

The Holy Land, Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque in the Qur'an, Sunnah and other Islamic Literary Sources<sup>i</sup>

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Coming from the same divine source as previous revelations, Islam embodies many things that are common to them such as the special status that the Holy Land and Jerusalem enjoy.

Islam recognizes the fact that the Holy Land is sacred to the People of the Book. When Muslims say that the Holy Land is the “Land of the Prophets”, certainly the prophets of the Children of Israel are included and constitute a continuum in the line of prophecy, which culminated with Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon them all). Almost every prophet lived in the Holy Land, or had a special relationship with it, including those who were born elsewhere. An example of the latter is Prophet Abraham, the prototype iconoclast. After he destroyed and mocked the idols of his people, they planned violence against him, but he was destined to go to the Holy Land. The following verse uses inclusive language to reflect the nature of Abraham’s new home:

But We delivered him and [his nephew] Lot [and directed them] to the land which We have blessed *for the nations*. Qur'an, 21: 71

An example of a prophet who had a special relationship with the Holy Land and Jerusalem in particular is that of Prophet Muhammad. The Qur'an stated in the chapter of the “Children of Israel” (*Banu Israel*), or the “Journey at Night” (*Al-Isra'*), that he was taken in a night journey miraculously from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque (Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa):

Glory be to (Allah) Who did take His Servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque [*Al-Masjid Al-Haram*] to the Farthest Mosque [*Al-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 hears and sees [all things]. Qur'an, 17:1

Scholars of hadith<sup>1</sup>, Qur'an commentators, and all of Islamic tradition take this particular verse seriously and consider the Sacred Mosque to be in Mecca and the Farthest Mosque to be in Jerusalem. No Muslim scholar challenged this position throughout the Islamic intellectual history which expands for more than fourteen centuries. The parameters of this blessed land go beyond what is between the Jordan

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River and the Mediterranean. Ibn Kathir (d. 774 AH/1373 CE), a medieval Muslim scholar, reported the commentary of several early Muslim scholars on verse 21: 71.

According to the famous Ubayy Ibn Ka`b, the blessed land is *Al-Sham* [i.e. Greater Syria, which includes Jerusalem]. The great early commentator, Qatadah, adopted the same position.<sup>2</sup> A more detailed account of the Night Journey and the Ascension [*Al-Isra' and Al-Mi`raj*] and their relation to Jerusalem will follow.

In addition, there is another verse in the Qur'an with reference to this line of blessing:

Between them and the cities on which We had poured Our blessings, We had placed cities in prominent positions, and between them We had appointed stages of journey in due proportion: "Travel therein secure, by night and by day." Qur'an, 34: 18

According to Mujahid, Al-Hassan, Sa`id Ibn Jubayr, Malik, Qatadah, Al-Dahhak, Al-Sadiyy, Ibn Zayd and many other respected early Muslim scholars, the blessed cities are those of *Al-Sham*. Ibn `Abbas (d. 68 AH/687 CE), the prominent early scholar of the Qur'an who was also a cousin and companion of the Prophet, maintained that the "blessed cities" is a reference to Bayt Al-Maqdis [i.e. Jerusalem].<sup>3</sup>

Though there are several references to *the* land, the term "Holy Land" [*Al-Ard Al-Muqaddasah*] is mentioned only once in the Qur'an:

Remember Moses said to his people: "O my People! Call in remembrance the favor of God unto you, when He produced prophets among you, made you kings, and gave you what He had not given to any other among the peoples.

"O my People! Enter the Holy Land which God has assigned unto you, and turn not back ignominiously, for then will you be overthrown, to your own ruin." Qur'an, 5:20-21

The context is that of Moses (peace be upon him) inviting the Children of Israel to enter the Holy Land after he delivered them miraculously from Egypt across the sea. The Children of Israel refused to enter the Holy Land, because it meant that they had to fight its people, who were known for their exceeding strength. This rejection earned them divine punishment:

God said: "Therefore will the land be out of their reach for forty years: in distraction will they wander through the land: but sorrow you not over these rebellious people." Qur'an, 5: 26

This verse is read in two very different ways, each one arriving at a very different meaning. The first way as shown above divides the verse into two parts, the first of which

ends after “years”. This way of dividing the verse indicates that the Children of Israel were forbidden to enter the Land temporarily because of their disobedience.

The second reading also divides the verse into two parts, the first of which ends after “reach”. Some scholars interpreted this way of dividing the verse to mean that the Children of Israel were forbidden to enter the Land in an absolute sense, again as a result of their disobedience. I am personally inclined toward the first reading, which considers the prohibition temporarily, and the entry to the Holy Land conditional.

Sayed Qutb stated in *In the Shade of the Qur’an*, a contemporary exegesis of the Qur’an, that the reason for this prohibition is to allow room for a new generation of Israelites to be brought up.<sup>4</sup> I would add that the new generation was ready to submit to the will of God, and therefore qualified for the entry to the Holy Land as “Submitters”; those who submit their personal will entirely to the will of God. The meaning of “Muslims” is also submitters. The Qur’an states in clear terms that righteousness is a prerequisite for inheriting lands:

Before this We wrote in the Zabur (“Psalms”!)<sup>ii</sup>, after the Message [given to Moses]: “My servants, the righteous, shall inherit the earth”.  
(Qur’an, 21: 105)

Other verses in the Qur’an directly associate the religious state of the Children of Israel to the inheritance of the land:

And We made a people, considered weak [in Egypt], inheritors of the East and West of the land [i.e. all of it], whereon We sent down Our blessings. The fair promise of your Lord was fulfilled for the Children of Israel, because they had patience and constancy, and We leveled to the ground the great works and fine buildings which Pharaoh and his people erected.  
Qur’an, 7: 137

According to these verses, right relationship with God, which means submission to His will, is the absolute criterion for inheritance of the Land. Of critical importance to the Qur’an is the fact that genetic or biological descent is never sufficient in itself to merit such inheritance. It is a non-factor in this respect.

Jerusalem or Bayt Al-Maqdis [House of the Holy] is, by definition, a holy place. It is included in verse 17:1, either by referring to the Al-Aqsa Mosque or to its precincts about which God said: “We did bless”. The great 14th century Muslim scholar, Ibn Kathir, said that Al-Aqsa Mosque is Bayt Al-Maqdis.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the “Al-Aqsa Mosque” and “Bayt Al-Maqdis” are used interchangeably whereby one of them is used as a metaphor of the other, as in the following hadith:

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<sup>ii</sup> The Qur’an uses “Torah”, “Psalms”, and “Gospel” (Arabic: Tawrah, Zabur, and Injil) in reference to the original revealed books. The Qur’an considers these previous revealed books are different from those that exist today, because they suffered from human edition.

Maimuna said: “O Messenger of Allah! Inform us about Bayt Al-Maqdis!” He said: “It is the land where people will be gathered and resurrected [on the Day of Judgment]. Go (grammatically imperative!) and pray in it, for a prayer in it is the equivalent of a thousand prayers in other [mosques].” I said: “What if I couldn’t reach it?” He said: “Then you send a gift of oil to it in order to be lit in its lanterns, for the one who does so is the same like the one who has been there.”<sup>6</sup>

The hadith shows that it is the religious duty of Muslims all over the world to maintain Al-Aqsa Mosque both physically and spiritually. The relationship with Al-Aqsa Mosque is primarily fulfilled through acts of worship, but the physical maintenance of the Mosque is also part of the responsibility of all Muslims. The fulfillment of both duties will be impaired as long as Al-Aqsa Mosque remains under occupation! The truth of the matter is that under Israeli occupation, Muslims do not have free access to the Mosque. Those who are prevented from having freedom of worship at Al-Aqsa Mosque include, but not restricted to, all Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and occasional restrictions to Jerusalemite men younger than 45 years of age.

Since the miraculous Night Journey of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), *al-Isra’ wa al-Mi`raj*, took place more than fourteen centuries ago, Muslims have established a sublime and perpetual relationship with Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Prophet was taken from Al-Masjid Al-Haram in Mecca to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem. This event marked a twining relation between the two mosques. The beginning of Surah Al-Isra’ (17:1) reminds Muslims and non-Muslims of this important event.

When the Prophet (Peace be upon him) reported the event to the people of Mecca, they challenged him to prove it by describing Jerusalem to them, because they were familiar with it through their caravan trading. They used this story to undermine his credibility as a prophet; they knew that the journey from Mecca to Jerusalem would take several weeks during that time in each direction. They were considering Prophet Muhammad’s abilities, not that of the Omnipotent God!

There are many references to this event in the Qur’an and the traditions of the Prophet (Peace be upon him), to the extent that it is not possible to cover all the details of the Isra’ and the Mi`raj in such an article. The basic story is that Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) was taken by the archangel Gabriel on a supernatural animal (Al-Buraq), from Mecca to Jerusalem and then to heaven, where he received the commandment for the five daily prayers. On his way back, the rout of the journey passed through Jerusalem and there he led the other prophets in prayer. The part of the journey from Mecca to Jerusalem is called Isra’ and the ascension to heaven is called Mi`raj. The journey took place during what is described as the Year of Sorrow (*‘Am Al-Huzn*). It was during this year that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) lost two of his most important supporters: his wife Khadijah and his uncle, Abu Talib, who despite the fact that he never embraced Islam defended his nephew against the powerful tribes of Mecca.

The greatest Hadith scholars, Al-Bukhari and Muslim, narrated that the

Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“When [the Meccan tribe of] Quraish did not believe me [about the Night Journey], I stood in the Hijr<sup>7</sup> and God revealed to me Bayt Al-Maqdis [i.e. Jerusalem] and I began describing its signs to them while I was looking at it.”

This hadith provides the setting for interpreting verse 17:1, and explains why Muslims believe that the “Farthest Mosque” is in Jerusalem.

The twinning relationship manifests itself in the fact that another term “the Sanctuary” or Al-Haram also refers to Al-Aqsa Mosque, deriving from the name “the Noble Sanctuary” or Al-Masjid Al-Haram in Mecca. The reference to Al-Aqsa Mosque as “Haram” is a cultural development that reflects the very close relationship between the two mosques in Islamic consciousness. In other words, strictly speaking from an Islamic *fiqh* point of view, the laws that apply to the Haram in Mecca, such as the prohibition of hunting during the time of Hajj, do not apply to Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Mujir Al-Din Al-Hanbali (d. 1522) used “Al-Masjid Al-Sharif Al-Aqsa” in the first page of his introduction to *Al-Uns Al-Jalil fi Tarikh Al-Quds wal-Khalil*. But the order of the words differed in the chapter on the description of Al-Aqsa Mosque; he used “Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa Al-Sharif”.<sup>8</sup> Muslim scholars understood that the name ‘Al-Aqsa Mosque’ predates the structures, and that no one building could be called as such. It is anachronistic to call the southern-most building Al-Aqsa Mosque; Al-Hanbali called it “Al-Jami` Al-Kabir Al-Qibliyy” (The Grand Southern Friday-Mosque).<sup>9</sup> It is quite remarkable that Mujir Al-Din Al-Hanbali, who wrote *Al-Uns Al-Jalil fo Tarikh Al-Quds wal-Khalil* in the year 900 AH/1495, when there were no political disputes regarding Al-Aqsa Mosque, offered the following definition:

“Verily, ‘Al-Aqsa’ is a name for the whole mosque which is surrounded by the wall, the length and width of which are mentioned here, for the building that exists in the southern part of the Mosque, and the other ones such as the Dome of the Rock and the corridors and other [buildings] are novel (*muhdatha*).”<sup>10</sup>

The paragraph that preceded the definition of Al-Aqsa Mosque was dedicated to its measurement. Twice, the measurements of the Mosque were taken under the supervision of Al-Hanbali to make sure that they were accurate. He mentioned that the length of the Mosque was measured from the southern wall to the northern corridor near Bab Al-Asbat (i.e. Lions’ Gate), and the width was measured from the wall overlooking the cemetery of Bab Al-Rahmah (i.e. Golden Gate) to the western corridor, beneath the Tankaziyyah School. In both cases, the width of the walls themselves was excluded.

It should be noted that the Qur’anic reference to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, as a mosque, took place years before the actual arrival of Muslims to Jerusalem. It means that

part of what the Muslim believes is that Al-Aqsa Mosque was designated as a mosque by God.

Other than the three Mosques of Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem, Muslims are free to choose the site for a new mosque, but once it is established, it remains a mosque forever.

The journey by night had Jerusalem as a transit station or as a gate to the heavens. God could have taken His Prophet (Peace be upon him) directly from Mecca to heaven, but He didn't. Al-Aqsa Mosque has a very prominent place in the whole event. It was the place where the Prophet (Peace be upon him) led the other prophets and messengers in prayer. This act is interpreted, among other things, as inheriting the responsibility and becoming custodians of the mosque.

Bayt Al-Maqdis became the first Qiblah or direction of prayer. Al-Bara' said:

“We have prayed with the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) in the direction of Bayt Al-Maqdis for sixteen or seventeen months. Then we were directed to the Ka`bah [in Mecca]”.  
(Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Despite the change of the Qiblah, the mere fact that Muslims prayed in the direction of Jerusalem is an indication of its prominence. According to the Qur'an, however, the mosque in Mecca was the first ever established by God for humanity, so it should not be surprising that the Qiblah was shifted back to it:

The first House [of worship] appointed for men, was that at Bakkah [i.e. Mecca]: full of blessing and of guidance for all the worlds. (Qur'an, 3: 96)

The same position is confirmed in a hadith narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim:

Abu Dhar Al-Ghafari -May God be pleased with him- said: “I said: O Messenger of Allah: Which mosque was established first on earth?  
He said: Al-Masjid Al-Haram [in Mecca].  
I said: Then which one?  
He said: Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa [in Jerusalem].  
I said: How much time was between them?”  
He said: Forty years, and when it is time for prayer, wherever you are, pray, for that where the merit is.”

The Qur'an teaches that, while a single system of ethics and belief should be common to the revelations and Scriptures of all peoples, the specific laws of ritual and behavior [i.e. Shari`ah] may vary among peoples and religions.

“...To each among you have We prescribed a Law and an Open Way.  
If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single People, but

(His plan is to test you in what He has given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues.” Qur’an, 5: 48

It should not be surprising, therefore, that Jews pray toward Jerusalem while Muslims pray toward Mecca. This fact does not reduce the sanctity of Jerusalem for Muslims. The second chapter of the Qur’an (verses 142-150) addresses the change of the Qiblah in detail. The basic message is that both directions of prayer are from God and that:

“...the people of the Book know that that is Truth from their Lord”.

In the area of *fiqh* (equal to the Hebrew term *halakhah*), it is prohibited to relieve oneself (e.g., urinate) in the open space in the direction of both, Al-Masjid Al-Haram in Mecca and Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. The hadith that declares such prohibition refers to these two mosques as the “two Qiblahs.”<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, the importance of Al-Aqsa Mosque in the life of Muslims is reflected in the many other traditions of the Prophet. One of these traditions –narrated by Al-Bukhari (#1115) and Muslim (#2475)- makes it clear that traveling in order to visit mosques for religious purposes, is permitted to three mosques only: Al-Masjid Al-Haram (in Mecca), Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi (in Medina) and Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa (in Jerusalem).

The language of the abovementioned Hadith in Arabic gives the impression that it is prohibited to travel to mosques other than these three. This led the prominent Shafi`i scholar Imam Al-Juwayni (d.1085 CE) to have a religious ruling that it is prohibited to do so. Imam Al-Nawawi (d.1277), who belonged to the same school of *fiqh*, rendered the position of Al-Juwayni erroneous, and that the majority of scholars (*jumhur Al-Ulama`*) understand the Hadith as saying that “there is no [extra] merit in traveling to other mosques”.<sup>12</sup>

Al-Aqsa Mosque was developed and the buildings expanded on a large scale during the reign of the two seventh and eighth century Umayyad Caliphs, Abd Al-Malik Ibn Marwan and his son Al-Walid to the extent that it surpassed the architectural grandeur of all mosques. The magnificence of the architecture of the Dome of the Rock and the southern most building within the parameters of Al-Aqsa Mosque is witness to the importance of these holy sites in Islam.

Calligraphy is used at Al-Aqsa Mosque to reflect its status in the Islamic worldview, and to stress God’s oneness and uniqueness (i.e., *tawhid*). Several chapters of the Qur’an and various other verses can be found inscribed inside and outside the buildings.

One of these inscriptions, chapter 17 (i.e. *Al-Isra`*), asserts the status of Al-Aqsa Mosque in the Islamic worldview. Like a necklace, it is inscribed on the neck of the Dome of the Rock, on the outside. The first verse of this chapter has a direct reference to Al-Aqsa Mosque, in the context of the “Night Journey”. The rest of this chapter, another 110 verses, is about the story of the “*Children of Israel*”, which is the second name of

this chapter. The narrative shifts from talking about Prophet Muhammad and his journey to Al-Aqsa Mosque, to Prophet Moses:

We gave unto Moses the Scripture, and We appointed it a guidance for the children of Israel, saying: Choose no guardian beside Me. (Qur'an, 17:2)

It should be noted that the same chapter is also inscribed over the niche in the southern-most building. The inscription, black on golden background mosaic with multi-colored leaves, begins immediately to the right side of the niche, facing south, and continues anti-clock wise in the direction of the east and then continues north and stops before the beginning of the eastern "hall" that has the rose window. There is another hall immediately south of it; it has a hand-carved wood of a small part of chapter 17. It seems that most of this apparently old work of art was lost to the arson of August 21, 1969 which devastated that south-eastern corner of the building.

Some of the next verses could be considered either as a report on historical events that have taken place already, or as a prophecy that will unfold in the future, with the Children of Israel and Al-Aqsa Mosque being at the center of these events. (Qur'an, 17:7)

Another chapter of the Qur'an is written on the outside of the Dome of the Rock. Like a crown, chapter 36 (i.e. *YaSeen*) covers the upper most part of the octagonal walls. There are several prophetic traditions of various strengths about the virtues of this chapter of the Qur'an. One of them, categorized as having a "weak" chain of narrators, considers it the "heart of the Qur'an".<sup>13</sup> *YaSeen* does begin with confirming the messengership of Prophet Muhammad, but then it moves to other topics including life, death and resurrection.

The inner side of the octagonal walls is adorned with short chapters and parts of longer ones, in addition to other non-Qur'anic inscriptions. It should be noted that the beginning and end of the following inscriptions don't always coincide with the beginning and end of the mentioned walls. Anti-clockwise, the south-eastern, eastern, northeaster, and northern walls have the following anti-Trinitarian message:

O People of the Book! Do not exaggerate in your religion nor utter aught concerning Allah save the truth. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a messenger of Allah, and His word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers, and say not "Three" - Cease! (it is) better for you! - Allah is only One Allah. Far is it removed from His Transcendent Majesty that He should have a son. His is all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is sufficient as Defender.

The Messiah does by no means disdain that he should be a servant of Allah, nor do the angels who are near to Him, and whoever



disdains His service and is proud, He will gather them all together to Himself. (Qur'an, 4:171)

Beginning with the north-western wall, we find the following verses from chapter 19 which is named after Maryam (i.e. Mary, mother of Jesus Christ), the only woman in the Qur'an to be mentioned by name:

And peace on me on the day I was born, and on the day I die, and on the day I am raised to life. Such is `Isa, son of Maryam; [this is] the saying of truth about which they dispute. It befits not [the Majesty of] Allah that He should take to Himself a son. Glory to be Him. When He has decreed a matter He only says to it "Be," and it is. And surely Allah is my Lord and your Lord, therefore serve Him; this is the right path. (Qur'an, 19:33-36)

The western and south-western walls have the following verses from chapter of the "Family of `Imran":

Allah bears witness that there is no god but He, and (so do) the angels and those possessed of knowledge, maintaining His creation with justice; there is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise. Surely the [true] religion with Allah is Islam, and those to whom the Book had been given did not show opposition but after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves; and whoever disbelieves in the revelations of Allah then surely Allah is quick in reckoning. (Qur'an, 3:18-19)

Ibn Kathir's exegesis of the Qur'an associates the dedication of Mary to the service of Al-Aqsa Mosque:

[Remember] when the wife of 'Imran said: My Lord! I have vowed unto Thee that which is in my belly as a consecrated [offering]. Accept it from me. Lo! Thou, only Thou, art the Hearer, the Knower!

And when she was delivered she said: My Lord! Lo! I am delivered of a female - Allah knew best of what she was delivered - *the male is not as the female*; and lo! I have named her Mary, and lo! I crave Thy protection for her and for her offspring from Satan the outcast. (Qur'an, 3: 35-36)

Ibn Kathir interpreted the statement of Mary's mother "*the male is not as the female*" as in "strength, perseverance in worship and in serving Al-Aqsa Mosque"

Chapter 20 (i.e. *Ta-Ha*) is written on the neck of the Dome of the Rock on the inside. It reflects certain similarities with chapter 17 which is written on the outside; both chapters "begin" with Prophet Muhammad and move to Prophet Moses. The Qur'an narrates, in

the case of the latter, some essential stories about him including receiving revelation, his struggle against the Pharaoh, liberating the Children of Israel from servitude, the story of the golden calf, splitting the sea, and more.

Some critics of Islam have claimed that because Jerusalem was never a political center of the Islamic world, it could not have been held in high esteem by Islam. This is a false argument, for even Mecca, the most sacred religious site of the Islamic world, was never the capital of any Islamic state. This certainly does not negate the importance of sacred religious sites. One should remember that the Umayyads developed the site of Al-Aqsa Mosque before the end of the first century A.H. They moved their capital from Medina to Damascus. Thereafter, no Muslim ruler took any of the three sacred cities, Mecca, Medina or Jerusalem as a capital. It is rather the religious importance of these cities that led them to their decisions, not the opposite.

There are many other traditions extolling the special merits of Jerusalem, including the view that praying at Al-Aqsa Mosque is far more efficacious than prayers in other locations (with the exception of the two mosques of Mecca and Medina). In addition, Um Salamah wife of the Prophet said:

“I have heard the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) saying:  
“He who initiates the minor Hajj [the *Umrah*] or Hajj at Al-Aqsa Mosque, God will forgive his prior sins.”<sup>14</sup>

There is an addendum to the previous Hadith stating that Um Hakim daughter of Umayyah Ibn Al-Akhnas, who reported the Hadith of Um Salamah, traveled from Medina all the way to Al-Aqsa Mosque and initiated the minor Hajj from there.

There are many other traditions that reflect the importance of Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque in Islam that for brevity I did not include in this article. Yet, to conclude, I would like to refer to `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab once more. After entering the city, the Bishop of Jerusalem invited him to pray inside the Holy Sepulcher church. `Umar declined politely and stepped outside the church to pray. This act, I believe, established a practical module for interfaith relationship, especially in relation to the religious space of the other.

The sacredness of the Holy Land does not mean that spirituality could only be achieved in such places. In a tradition narrated in Imam Malik’s greatly respected hadith collection known as *Al-Muwatta’*, two prominent companions of the prophet had the following exchange of letters regarding Jerusalem: Abu Darda’ invited Salman Al-Farisi to come to Bayt Al-Maqdis (literally, the House of the Sanctified). Salman replied by saying that the land cannot sanctify anyone. Only one’s good deeds may bring one true sanctity.

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<sup>1</sup> A hadith is a tradition of Prophet Muhammad. When the message that the hadith contains forms part of the Islamic worldview, it is described as *Sunnah*, or way of the Prophet. The Sunnah constitutes, after the Qur’an, the second source of Islamic law, Shari’ah.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir* (Beirut: Dar Al-Jeel, 1988) vol. 3, p. 180.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibn Kathir, vol. 3, p. 512.

<sup>4</sup> Sayyed Qutub, *Fi Zilaal Al-Qur'an*, 12th edition (Beirut: Dar Al-Shuruq, 1986) vol. 2, p. 871.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Kathir, vol. 3, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Abu Dawud, *Sunan* # 457; Ibn Majah, *Sunan* # 147; Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad* # 6/463; Al-Bayhaqi, *Sunan* #2/441

<sup>7</sup> *Hijr Isma'il*, an area considered to be part of the Ka`bah but ended up outside it when it was rebuilt before Muhammad (Peace be upon him) became a prophet.

<sup>8</sup> Mujir Al-Din Al-Hanbali, *Al-Uns Al-Jalil fo Tarikh Al-Quds wal-Khalil* (Beirut: Dar Al-Jil, 1973) vol.2, p.11.

<sup>9</sup> Al-Hanbali, vol.2, p.32.

<sup>10</sup> Al-Hanbali, vol.2, p.24.

<sup>11</sup> Abu Dawud, *Sunan* # 10; Ibn Majah, *Sunan* # 319; Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad* # 4/210.

<sup>12</sup> Al-Nawawi, *Sahih Muslim bi-Sharh Al-Nawawi* (Commentary on Hadith # 2475).

<sup>13</sup> Al-Tirmidhi, *Sunan* # 2812.

<sup>14</sup> Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad* # 25347.