa* as stated in the Quran is the entire city of Jerusalem which is referred to today as *al-Haram al-Sharif*.

The Holy Shrine (*al-Haram al-Sharif*) is the entire walled compound area that can be seen in the photo below – highlighted in red:



Figure 616

The Furthest Mosque: *Masjid al-Aqsa*

In the southern part of the Holy Shrine, there is a physical building which is known as *Masjid al-Aqsa*. This *masjid* is covered with an greenish-coloured dome, and is interesting in terms of its building architecture. This *masjid* was built under the directive of the Caliph, ﷺ Abd al-Malik Marwan, and over time, this building suffered serious damage, and was rebuilt in different periods.¹⁷ But as mentioned, this place, although it bears the name of *Masjid al-Aqsa*, is by no means the actual and entire *Masjid al-Aqsa* which the Quran speaks about. Rather, the land that the current *masjid* occupies, which was built by the orders of ﷺ Abd al-Malik Marwan, is merely a portion of the actual *Masjid al-Aqsa* which is considered sacred in Islam.



Figure 718

The Dome of the Rock: *Qubba al-Sakhra*

At the top of the Mount of Moriah, there is a rock on which a building – a *masjid* – was constructed. This rock is the highest point of the mountain, and some historical sources state that Prophet Muhammad (S) ascended from this rock into the heaven on his miraculous *Meʿraj*.¹⁹

Next to this rock, there is a pit a few meters away²⁰ which various historical texts note has been used for different applications in the eras, and even today this pit is still present under the dome of this *masjid*.

The image of this rock which is preserved under the golden dome of the Dome of the Rock *Masjid* can be seen in this photo:



Figure [821](#)

There are rumours which some people have spread about this rock, that at one time it was suspended in the air as a miracle from Allah (SwT).[22](#) This claim is also mentioned in some books, however we did not find any reliable text to confirm this.

In any case, a building was constructed over this rock, which is an octagonal-shaped building with a golden dome, and is usually shown in the mainstream media and (mis)named as *Masjid al-Aqsa*. This building was also constructed under the orders of ٱAbd al-Malik Marwan.[23](#)

In the photo below, you can see *Masjid al-Aqsa* – the Furthest Mosque (on the far left of the image), the *Qubba al-Sakhrah* – the Dome of the Rock (in the centre of the image), as well as the entire Holy Shrine complex – *al-Haram al-Sharif* outlined in red.



Figure [924](#)

It should be noted that during the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem, which took place peacefully between the two opposing sides, the second caliph, ʿUmar ibn al-Khattab, entered Jerusalem and prayed in a part of the shrine where a *masjid* was later built.[25](#)

Of course, it is not clear in which area he performed his prayers, however, history describes this incident as follows: “The second caliph, ʿUmar, came to conquer Jerusalem, and when he saw a large rock present in that area, he questioned as to what that area was. He was told that it was being used as a garbage dump. He removed the garbage and ordered that a *masjid* be built in that area.”[26](#)

Now, considering that in the historical narrations, in addition to the rock that was mentioned, the whole Mount of Moriah has also been referred to as ‘the rock,’ it makes it all the more challenging to understand the narration, and as such it is not possible to determine the exact location of the *masjid*.

With that said, we lean more towards the interpretation that such a historical narration refers to the actual rock that is under the golden dome of the *masjid*, which currently stands on that site. This is a *masjid* which is commonly known as the *Masjid* of ʿUmar (ibn al-Khattab) – and it is also known as the Dome of the Rock. However, the historical references fail to state this explicitly. What is certain is that both buildings – the present-day *Masjid al-Aqsa* and *Qubbah al-Sakhra* – were both built well after the birth of Islam, during the rule of ʿAbd al-Malik Marwan.[27](#)

At the time of the revelation of the Quranic verse, which speaks about a *masjid* – a word that literally

means a place of worship, not necessarily a physical building – in a region where there was no such building there, means that the place that today is called *Masjid al-Aqsa* **cannot** be considered the place which the Quran referred to as *Masjid al-Aqsa* in Surah al-Isra^٥ which is Chapter 17.

Verses and Narrations about Jerusalem

It is certain that *Masjid al-Aqsa* which Islam spoke about is a sacred place, and there are verses (*ayat*) of the Quran in regards to it, such as the verse of the miraculous night ascension (*Me^٥raj*) of Prophet Muhammad (S)²⁸ and the verses of the Quran in regards to the changing of the *qiblah*²⁹ which all refer to this sanctified region.

In addition, there are also *ahadith* which speak about the virtues of the actual *Masjid al-Aqsa* – which as we said is **NOT** the current building on that sacred site which was constructed by ^٥Abd al-Malik Marwan.

For example, Prophet Mu^٥hammad (S) has been quoted as saying: “Indeed, Allah has chosen four cities, just as He said (in the Quran): ‘I take an oath by the fig (*al-tin*), and the olive (*al-zaytun*), and the Mountain of Sinai (*tur sinin*), and this secure city (*al-balad al-amin*)’³⁰ – and the meaning of the ‘fig’ is the city of Medina; the ‘olive’ is Jerusalem; the ‘Mountain of Sinai’ is the city of Kufa; and this ‘secure city’ is Mecca.”³¹

In addition, there is a *hadith* reported from Imam ^٥Ali (‘a) in which he has been quoted as saying: “There are four heavenly palaces in this world: Masjid al-Haram (Mecca); Masjid al-Nabi (Medina), Bayt al-Maqdas (Jerusalem) and Masjid al-Kufa.”³²

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (‘a) has been quoted as saying: “The (recitation of an) obligatory prayer in Masjid al-Haram, Masjid al-Nabi, Bayt al-Maqdas, and Masjid al-Kufa is equal to the reward of one *haji*, and the superogatory prayers (performed) in these *masajid* is equal to the reward of one ^٥umrah.”³³

Textual Forgeries of the Umayyads

Ever since the region of Sham³⁴ came into the hands of the Umayyads, they sought to gain prestige for themselves and their territory of rule, therefore they fabricated many *ahadith* in this regards.

Among the forgeries was to elevate the status of the sanctuaries in Jerusalem – whose importance was already known in Islam for reasons previously mentioned – however the Bani Umayyah took it to a whole other level. The Umayyads and the Banu Marwan caliphs tried to exaggerate the importance of this region by fabricating various *ahadith* about Jerusalem and its spiritual merits.

On the other hand, the twelve Imams of the Shi^٥as – the true successors of Prophet Muhammad (S) and the actual protectors of the faith of Islam – tried their best to combat these false narrations as much

as they could. In one narration which we quote here, the forgery and the fight against it can clearly be seen.

Zurara³⁵ said: “I was seated beside Abu Jaʿfar [Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (‘a)] while he was in the position of *mohtab* (sitting on the ground covered, with his arms locked around his knees) facing towards the *Kaʿbah*. He said: ‘Looking at the *Kaʿbah* is (an act of) worship.’

A man from Bajila called Asim ibn ʿUmar came over and said to Abu Jaʿfar: ‘Kaʿab al-Ahbar³⁶ says that the *Kaʿbah* prostrates to *Bayt al-Maqdas* every morning.’

Abu Jaʿfar said: ‘So what do you think about what Kaʿab says?’

He replied: ‘He speaks the truth. The word (going around) is what Kaʿab has said.’

Abu Jaʿfar exclaimed: ‘You lie, and Kaʿab al-Ahbar is also lying along with you,’ and (the Imam) was angered.”

Zurara then continued: “I had not ever seen him [Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (‘a)] look someone in the face and say to him: ‘You have lied!’ apart from this instance. Then he (the Imam (‘a)) said: ‘Allah, Mighty and Majestic, has not created a spot in the Earth more beloved to Him, than this,’ and he gestured with his hand towards the *Kaʿbah* (and went on to say): ‘Nor is anything more prestigious to Allah, Mighty and Majestic, than it. For it, Allah sanctified the months in His Book [the Quran] the day that He created the skies and the Earth. Three [of these months] are consecutive [and are use to perform] the *hajj* – Shawwal³⁷, Dhuʿl Qaʿdah, Dhuʿl Hijjah, and Muharram; and one month is separate from these [for the performance of] *ʿumrah*, and it is Rajab.’”³⁸

[Al-Quds \(Jerusalem\) is a Political Issue](#)

So far, we have spoken about the religious significance of Jerusalem – albeit in brief but we must add that this city also holds great political importance.

This *masjid* is perhaps the only significant *masjid* in the world which has been in the hands of non-Muslims for many years, and is probably the only *masjid* which non-Muslims have claimed as their own.

This conflict started from the time of the Crusades and continues up until this day, and Muslims, Christians, and Jews have all fought for many years to take over this *masjid*, and the land in and around it, and much blood has even been shed along the way. The wars which have taken place throughout the ages have affected many Muslim countries and even continental Europe.

These political conflicts have caused Jerusalem to multiply in its importance and value, and has become a concern for the entire Muslim world. Therefore, in analyzing the position of Jerusalem, serious attention should be paid to its political status and importance – not only the religious significance which it holds.

O Allah! Send Your prayers upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad!

1. By Ordnance Survey Offices, Southampton, 1926 – Jerusalem map, scale 1:10,000 1st edition, Survey of Palestine, Jaffa, August 1925, Ordnance Survey Offices, Southampton, 1926., CC0,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=52214859> [11]

2. From Google Maps:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Jerusalem,+Israel/>

[12]@31.7776708,35.2356222,795m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x1502d7d634c1fc4b:0xd96f623e456ee1cb!8m2!3d31.768319!4d35.21371

3. Quran, Surah al-Isra:

سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِيْ اَسْرٰى بِعَبْدِهٖۙ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِۙ اِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْاَقْصَا الَّذِي بَرَكْنَا حَوْلَهٗۙ لِنُرِيْهُۙ مِنْۢ مِّنْۢ مَّآبِنِنَاۙۚ اِنَّهٗۙ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْبَصِيْرُ

All-Glorified is He [Allah (SwT)] Who took His servant [Prophet Muhammad (S)] for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque (al-Masjid al-Haram) to the Farthest Mosque (al-Masjid al-Aqsa), the environs of which We have blessed, so that We might show him some of Our signs [of the truths concerning Our Divinity and Lordship]. Surely He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. (17:1).

4. Ibid.

5. Quran, Surah al-Baqarah:

قَدْۤ نَرٰى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضٰهَاۙ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِۙ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْۙ فَوَلُّوْا وُجُوْهُكُمْۙ شَطْرَهٗۙۚ وَاِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوْا الْكِتٰبَ لَيَعْلَمُوْنَۙ اَنَّهُۥ الَّذِىۙ هُوَ الْحَقُّۙ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْۙۚ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَفْلٍ عَمَّاۙ يَفْعَلُوْنَ

Certainly We have seen you [O Prophet Muhammad (S)] often turning your face to heaven. [Do not worry, for] We will surely turn you towards a direction (qiblah) that you will be pleased [and satisfied]. So [now the time has come], turn your face towards the Sacred Mosque (al-Masjid al-Haram). [And you O believers] turn your faces towards it wherever you are. Surely those who were given the Book know well [the coming of this Prophet and this change of qiblah] to be true [commandments] from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware [or unmindful] of what they do. (2:144).

6. Ibn al-Athir, Izz al-Din Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Abi al-Karam, Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh, Vol. 2, P. 52.

7. Image from: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/Westernwall2.jpg> [13]

8. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is a church in the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. According to traditions dating back to the fourth century, it contains the two holiest sites in Christianity: the site where Jesus was crucified at a place known as Calvary or Golgotha, and Jesus's empty tomb where he is believed by Christians to have been buried and resurrected. The tomb is enclosed by a 19th century shrine called the Aedicula. The Status Quo, an understanding between religious communities dating to 1757, applies to this site.

9. Image from:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/01/The_Church_of_the_Ho... [14]

10. Screen shot taken from Google Maps – last accessed on May 26, 2021.

11. Quran, Surah al-Isra:

سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِيْ اَسْرٰى بِعَبْدِهٖۙ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِۙ اِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْاَقْصَا الَّذِي بَرَكْنَا حَوْلَهٗۙ لِنُرِيْهُۙ مِنْۢ مِّنْۢ مَّآبِنِنَاۙۚ اِنَّهٗۙ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْبَصِيْرُ

All-Glorified is He Who took His servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque, the surroundings of which We have blessed, so that We might show him some of Our signs [about the truths concerning Our Divinity and Lordship]. Surely He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. (17:1).

12. Muhammad Hasan Sharab, Al-Ma'alim al-Athirah, P. 84.

13. Quran, Surah al-Isra:

سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِيْ اَسْرٰى بِعَبْدِهٖۙ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِۙ اِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْاَقْصَا الَّذِي بَرَكْنَا حَوْلَهٗۙ لِنُرِيْهُۙ مِنْۢ مِّنْۢ مَّآبِنِنَاۙۚ اِنَّهٗۙ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْبَصِيْرُ

All-Glorified is He Who took His servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque, the surroundings of which We have blessed, so that We might show him some of Our signs [about the truths concerning Our Divinity and Lordship]. Surely He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. (17:1).

14. [Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan](#) (b. 26/646 – d. 86/705) was the fifth Umayyad caliph who came to power in 65/684–85, after the death of his father, Marwan ibn al-Hakam; and ruled for 21 years.

15. [Tabataba'i](#), Sayyid Muhammad Husayn, *Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Quran*, Vol. 13, P. 6.

16. Image from:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/91/Temple_Mount_%28Aeri... [15]

17. The building of Masjid al-Aqsa was repaired and reconstructed in different periods by different dynasties, including the [Abbasids](#), [Fatimids](#), [Ayyubids](#), and [Ottomans](#). The [Abbasid Caliphs](#), [Mansur al-Dawaniqi](#) (reign: 136 ah–158 ah), and [Mahdi al-Abbasi](#) (reign: 126 ah – 169 ah), repaired and reconstructed the building after it was damaged by an earthquake. Moreover, as implied by an inscription, a dome was built for Masjid al-Aqsa in 426 ah by the [Fatimid Caliph](#), [al-Zahir li-Izzaz Dinillah](#). In 458 ah, the northern courtyard of the masjid was reconstructed at the command of [al-Mustansir li-Dinillah](#). In 1099 ce, the [Crusaders](#) conquered Jerusalem and built a church in one part of the masjid, and transformed the other part into a resting place for the cavalry, and a storage for their provisions. In 1187 ce, [Salah al-Din Ayyubi](#) reclaimed Jerusalem from the [Crusaders](#), reconstructed the masjid, tiled its dome, and placed a wooden minbar in it. Later on, the [Mamluks](#) and [Ottomans](#) also contributed to the reconstruction of the masjid.

18. Image from:

<https://i2.wp.com/jewishvoiceforpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/tem...> [16]

19. [Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh](#), Vol. 2, P. 52.

20. [Ibn Batutah](#), [Shams al-Din Abi Abdillah Muhammad ibn Abdillah al-Lawati al-Tunji](#), [Rihlah ibn Batutah](#), Vol. 1, P. 96.

21. Image from:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dome_of_the_Rock#/media/File:Foundation_st... [17](2018)_3.jpg

22. This statement was mentioned in the [Travel Journal of Nasir Khusruw](#) and is normally narrated as being mentioned by him, however he relates this event in his travel journal from another individual. See: [Safarnameh Nasir Khusruw](#), P. 52.

23. [Al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah](#), Vol. 8, P. 280.

24. Image from:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/91/Temple_Mount_%28Aeri... [15]

25. [Al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah](#), Vol. 7, P. 56.

26. [Ibn Khaldun](#), [Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn Khaldun](#), [Tarikh Ibn Khaldun](#), Vol. 1, P. 443.

27. [Al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah](#), Vol. 8, P. 280.

28. [Quran](#), [Surah al-Isra](#), 17:1.

29. [Quran](#), [Surah al-Baqarah](#), 2:42.

30. [Quran](#), [Surah al-Tin](#), 95:1–3:

وَالَّتَيْنِ وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا فِيهَا مَنَاجِزَ الْعَالَمِينَ ۗ وَهَذَا الْبَلَدُ الْأَمِينُ ۗ

31. [Hurr al-Amili](#), [Muhammad ibn Hasan](#), [Tafsil Wasa'il al-Shi'a ila Tahsil Masa'il al-Shari'ah](#), Vol. 14, P. 361. The Arabic of this tradition is as follows:

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَلِيِّ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ فِي مَعَانِي الْأَخْبَارِ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَحْيَى عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ خَالِدٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الرَّازِيِّ عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي عُثْمَانَ عَنْ مُوسَى بْنِ بَكْرِ عَنْ أَبِي الْحَسَنِ مُوسَى بْنِ جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ عَنْ آبَائِهِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ اخْتَارَ مِنَ الْبُلْدَانِ أَرْبَعَةً فَقَالَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَجَلَّ وَالتَّيْنِ وَالتَّيْتُونَ وَطُورِ سَيْنِينَ وَهَذَا الْبَلَدُ الْأَمِينُ الْمَدِينَةُ وَالتَّيْتُونَ بَيْتُ الْمَقْدِسِ وَطُورُ سَيْنِينَ الْكُوفَةُ وَهَذَا الْبَلَدُ الْأَمِينُ مَكَّةُ

32. [Ibid.](#), Vol. 5, P. 283. The Arabic of this tradition is as follows:

الرِّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ آبَائِهِ عَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: أَرْبَعَةٌ مِنْ قُصُورِ الْجَنَّةِ فِي الدُّنْيَا الْمَسْجِدُ الْحَرَامُ وَ الْمَسْجِدُ الرَّسُولِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَ الْمَسْجِدُ الْكُوفَةُ وَ الْمَسْجِدُ بَيْتُ الْمَقْدِسِ وَ الْمَسْجِدُ بَيْتُ الْمَقْدِسِ وَ الْمَسْجِدُ الْكُوفَةُ يَا أَبَا حَمْرَةَ الْفَرِيضَةَ فِيهَا تَعْدُلُ حَجَّةٌ وَ النَّافِلَةُ تَعْدُلُ عُمْرَةٌ

33. [Saduq](#), [Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Babawayah](#), [Man La Yahduruhu al-Faqih](#), Vol. 1, P. 229. The Arabic of this tradition is as follows:

قَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِأَبِي حَمْرَةَ التَّمَالِيِّ الْمَسَاجِدُ الْأَرْبَعَةُ الْمَسْجِدُ الْحَرَامُ وَ الْمَسْجِدُ الرَّسُولِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَ الْمَسْجِدُ بَيْتُ الْمَقْدِسِ وَ الْمَسْجِدُ الْكُوفَةُ يَا أَبَا حَمْرَةَ الْفَرِيضَةَ فِيهَا تَعْدُلُ حَجَّةٌ وَ النَّافِلَةُ تَعْدُلُ عُمْرَةٌ

34. In the most common historical sense, Syria refers to the entire northern Levant, including Alexandretta and the ancient city of Antioch, or in an extended sense the entire Levant as far south as Roman Egypt, but not including Mesopotamia. The area of Greater Syria also called Natural Syria, or the Northern Land (Bilad al-Sham) extends roughly over the Bilad al-Sham province of the medieval Arab caliphates, encompassing the Eastern Mediterranean (or Levant) and Western Mesopotamia. The Muslim conquest of the Levant in the seventh century gave rise to this province, which encompassed much of the region of Syria, and became largely overlapping with this concept. Other sources indicate that the term Greater Syria was coined during the Ottoman rule after 1516, in order to designate the approximate area included in present-day occupied Palestine, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon.

35. Zurara ibn A'ayan ibn Sunsun al-Shaybani al-Kufi (b. c 70 ce/690 ah – d. 150 ce/767 ah) was one of the greatest Shi'a faqihs (jurists) and theologians, and among the close companions of Imam al-Baqir ('a), Imam al-Sadiq ('a), and Imam al-Kazim ('a). Imam al-Sadiq ('a) considered him as one of his greatest companions, stating that: "If it was not for Zurara, the narrations of my father would have perished."

The Imam also gave him good tidings that he would enter Heaven. Zurara was a member of the extended family of A'ayan, and a large number of the members of the A'ayan family were among the companions and followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), and they were transmitters of ahadith and fuqaha'.

36. Ka'ab al-Ahbar (b. 32/652 or 34/654) was a Jewish scholar who converted to Islam in the period of the caliphate of shaykhayn (Abu Bakr and 'Umar). Ka'ab al-Ahbar was a confidant of the second caliph, and propagated many Isra'iliyyat narrations among the Muslims. The companions of the Prophet (S) displayed different positions and behaviours regarding Ka'ab al-Ahbar, however it is important to note that Imam al-Baqir ('a) said that Ka'ab al-Ahbar was a liar, and therefore none of the ahadith which he reported are cited in the four major works of the books of hadith of the Shi'a.

His full name is Ka'ab ibn Mati' al-Himyari al-Yamani, and he is recognized as one of the tabi'in (the generation which came after the companions of Prophet Muhammad). His title (kunya) was Abu Ishaq, and he was a prominent Jewish scholar in Yemen during the Era of Ignorance (Jahiliyyah). According to some historians, he could discern the accuracy or inaccuracy of what was attributed to being in the Bible. In the period of the second caliph, 'Umar, he went to Medina and stayed there, but in the period of the third caliph, 'Uthman ibn al-'Affan, he went to Syria and lived in Homs where he died in 32/652–53[6] or 34/654–55. He was known as Ka'ab al-Ahbar as the word al-Ahbar is the plural form of al-hibr which is used to mean 'a Jewish religious scholar.' Ka'ab al-Ahbar quoted frequently from the Torah, referring to it as the Book of God. Ka'ab al-Ahbar converted to Islam during the caliphate of Abu Bakr or early in the period of the caliphate of 'Umar. According to some sources, Ka'ab al-Ahbar converted to Islam during the Conquest of Jerusalem at the suggestion of the second caliph. 'Abbas ibn 'Abdul Muttalib (the cousin of Prophet Muhammad) asked Ka'ab al-Ahbar: "Why did you not convert to Islam during the life of the Prophet (S) but did so during the caliphate of 'Umar?" Ka'ab al-Ahbar replied: "My father wrote me some notes from the Torah and told me to act upon them. He sealed all of his books and made me promise not to open the seals. When I witnessed the emergence of Islam and saw that it was safe against all troubles, I told myself that my father may have concealed a piece of knowledge from me. Thus, I opened the seals on those books, and I saw the characteristics and features of the Prophet (S) and his people in the books, so then I converted to Islam."

37. Note that this hadith is not saying that Shawwal is one of the four sacred months as by the consensus of Shi'i scholars, the four months are limited to Dhu'l Qa'dah, Dhu'l Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab. Rather, the hadith is saying that Shawwal is one of the four sacred months in which the 'Umrah al-tamattu' is permitted to be performed. In his hajj rites manual, Ayatullah al-Uzma as-Sayyid 'Ali al-Husayni al-Sistani states: "'Umrah al-tamattu' can only be performed during the season of obligatory pilgrimage, namely: Shawwal, Dhu'l Qa'dah and Dhu'l Hijjah, whereas it is permissible to perform the 'Umrah al-Mufradah during all the months of the year, preferably in Rajab."

38. Kulayni, Muhammad ibn Ya'qub ibn Ishaq al-, Al-Kafi, Vol. 4, P. 240. The Arabic of this tradition is as follows:

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ وَ مُحَمَّدٌ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ عَنِ الْفَضْلِ بْنِ شَاذَانَ جَمِيعاً عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ أُذَيْنَةَ عَنْ زُرَّارَةَ قَالَ: كُنْتُ قَاعِداً إِلَى جَنْبِ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَ هُوَ مُحْتَبٍ مُسْتَقْبِلِ الْكَعْبَةِ فَقَالَ: أَمَا إِنَّ النَّظَرَ إِلَيْهَا عِبَادَةٌ. فَجَاءَهُ رَجُلٌ مِنْ بَجِيلَةَ يُقَالُ لَهُ عَاصِمٌ بْنُ عُمَرَ فَقَالَ لِأَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنَّ كَعْبَ الْأَحْبَارِ كَانَ يَقُولُ إِنَّ الْكَعْبَةَ تَسْجُدُ لِبَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ فِي كُلِّ عِدَاةٍ. فَقَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: فَمَا تَقُولُ فِيمَا قَالَ كَعْبٌ؟ فَقَالَ: صَدَقَ الْقَوْلُ مَا قَالَ كَعْبٌ. فَقَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: كَذَبْتَ وَ كَذَبَ كَعْبُ الْأَحْبَارِ مَعَكَ وَ غَضِبَ. قَالَ زُرَّارَةُ: مَا رَأَيْتُهُ اسْتَقْبَلَ أَحَدًا بِقَوْلٍ كَذَبْتَ غَيْرَهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ: مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ بُقْعَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْهَا ثُمَّ أَوْمَأَ بِيَدِهِ نَحْوَ الْكَعْبَةِ وَ لَا أَكْرَمَ عَلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ مِنْهَا لَهَا حَرَمٌ اللَّهُ الْأَشْهُرَ الْحُرْمَ فِي كِتَابِهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضَ ثَلَاثَةَ مِثْوَالِيَّةٍ لِلْحَجِّ - سُؤَالَ وَ ذُو الْقَعْدَةِ وَ ذُو الْحِجَّةِ وَ شَهْرٌ مُفْرَدٌ لِلْعُمْرَةِ وَ هُوَ رَجَبٌ.

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