

Palestine Lives...

The Agony of Jerusalem-A Muslim City Being Judaized

April 22, 2011

by Ismail Zayid

O' Ye Jerusalem.

*Ten measures of beauty came into the world,
Jerusalem took nine and the rest of the world one.*

There are ten measures of suffering in the world.

Nine in Jerusalem and one in the rest of the world.

These are words which are framed in the entrance to an old orphanage in Arab Jerusalem, depicting two outstanding characteristics that remained, throughout history, closely associated with the holy city.

Today, thanks to brutal Zionist occupation, little is left of the beauty, the magnificence of which is being callously obliterated by a process of flagrant vulgar Judaization. Its sanctity is similarly being defiled and desecrated. As to the suffering, Jerusalem's share abounds and its people are today ruthlessly subjected and brutalized, meeting limitless suffering and pain.



This is the Jerusalem that we are talking about. Let us first look at its heritage as a Muslim City and its place in Islamic history before we look at the nature of this present arrogant Zionist occupation.

Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities of the world. Its history goes back at least 4000 years and its religious significance dates from the Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh) in the 19th. century before Christ. The city with its historical and religious roots has left its marks on the spiritual and political lives of man throughout history, and history, in turn, has left its mark on Jerusalem.

The city has known many rules and experienced many invasions. More often than not, it has been an object of emulation and veneration rather than mere annexation. Its conquerors, except the present ones, overwhelmed by its magnificence, tended to identify themselves with the city rather than the city with themselves. Of all its pages, the history of Jerusalem has none more glorious than that of its first and second triumphant and dignified conquest by Islam in the 7th and 12th centuries A.D. Contrasted with this, none is blacker and more barbarous than its occupation first by the European Crusaders in 11th century and then by Zionist Crusaders in the 20th century A.D.

When in 638 A.D. the Caliph 'Omar Ibn-al-Khattab accepted in person the capitulation of Jerusalem, the city had been for centuries first Roman and then Byzantine in character. Exactly five centuries earlier, the Roman Emperor, Hadrian, obliterated the last vestiges of Jewish life in the city. The city was ploughed up and in its place rose the Roman City of Aelia and the Jews were forbidden, under pain of death, to enter it.

In 614 A.D. Persians, welcomed and assisted by the Jews, captured Jerusalem and massacred thousands of its Christian inhabitants. Seven years later Heraclius drove the invaders out and wreaked vengeance on the Jews.

Meanwhile in Mecca, Sayyidna Muhammad (peace be upon him) was preaching the new faith of Islam, a faith in which Jerusalem had a special place and veneration. The Byzantine defeat was specifically mentioned in the divine revelation with a forecast of their later triumph!

"The Roman Empire has been defeated in a land close by, but they, (even) after (this) defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious" (Sura XXX:1-2)

More important is the specific and fundamental mention of Jerusalem as the first Qibla of Islam.

It was also the site of the Prophet's "Nocturnal Journey" and ascension therefrom to Heaven:

"Glory to God, who did take His servant for a journey by night from the sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque, whose precincts we did bless, in order that We might show him some of Our signs. For He is the one who hears and sees all things." (Sura XV11:verse 1)

Such was the significance of Jerusalem and its place of respect that, after its prolonged siege by the Muslim army, Patriarch Sophorius offered to surrender it only to the Caliph Omar. Mindful of Jerusalem's special sanctity in Islam, the Caliph marched and took the city keys from the Patriarch whose splendid vestments contrasted clearly with the dignified simplicity of Omar.

In that age, or any age, the characteristic inherent tolerance of Islam was reflected in the extraordinarily generous and humane terms of surrender:

"In the name of Allah, the merciful and compassionate. This is the Covenant which 'Omar the Servant of Allah, the Commander of the Faithful, granted to the people of Aelia. He granted them safety for their lives, their possessions, their churches, and their crosses. They shall not be constrained in the matter of their religion, nor shall any of them be molested."

This covenant remains to this day a grand example of Islamic tolerance to be envied and sharply contrasted with the behaviour of conquerors in the so-called civilized communities of this 20th-century.

Before leaving Jerusalem, 'Omar identified and cleared the site from which the Prophet (pbuh) ascended to heaven. A makeshift mosque was then erected at the place where the Buraq was tethered (the Buraq Mosque). From this simple beginning to the later erection of great monuments of Muslim architecture, Jerusalem's renowned as one of Islam's holiest cities flourished. Its Roman name was dropped and it

became “al-Bait al-Muqaddas” or simply “al-Quds” (The Holy City) and later “al-Quds al-Sharif” (The Holy and Noble City).

Jerusalem’s association with the Prophet and ‘Omar and its veneration by Islam was reflected in the fact that Muawiyah and other Omayyad Caliphs chose to be proclaimed Caliphs in it. The magnificent buildings of “al-Aqsa Mosque” and the “Dome of the Rock” were erected by Caliph Abdul-Malik Ibn Marwan. This tradition of respect for al-Quds was maintained throughout many Muslim dynasties, including the Abbasids, Mamelukes and Ottoman Caliphs.

Throughout this period, Islam’s tolerance extended to “the People of the Book” allowed visits by Christian and Jewish pilgrims to Jerusalem. In this modern age of intolerance, it is little appreciated that Islam, with characteristic tolerance, did not seek to eliminate its predecessors. Far from practicing suppression, its avowed policy was one of tolerant coexistence.

Al-Aqsa Mosque became a great center of learning, where, right from the beginning, many of the Companions of the Prophet took up residence, taught and were buried there. Al-Ghazzali resided there and prepared his learned discourses. His writings included the “Jerusalem Tract”.

In 1099 AD, the great calamity, second perhaps only to that of 1967 AD, befell Islam with the loss of Jerusalem to the Crusaders. Their barbarity is one of the darkest chapters of human history. They celebrated their victory by indiscriminate massacre of the entire Muslim population of the Holy City, men women and children. The few Jews who had not escaped gathered in a house which was burnt over their heads.

Ninety years later, Salah el-Din liberated the Holy City in 1187 and again showed exemplary Muslim tolerance. To the successors of the so-called “chivalrous” knights, who, according even to their own historians, waded knee-deep in the blood of the Muslim women and children, Salah el-Din guaranteed safety of life and property.

The city was repopulated by the Muslims and in 1193 Salah el-Din’s son al-Afdal built the Magharibah Mosque in the south-western Holy Precincts of al-Aqsa Mosque. The land outside the Magharibah Gate was dedicated as Waqf (Religious Muslim Foundation) for the pilgrims and scholars of North Africa. This area is closely associated with the prophet’s Nocturnal Journey and the gate is also known as the Prophet’s or Buraq’s Gate. Seeing the vandalism of the Crusaders had swept away the graves of some old Muslim heroes, Salah el-Din caused the burial of the heroes of his campaign near the wall of the “Haram al-Sharif”.

Jerusalem continued to receive Muslim attention under the Ottoman Caliphs many of whom forbade Jewish purchase of land in Jerusalem and Palestine, in distinct exception from the entire Empire. It was Sulaiman the Magnificent who gave Jerusalem its present walls and many improvements in the Haram area.

As to Jewish presence, it is of interest to review its nature and development. Omar accepted the request of the Patriarch to exclude Jews from entering the city. In time, however, Muslims allowed them entry

but no communal prayers were allowed until 1475 when the Mameluke Sultan Qaitbai authorized the use of a house as a Synagogue, against the rule of the Jerusalem Judge. In 1831 the Egyptian Administration allowed the presence of a British Consulate, the first of its kind, in Jerusalem which undertook the protection of the Jews, the few of them who resided there. In the meantime the Jews were allowed to visit individually a section of the Western Wall of the Haram, restricting their entry to a narrow path 11 feet wide and 120 sq. yards in total area. In 1839 a cunning attempt was made in an offer by a British Jew to pave this narrow passage which later came to be called the Wailing Place. This was vehemently rejected as the land was Muslim Waqf property.

In 1911 attempts were made by Jews to bring to this place chairs and other articles. The guardian of the Waqf and the authorities rejected that and no sitting by visitors was allowed. In response to Muslim fears, as a result of these, accelerating demands and recent Zionist threats, the British Government in 1922 made the following proclamation:

“I make known to you that every sacred place, building, monument, bequest or customary place of prayer of whatsoever form, of the three religions, will be maintained and protected according to existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faiths they are sacred.”

Attempts by Zionists continued to nullify this British promise to maintain the status quo. They attempted to buy the land around the Western Wall of the Haram and to bribe the Muslim Custodian of the Waqf but to no avail. Herzl was no less open in his Diaries when he promised, if ever the Zionists had the power, to cleanse the city of all relics of other faiths.

Jewish provocation increased and in 1929 a gang of Zionists marched defiantly through the Old City, held public prayers and erected the Zionist flag on the Buraq wall. Clashes between Arabs and Jews and bitter fighting took place. The British Government appointed an International Commission under the Chairmanship of a Swede Eliel Lofgren, which heard claims from Muslims and Jews. In December 1930 the Commission ruled in support of the Status quo concluding:

“The Western Wall was an exclusively Muslim Waqf property and part of a Muslim Holy Place, al-Haram al-Sharif area. The pavement in front of the wall and between it and the Magharibah Quarter was also a Muslim Waqf property and formed part of a legally constituted religious foundation.”

Notwithstanding all this, Zionist plans to encroach upon the precincts of the Noble Sanctuary with the ultimate objective of building the Temple in place of al-Aqsa Mosque Temple.

On May 15, 1948 a massive military onslaught was made to capture the old city by Haganah forces, but this was repulsed by the local Moujaheds and the Jordan Army. Zionist plans did not stop there and preparations for the take-over continued. Weizmann, Israel's first President, said:

“Israel has no meaning without Jerusalem and Jerusalem has no meaning without the Temple.”

The fulfillment of Zionist designs was realized on June 7, 1967, when Israel's army occupied Jerusalem virtually unopposed. The Jordan Government throughout its 20 years rule had dismally neglected the defenses of the Holy City and made no attempt to safeguard it. Despite this, the Zionists in 1967 as in

1948 did not spare the Holy Places and bombs and rockets were showered on al-Haram Sharif causing much damage. It was, however, what took place after occupation that must stir the heart of every Muslim and man of conscience.

No sooner had Israel's army occupied Arab Jerusalem than it began to fulfill long-declared objectives in a clearly premeditated plan of Judaization. On June 11, 1967, 135 houses in the Waqf property of Magharibah Quarter were demolished and bulldozed at 3-hours notice, leaving a large plaza before the Buraq wall. These included the famous Buraq mosque as well as another mosque and many historic places. Terror was accelerated in the city to force the maximum number of Arabs out of it, never to be allowed to return.

On the June 27, 1967, Israel declared formal annexation of Arab Jerusalem, in violation of the 4th Geneva Convention and the Charter of the U.N. and in defiance of the nations of the world. Protests from Muslim and other nations were made, but the Zionists have always worked devotedly to the principle that "Might is Right", and since when have mere protests made any difference to those determined to exploit force? The U.N. General Assembly twice on 4th and 14th July 1967 resolved unanimously the illegality of this annexation and demanded rescinding of these illegal measures. The Security Council similarly and unanimously resolved on May 21, 1968, and July 3, 1969 condemning this annexation. But Israel, now well accustomed to scores of similar resolutions and condemnations, treated the Council no less contemptuously than it had treated the Assembly. In August 1967, further demolition of the remaining buildings around the Haram was carried out. This included many buildings of important Islamic heritage and libraries, all being Waqf property. Protestation by the Supreme Muslim Council in Jerusalem went unanswered, and within days Israeli bulldozers demolished 1400 years of Muslim history in the precincts of the Noble Sanctuary.

Excavations under the Aqsa Mosque soon began, supposedly to investigate traces of the Jewish Temple, further contravening UNESCO rules and every principle of international law, Cracks would appear in historic and other buildings. This is used as pretext for demolition to safeguard the "lives of their inhabitants," or so we are told by their "humane" Zionist conquerors, and so goes on the vicious circle. The objective is clear. Jerusalem must be cleansed of everything Muslim as Herzl promised. After every wave of demolition, Jews go there chanting among the rubble and scaffolding of now extinct Muslim history. Even the mere verbal protests of Arab and Muslim nations have become faint and irrelevant. In 1972, after European protests against the mutilation of the aesthetic beauty of Jerusalem and the erection of ugly buildings on Mount Scopus raised the possibility of slowing down of the excavations, the Grand Rabbi Nissim issued this proclamation:

"City Contractors -where are your Jewish bulldozers and machines which went to work, as they should, on the first night to clear the ground before the wailing wall. The slums (for this is what Herzl called Muslim Jerusalem) must be destroyed without fear or shame and their inhabitants given their marching orders."

The operation has continued.

Simultaneously with this operation of bulldozing Muslim history in the ancient city and evicting its Arab inhabitants and replacing them by Jews, another operation of suffocating encirclement of Arab Jerusalem by new buildings for Jewish immigrants is going on to strangle the Arab city and make it totally Jewish. Thousands of acres of Arab land on Mount Scopus were confiscated and expropriated and with great speed large hideous buildings were erected in a belt around Jerusalem, besmirching the character of the Holy City. These actions raised more protests from inside and outside Israel against the disfigurement of the city. Israel, however, enacted in 1969 its "Greater Jerusalem" project extending the limits of the city to many surrounding Arab towns and planning to inject in it another 900,000 immigrant Jews to secure permanent political and military advantages. The process continues to accelerate and the outside world remains deaf to the suffering of Jerusalem and its Arab people.

Let us now turn to a more alarming aspect of the situation, namely the condition of al-Haram al-Sharif, which is today in real jeopardy. We saw how in the last 100 years an accelerating and cunning encroachment on the Buraq wall gradually increasing from mere visiting, later praying, paving, bringing chairs and now total destruction of everything that surrounds it.

Al-Aqsa Mosque faces today the same threat. In total disregard to the sanctity of the precincts of the Noble Sanctuary, clearly prescribed by codes of all civilized behaviour as specified by the 4th Geneva Convention prohibiting encroachment upon and dictating the integrity of all religious places, the Israelis immediately after June 7, 1967 marched into the Noble Sanctuary and committed every obscenity and blasphemous indecency. Their authorities used their troops to take with force the keys to the Magharbeh, or Prophet's Gate and used it to provide access for Jews to enter the Aqsa Mosque. In the first week Chief Rabbi Nissim led groups in prayers around the Dome of the Rock and spoke of rebuilding the Jewish temple at its original site pointing towards the Aqsa Mosque.

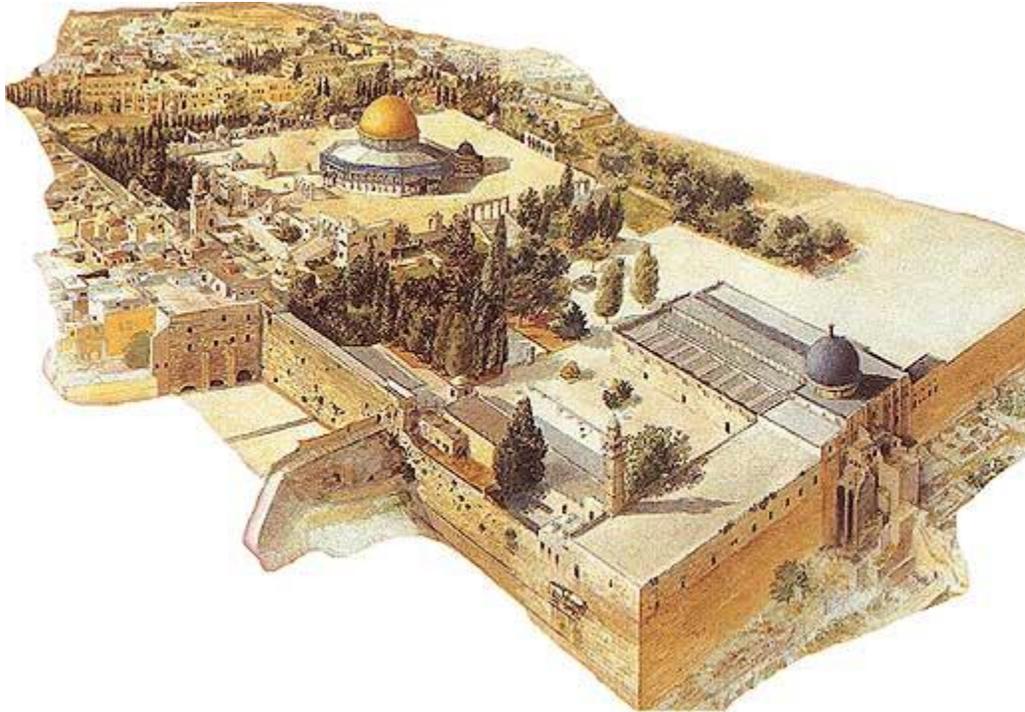
On August 15, 1967 the Chief Rabbi of the Israeli Army, Brigadier Goren, with his escort and other Jews mounted to the Dome of the Rock area, with Rabbinical vestments and blew his horn and conducted prayers within the confines of the Aqsa Mosque, infringing the inviolability of this Muslim holy place. The Israeli Minister of Religious Affairs announced that this Muslim Mosque is Jewish property and that sooner or later, the Jews will rebuild their Jewish temple there. On June 20, 1967, Time Magazine published an interview with Israeli historian Israel el-Dad who stated: "The Temple must be reconstructed on its original site" and when asked "what about the Aqsa Mosque," his reply was -Who knows? Perhaps there will be an earthquake ." Sure enough, the Israelis proceeded to provide the necessary "earthquake." The undergoing excavations are already threatening the structural integrity of the Mosque. Some more zealous Zionists were, however, less patient and on August 21, 1969 set fire to the Aqsa Mosque. The usually efficient Israeli fire-fighting machinery was on that day extraordinarily slow in reaching the Mosque. Fire-fighting engines from not-so-near Arab town and cities in Ramallah, Nablus and Al-Khalil were required to support the frenzied crowds of Muslim men, women and children who carried water in every article they could lay hands on to put out the fire, but not before massive damage to the roof, total, destruction of the beautiful Salah el-Din Minbar and much of the, beautiful stained glass and mosaics had taken place. Israel claimed first it was an electrical fault, but later identified the culprit as an Australian agent. Needless to say he was soon released, a free man, his sanity

questioned; how very convenient! Protests from the Muslim world and other nations came but soon died out. Israel, quite familiar with loud protests that carry no force and soon died down, decided to bide her time and prepare for the next stage. The fate of the Ibrahimi Mosque in Al-Khalil was carefully employed as a test case. Soon after occupation Jews achieved access to the precinct of this mosque and started conducting prayers in it. The Mosque was soon entered and special time, outside Muslim prayers, was reserved for Jewish prayers, and finally in 1975 the Mosque was partitioned, converting the bulk of it into a Synagogue. Even the usual flimsy protests from our leaders could not be spared, for our Arab leaders were at the time busy arranging disengagement agreements and it might have been feared that these unnecessary protests might disturb the fine sensitivity of “our dear friend Henry.”

“With this achievement in mind, the Zionists began preparing the same procedure for the Aqsa Mosque. A group of Jewish zealots conducted prayers last year in the Aqsa Mosque area. The Muslim guards employed by the Supreme Muslim Council, since the fire, evicted these intruders. The issue was taken before a Jewish Court which, needless to say, ruled on 8th January 1976, that the Jews had the right to conduct their prayers in the Aqsa Mosque and it was the Muslim guards who were violating the law. Immediate and frenzied protestations against this ruling erupted in Jerusalem and every Arab city in the West Bank. Numerous demonstrations took place daily causing scores of young men and women to be beaten up and imprisoned. A high school girl in Ramallah was beaten to death a few weeks ago for defying the Military Governor who entered the school and directed obscene insults at her. I have daily and attentively listened to news broadcasts from Cairo, London, the CBC in Canada and the Voice of America. To none of these stations did any of this seem worthy news, except for a brief mention on one occasion, on the Voice of America. Two weeks ago a sit-in at a girls’ high school in Nablus was viciously broken into by Israeli troops. In protest the entire teaching staff of the school resigned and were followed by the Mayor and Municipal Council in Nablus. I was in Amman the week before and was told that when a boys’ high school organized a demonstration in support of their brethren in Jerusalem against this violation, a threat to one of Islam’s holiest places, a security officer threateningly informed the students that what goes on in Jerusalem should be of no concern to them. I may in fairness add here that the role of other Arab or Muslim nations on this score as on others is not by any means much more honorable. The suffering of the Palestinians and the desecration of one or the holiest of Islam’s sanctuaries goes unnoticed in our Muslim lands. Our rulers find time to issue statements about the price of oil, the fate of Angola and even on their bilateral friendly relations with America but little is spared for the fate of Muslim Land and the integrity of our holy places for which thousands of Muslim Mujahids, heroes and Companions shed their blood, evidently in vain by our reckoning. There is a conspiracy of silence, not only in Europe and America but throughout the Arab and Muslim land, concerning the fate of Jerusalem. It took two long months of agony in Jerusalem before the Muslim nations called for the Security Council meeting and only after it could not be kept hushed up much longer. How long will our Muslim nation remain apathetic and its leaders engulfed in the fulfillment of their personal desires and ambitions, in alliance with the very enemies who threaten the destiny of our nation? This situation reminds me of these verses:

Our blood we have mixed with overflow of tears
When our line of defence was no more.

A man's worst weapon is tears to shed
When war is waged with cutting swords.
of ye Sons of Islam behold
Onslaughts on all sides!
How can you close your eyes
To a calamity that awakes the sound asleep?
How long will Arab heroes endure such injury
And submit to disgrace from the barbarian?



These verses may have been written today to describe the injury of Jewish occupation of Muslim land, desecration of Muslim holy places and the denigration of everything Islam stands for in Jerusalem and elsewhere. These were, however, the words of an Arab poet Abi-Wardi describing not a dissimilar situation, when al-Aqsa Mosque was occupied by the first crusaders, expressing the anguish that pervaded the then disunited and weakened lands of Islam. The Muslims, like they are today, were disunited and even conspired and allied themselves to their very enemies. They remained like this for 90 years until Salah-el-Din, in the true spirit of Islam, inspired with faith and devotion, led the Muslims to victory in Hittin against those who invaded the sanctity of Muslim land. Today we are virtually in an identical position and Muslim land is defiled by the new Zionist Crusaders and we have forsaken our faith. I refer to the Zionist intruders as the new crusaders for that is what they truly are. Zionism would not have triumphed as it did had it not been for our disunity and the unholy alliance it forged with European Imperialism wreaking vengeance for the defeat they endured at the hands of Salah el-Din. What is happening in Palestine today is no accident. Western Imperialism has continuously maintained a fear-promoted hatred of Islam's potential of unifying strength. In 1907 a committee headed by the

Prime Minister of Great Britain, Campbell Bannerman, assessing the problems and threats facing European Imperialism resolved:

“The danger that threatens European Imperialism lies in the Mediterranean, on the shores of which live one people endowed with all the requirements of unity and cohesion in its religion and language. The imperial powers must work to disunite and fragment this nation by erecting a foreign wedge sufficiently strong which can be used by Imperialist powers to effect their objectives.”

This is in a nutshell what Israel is, a foreign wedge created in the heart of Arab and Muslim land to disunite and fragment, a potentially great nation and thus secure imperialist interests. This is a basic fact that must be appreciated by our nation.

That all this is a continuation or a second chapter of the Crusades is portrayed to us by no less a man than General Allenby, the British General who stood before the gate of Jerusalem in December 1917 having triumphed over the Muslim Ottoman Army and said: .

“Today ends the war of the crusades.”

And similarly his French ally General Gureau on occupying Damascus in 1920, stamped his foot on the grave of Salah el-Din and said. “We have come back again, Saladin.”

Winston Churchill, the Colonial Minister of Great Britain, who stood in Jerusalem on March 28, 1921 planting a palm tree at the Mount of Olives in the foundation-laying ceremony for the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, spoke in praise of the Christian European Crusaders and the Jewish Maccabees who died in Jerusalem. In one breath, he was declaring the unholy alliance of these two foes of Islam in an orchestrated conspiracy against the Muslim land of Palestine.

It is this conspiracy fomented in this unholy alliance that the Palestinian people have had to face and which imposed upon them with vengeance 60 years of continuous suffering and pain. The holy Prophet (PBUH) anticipated this suffering and the need for continuing sacrifice that was to befall the Palestinians as part of Bilad al-Sham when he spoke addressing one of the Holy Companions Maaz Ibn Jabal and said:

“Almighty Allah will secure for you, after my death, the conquest of Bilad al-Sham, from Arish to Euphrates, The men and women of this land will have to stand ready for battle until Yom al Qiyamah (the Day of Resurrection.) Whoever of you chose to live on the coasts and land of Bilad al-Sham or in the Holy City (Jerusalem) will be in continuous Jihad until Yom al-Qiyamah (the Day of Resurrection.)”

Today we see the truth of this holy Hadith and witness the Jihad of the Holy Land, the Muslim Soil that holds the remains of many of the Holy Companions, as we also watch the pain of the Holy City and the agony of the Noble Sanctuary. But I ask you, is it enough for us as Muslims to witness the Jihad and suffering of the people of this land as mere spectators while our leaders make empty speeches of protest but continue to make embracing friendships with the enemies of our faith who provide the guns to the invaders who desecrate our Muslim land and defile its sanctity? I beseech you, in the name of Allah, that we must speak and act before it is too late, for on us as Muslims lies the burden of cleansing our Muslim land. It is our supreme duty to fight for our Muslim heritage, or have we exchanged roles

with the Israelites who told Moses: “O Moses, go thou and thy lord and fight them, we are awaiting here.”

It is our shame to see Qiryat Eshkol erected on Mount Scopus, (label Al-Mukabbir) .where Omar Ibn al-Khattab stood and called:

Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar.

from → [Palestine](#)