

A GUIDE TO

AL-AQSA MOSQUE

AL-HARAM ASH-SHARIF



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*In the name of Allah,
most compassionate, most merciful*

Dear Visitor,

Welcome to one of the major Islamic sacred sites and landmarks of civilization in Jerusalem, which is considered a holy city in Islam because it is the city of the prophets. They preached of the Messenger of God, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH):

The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers, [saying], "We make no distinction between any of His messengers." And they say, "We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination" (Qur'an 2:285).

It is also the place where one of Prophet Mohammad's miracles, the Night Journey (Al-Isra' wa Al-Mi'raj), took place:

Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from Al-Masjid Al-Haram to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing (Qur'an 17:1).

In addition, it was the first Qibla towards which Muslims turned for their daily prayers for 16 months until they were ordered to turn towards Al-Ka'aba in Mecca:

We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a qibla with which you will be pleased. So turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram. And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces toward it [in prayer]. Indeed, those who have been given the Scripture well know that it is the truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do (Qur'an 2:144).

Moreover, according to the Qur'an and Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) traditions Al-Aqsa Mosque is considered one out of three restricted destinations to which Muslims travel in pilgrimage:

Do not prepare yourself for a journey except to three Mosques, i.e. Al-Masjid Al-Haram, the Mosque of Aqsa (Jerusalem) and my Mosque (Sahih-Bukhari 2:21:288).

This booklet intends to serve as an informative guide to Al-Aqsa Mosque and the monuments it encompasses, which have been under Hashemite custodianship since 1924. It provides background information to all those landmarks, including mosques, minarets, domes, arched gates, schools, corridors, gates, pulpits, platforms, Al-Buraq Wall, water sources and the Islamic Museum. In doing so great efforts have been made to reflect the essential Islamic narrative in response to the various attempts to falsify the historical and religious facts of this holy site.

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنَ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

MOSQUES

Al-Aqsa Mosque*

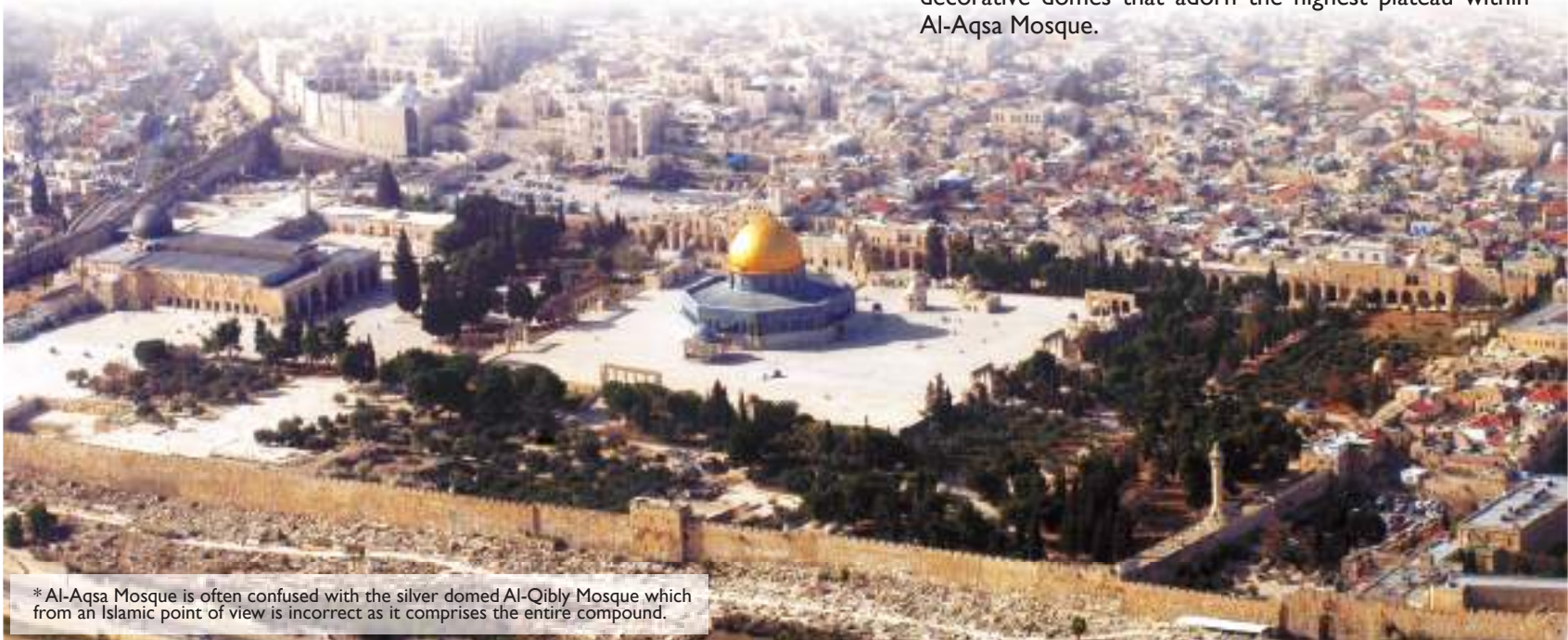
Al-Aqsa Mosque is located in the southeast corner of the Old City of Jerusalem, covering one-sixth of its area. Al-Aqsa Mosque comprises the entire area within the compound walls (a total area of 144,000 m²) - including all the mosques, prayer rooms, buildings, platforms and open courtyards located above or under the grounds - and exceeds 200 historical monuments pertaining to various Islamic eras. The mosque is also referred to as *Al-Haram Al-Sharif*. However, there are no grounds for this name in Islamic religion or creed as the only two *Harams* are in Mecca and Medina. It is believed the name is part of the Ottoman heritage in Palestine.

According to Islamic creed and jurisprudence, all these buildings and courtyards enjoy the same degree of sacredness since they are built on Al-Aqsa's holy grounds. This sacredness is not exclusive to the physical structures allocated for prayer, like the Dome of the Rock or Al-Qibly Mosque (the mosque with the large silver dome), or to the buildings located on

the surface of Al-Aqsa's premises. Thus, a worshiper receives the same reward for praying anywhere within the Mosque including the open courtyards.

Al-Aqsa Mosque has the following four different levels:

- An underground level which is under the Holy Mosque level containing wells and water canals, and some buildings that are currently filled with earth and waste.
- A subterranean level, including the Marwani prayer hall in the southeastern corner, the Ancient "Aqsa" (actually two massive corridors leading to the Umayyad palaces, below the current Al-Qibly Mosque), the Buraq prayer hall (below the Moroccan Gate in the west), the Golden Gate (called in Arabic Bab Ar-Rahmah and Bab At-Tawbah, in the east), and the closed gates: the single, the double, the triple, the Buraq's Gate, and the lower Gate of the Chain.
- The Southern Al-Qibly Mosque and the expansive middle courtyard that includes open gates, corridors, platforms, trees, etc.
- The Dome of the Rock and its surroundings, including the decorative domes that adorn the highest plateau within Al-Aqsa Mosque.



* Al-Aqsa Mosque is often confused with the silver domed Al-Qibly Mosque which from an Islamic point of view is incorrect as it comprises the entire compound.

The Origin of Al-Aqsa's Name

The Arabic meaning of Al-Aqsa is two-fold: (1) the furthest, in reference to distance; (2) the supreme; in reference to status. Therefore, Al-Aqsa Mosque could mean the furthest from Mecca in the time when Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon Him - PBUH) received the divine revelations (the Qur'an), or the mosque with the supreme status.

It is a blessed land as stated by the Qur'an:

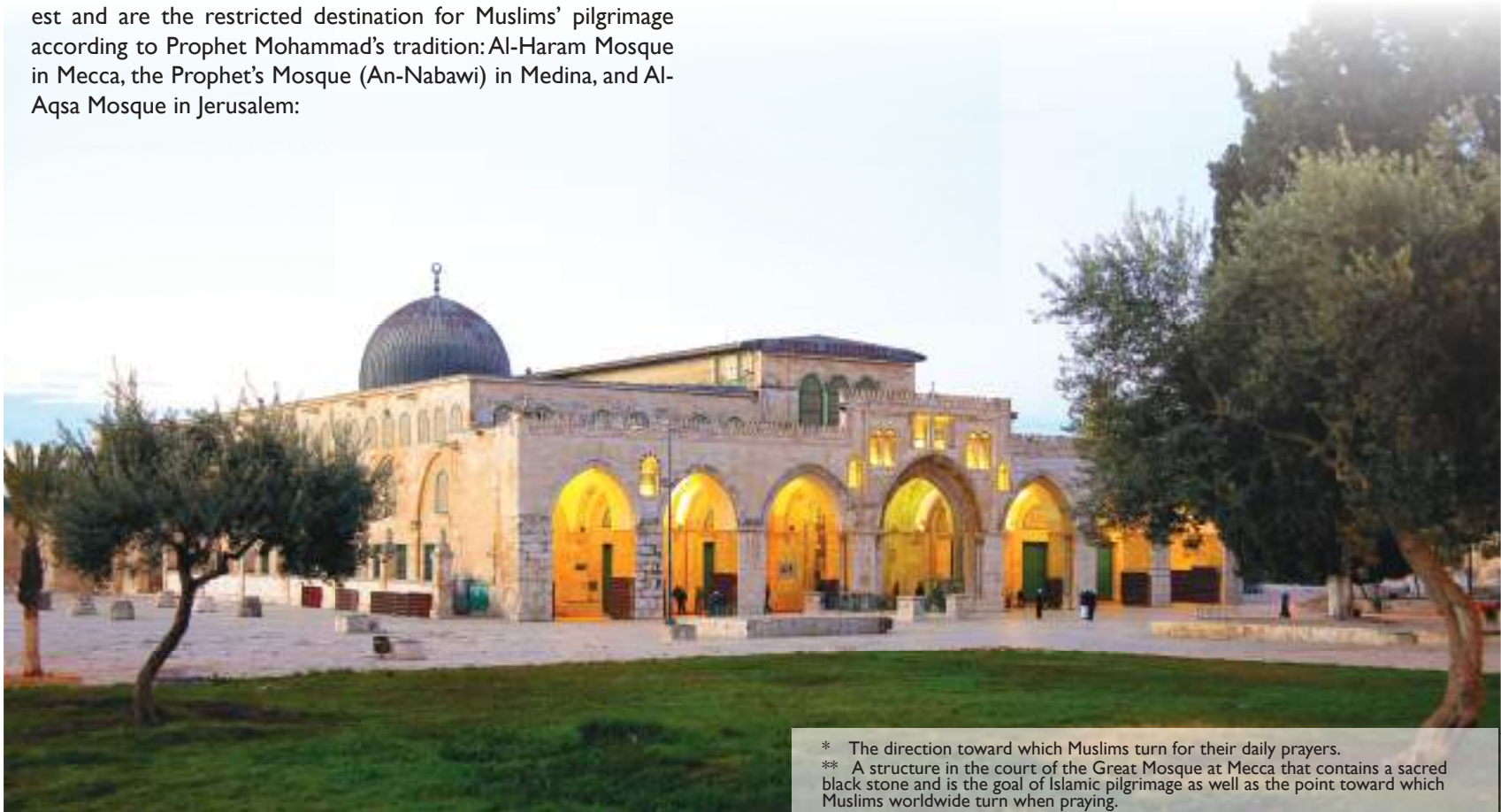
Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing (Qur'an 17:1).

In Islam, there are three mosques that are considered the holiest and are the restricted destination for Muslims' pilgrimage according to Prophet Mohammad's tradition: Al-Haram Mosque in Mecca, the Prophet's Mosque (An-Nabawi) in Medina, and Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem:

Do not prepare yourself for a journey except to three Mosques, i.e. Al-Masjid-Al-Haram, the Mosque of Aqsa (Jerusalem) and my Mosque (Sahih-Bukhari 2:21:288).

According to Islamic belief, Al-Aqsa Mosque is also the first Qibla* and the second mosque built on earth after the Ka'aba** in Mecca.

Narrated by Abu Dahr: I said, "O Allah's Apostle! Which mosque was first built on the surface of the earth?" He said, "Al-Masjid-ul-Haram (in Mecca)." I said, "Which was built next?" He replied "The mosque of Al-Aqsa (in Jerusalem)." I said, "What was the period of construction between the two?" He said, "Forty years." He added, "Wherever (you may be, and) the prayer time becomes due, perform the prayer there, for the best thing is to do so (i.e. to offer the prayers in time)" (Sahih Bukhari 4:55:585).



* The direction toward which Muslims turn for their daily prayers.
** A structure in the court of the Great Mosque at Mecca that contains a sacred black stone and is the goal of Islamic pilgrimage as well as the point toward which Muslims worldwide turn when praying.

I. Al-Qibly Mosque

Al-Qibly Mosque which is also known as Al-Aqsa Mosque, is the first physical structure ever built by Muslims on the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. When Muslims first entered Jerusalem in 15 AH/638 AD the site was deserted and neglected with no signs of construction on it. Caliph Omar bin Al-Khatab and his companions cleared it from earth and waste and built a simple mosque on its southern part after deliberating the best location for it, as some of the Prophet's (PBUH) companions suggested building it in front of the Rock of Ascension to the north facing the Qibla. Nonetheless, the Caliph decided to build the mosque in the heart of Al-Aqsa next to the southern wall instead. The first mosque was a simple building that sat on wooden trusses and was designed to accommodate 3,000 worshippers.



However, Al-Qibly Mosque, as we know it today, was first built by the Umayyad Caliph Walid bin Abdul Malek bin Marwan between 90-96 AH/706-714 AD. Some narratives say that Caliph Abdul Malik bin Marwan was the one who initiated the mosque's constructions. When he died before the building was completed, his son Al-Walid carried on the mission.

During the Umayyad era, Al-Qibly Mosque consisted of 15 naves, with the widest being the one in the middle. The building was covered with a brick ceiling and topped with a magnificent dome at the end of the middle nave. The mosque was renovated for the first time during the Abbasid era by Caliph Abu Jaafar Al-Mansour, and again by Caliph Al-Mahdi. Al-Ma'moun, another Abbasid Caliph, rebuilt the central hallway. Prince Abdullah bin Taher of the Tahriah State, a dynasty that ruled Yemen during the Mamluk era (855-923 AH/1451-1517 AD), later built the corridor leading to the mosque.

The Fatimid Caliphs also renovated Al-Qibly Mosque more than once, including the time when Caliph Addahir Li Ezaz Din Allah renovated the mosque in 436 AH/1034 AD.

During the Crusaders' occupation of Jerusalem, Al-Qibly Mosque was used as their headquarters. The Ayoubi Caliph Saladin liberated Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque in 583 AH/1187 AD. He ordered the renovation of the building and returned it to its former state. He also installed the magnificent wooden pulpit which Nour Ad-Din Mahmoud Zinki, a Mamluki king from the Zinki dynasty, had ordered to be made in Aleppo and be placed next to the main *mihrab* (i.e. niche) in Al-Qibly Mosque.

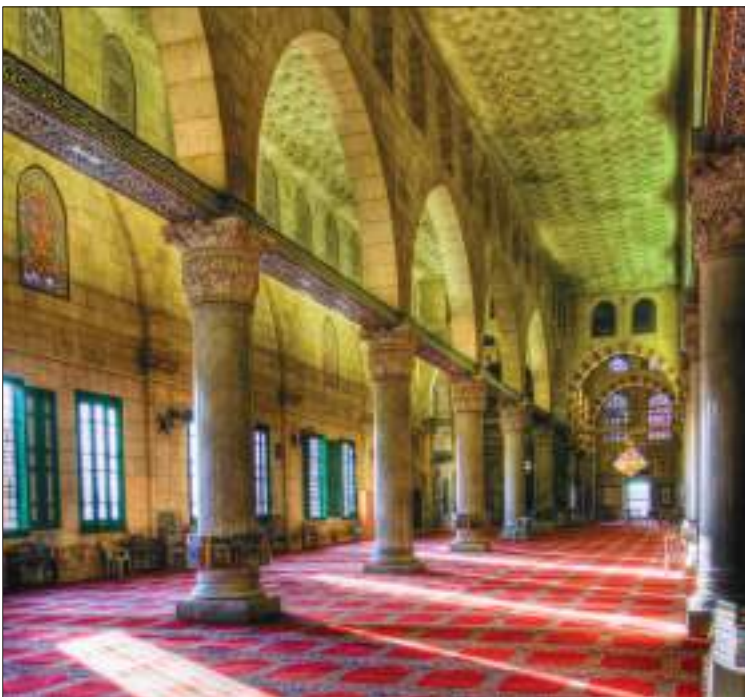


The Ottomans also invested a lot of care in Al-Qibly Mosque, especially Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent who carried out a comprehensive renovation of the building, as well as Sultan Mahmud II, Sultan Abdul Aziz, and Sultan Abdul Hamid II who furnished the Mosque with carpets and provided it with new lanterns.

Starting in the 1920s, when the Hashemite monarchs became the guardians (custodian) of the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem, Jordan's rulers – from Sherif Hussein bin Ali to present-day King Abdullah II - have made great efforts to restore, renovate and maintain Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The Current Structure and Interior of Al-Qibly Mosque

Al-Qibly Mosque is a square building made of seven naves; the biggest nave is in the center, which is topped with a magnificent silver dome, and there are three smaller naves on its eastern side and another three on its western side. The building's dimensions are 80 meters in length to the south and 55 meters in width to the west. Al-Qibly Mosque has nine entrances; a separate door leads to each one of the seven naves, while there is one entrance on its western side, and another on its eastern side. The door in the middle of the building's northern façade is the mosque's main entrance; however, all seven doors lead inside the mosque where the seven naves overlap with no physical



barriers between them other than stone and marble columns that carry the weight of the building. The stone columns are historic and ancient, while the marble ones were added to the mosque when it was renovated in the early 20th Century; these columns are connected by huge arches that are attached to the mosque's ceiling.

Omar's Mosque

Omar's Mosque is located in the southerneast corner of Al-Qibly Mosque and is considered part of it. It is an oblong building that has two entrances: one in Al-Qibly Mosque, the other overlooking Al-Aqsa's courtyards. Today, part of the mosque is used as an emergency clinic.

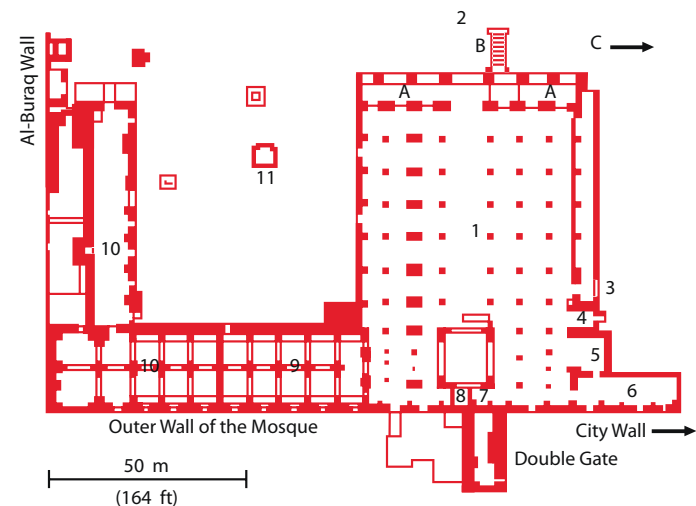
Mosque of the Forty Martyrs

This is a spacious room located to the north of Omar's Mosque, where one of its two entrances can be found, while the other is in Al-Qibly Mosque.

Mihrab (Niche) of Zechariah

Zechariah's Niche is located in the eastern part of Al-Qibly Mosque. The niche was named in commemoration of Prophet Zechariah (PBUH), and it is also said to be the place where Mary (PBUH) was lodged and visited by Zechariah (PBUH), although there is no solid evidence for this.

Every time Zechariah entered upon her in the prayer chamber, he found with her provision (Qur'an 3:37).



- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (A) Porch | (5) Mosque of the Forty Martyrs |
| (B) Steps to underground rooms | (6) Mosque of Omar |
| (C) Steps to "Christ's Cradle" | (7) Mihrab (prayer niche) |
| (1) Prayer hall | (8) Minbar (pulpit) |
| (2) Fountain | (9) White Mosque (Women's Mosque) |
| (3) Eastern Gate | (10) Islamic Museum |
| (4) Mihrab of Zechariah | (11) Dome of Yusuf |

2. The Dome of the Rock

The Umayyad Caliph Abdul Malek bin Marwan ordered the building of the golden dome between 71-72 AH/691-692 AD on the highest spot of Al-Aqsa Mosque, in the middle of a plateau that is 4 meters higher than the rest of the mosque's courtyards. The Dome of the Rock, which is the earliest existing model of Islamic architecture, was built over what Muslims believe to be the Rock of Ascension.* It is sitting on top of an octagonal-shaped building with four doors; the building's dimensions are 20.59 meters in length and 9.5 meters in height. The dome is based on a circular drum ornamented with faience** and decorated with verses from chapter 17 (Al-Isra') of the Qur'an. The dome has a 2.5-3° indentation in the structure of its circular pillars that grants the person full vision of its interior including the stone columns and pillars if he/she stands at any of its four entrances. A number of arched gates surround the Dome of the Rock's plateau, but they only serve a decorative purpose. In 1433 AH/2012 AD, the Islamic Waqf and the Committee for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque carried out a comprehensive renovation of the Dome.

The Dome of the Rock consists of:

- The dome built around the Holy Rock of Ascension;
- Four doors;
- Sixteen windows made of colored glass ornamented with Islamic motifs and writings;
- A niche that belongs to the original building which is the oldest mihrab preserved in the Islamic world;
- The Holy Rock of Ascension: it is a natural irregular-shaped rock that has a small cave underneath it in which two niches, called the "Prophets' chapel", have been carved, one of them is flat, while the other is deep. A lot of Muslims believe that this particular rock is the Rock of Ascension; however, this was not confirmed by any of Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) traditions, thus the rock and the cave underneath it, in which many Muslims pray thinking it is blessed, enjoy the same degree of sacredness as any other part of Al-Aqsa Mosque. Another common incorrect narrative among Muslims is that the rock is hanging in the air.



* According to Muslim tradition the rock is the spot where Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) ascended to heaven during his night journey (Al-Isra' wa Al-Mi'raj).
** Glazed ceramic ware, in particular decorated tin-glazed earthenware.

The Dome of the Rock and the Umayyads

Caliph Muawiya Ibn Abi Sufyan, the founder of the Umayyad dynasty, was the first ever caliph receiving the oath of allegiance (ba'ya) at Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Caliph Abdul Malek bin Marwan built the magnificent Dome of the Rock and reconstructed Al-Aqsa Mosque between 69AH/688 AD and 72AH/691 AD. His son, Al-Walid Ibn Abdul Malek continued the reconstruction mission.

The Dome of the Rock and the Abbasids

The Abbasids renovated the Dome of the Rock more than once; most notably are works carried out by Caliph Al-Ma'moun in 216 AH/831 AD and the installation of new wooden doors ordered by the mother of Caliph Al-Muqtadir Ballah in 301 AH/913 AD.

The Dome of the Rock and the Fatimids

The Fatimids carried out a comprehensive renovation of the Dome of the Rock after it sustained severe damage in an earthquake in 413 AH/1022 AD during the reign of Caliph Ath-Thaher L'izaz Din Allah Abu Al-Hassan Ibn Al-Hakeem. It was renovated again by Caliph Abu Jaafar Abdullah in 467 AH/1075 AD.

The Dome of the Rock and the Crusaders

When the Crusaders occupied the city of Jerusalem in 492 AH/1099 AD, they turned the Dome of the Rock Mosque into their headquarters. They added ornaments, crosses, and icons to its original design and surrounded the Rock of Ascension with an iron fence to prevent people from stealing pieces of it. However, when Saladin liberated Jerusalem from the Crusaders in 583 AH/1187 AD he returned the building to its original function as a mosque.

The Dome of the Rock and the Ayoubis

After liberating Jerusalem and reclaiming the Dome of the Rock, Saladin ordered its comprehensive renovation. Crusader remnants were removed from it and washed it with rose water; the Dome was coated with gold and its walls were fortified. The Ayoubis also added the wooden frame surrounding the Holy Rock of Ascension.

The Dome of the Rock and the Mamluks

The Mamluks also renovated the Dome of the Rock several times. In 659 AH/1260 AD Ad-Daheer Baibars ordered a comprehensive restoration of the mosque and replaced the mosaic decorating its drum. It was renovated again in 694 AH/1294 AD by King Al-Adel Al-Mansouri and later by Sultan Mohammad bin Qalaoun and Prince Mohammad bin Saif Ad-Din Ath-Thaheri.

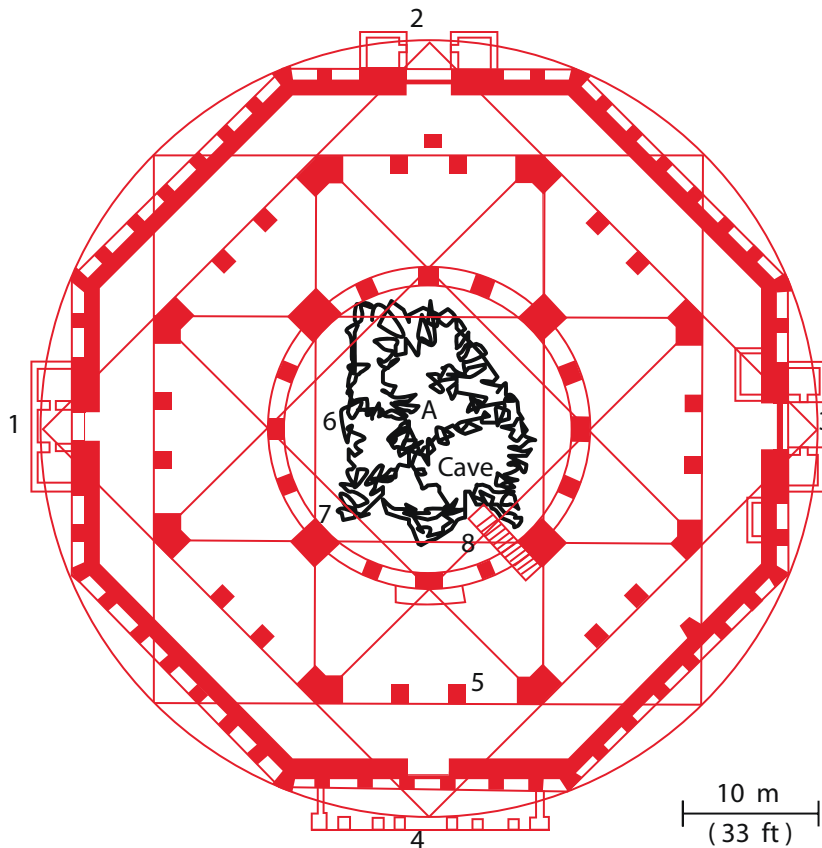
The Dome of the Rock and the Ottomans

Ottoman Sultans took great interest in the Dome of the Rock, which witnessed architectural prosperity during their era. Between 955-969 AH/1548-1561 AD Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent replaced the mosaic decorating the Dome's drum with pieces of faience especially manufactured in Istanbul. He also opened new windows for the building and coated its doors with copper. In 1270 AH/1853 AD, Sultan Abdul Majid II ordered a comprehensive renovation of the building, and in 1291 AH/1874 AD Sultan Abdul Aziz had the Dome coated with lead sheets and the magnificent chandelier placed in its center. In 1293 AH/1876 AD Sultan Abdul Hamid II ordered inscribing Chapter 36 ("Ya-sin") of the Noble Qur'an on the upper part of the dome's octagonal building.

The Dome of the Rock and the Hashemites

The Hashemites renovated the Dome of the Rock several times, first in 1342 AH/1924 AD during the reign of King Abdullah I who ordered comprehensive works. In 1372 AH/1953 AD King Hussein bin Talal had the dome coated with gold-colored aluminum sheets and its walls covered with marble slabs. He also renovated the faience decorating the dome's drum. The last major works were conducted during the period 1389 AH/1969 AD-1415 AH/1994 AD: the exterior golden dome was replaced by a new one made of gold-plated copper sheets, the Islamic motifs decorating the interior wooden dome were rearranged and a fire alarm system was installed. The Hashemites continue to oversee and execute any restoration necessary through the Islamic Waqf Department in Jerusalem.





- (A) Holy Rock (As-Sakhra)
- (1) West Gate (Bab Al-Gharb)
- (2) Gate of Paradise (Bab Al-Jenneh)
- (3) David's Place of Judgment (Dome of the Chain)
- (4) South Gate (Bab Al-Qibla)
- (5) Mihrab (prayer niche)
- (6) What is believed to be the print of Al-Buraq's hoof
- (7) What is believed to be Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) footprint
- (8) Steps down to the "Holy Rock Cave"

3. The Ancient Aqsa

The Ancient Aqsa is located underneath the central nave of Al-Qibly Mosque; it is a linear building that extends from north to south. It can be accessed by using an old staircase located in front of Al-Qibly Mosque's exterior corridor which is made of 18 steps. The Ancient Aqsa building ends with another door that is called "The Door of the Prophet" or "The Double Gate". The mosque is a barrel-shaped vault comprised of three cylindrical arches that has an inclination towards the south due to the geographical nature of Al-Aqsa Mosque's location; the interior building consists of two naves that are surrounded by huge stone pillars. It originally served as passage for the Umayyad caliphs connecting their palaces to Al-Aqsa, as the palaces were built next to its southern wall. However, the Ancient Mosque's building that was restored and reopened by Al-Aqsa's Committee for the Reconstruction of Holy Sites in 1419 AH/1998 AD is an Umayyad building. Today, the building hosts Al-Aqsa Mosque's library, called "Al-Khutniyah Library."



4. Al-Masjid Al-Marwani

Al-Masjid Al-Marwani or the Eastern Basement is a subterranean massive hall located in the southeastern corner of Al-Aqsa Mosque. Originally a very steep hill, this area was raised through various structures in order to be on the same level of Al-Aqsa Mosque's northern courtyards, as Muslims wanted to build the Al-Qibly Mosque on strong foundations. Although the accurate year of construction remains unknown, it has been confirmed that the Al-Masjid Al-Marwani was built before the Al-Qibly Mosque.

The mosque is made of 16 naves that extend over four and a half acres of land, which makes it the largest physical structure inside Al-Aqsa's premises with the capacity to accommodate over 6,000 worshipers at once. It can be accessed by using a stone staircase connected to two huge gates to the northeast of Al-Qibly Mosque. Those were built after the renovation of the mosque to allow the large numbers of worshipers and visitors to enter and exit without any obstacles, and to improve the ventilation system since the building lacks a sufficient number of windows.

In coordination with the Al-Aqsa Institution for the Renovation of Islamic Sites in the Galilee and under the executive supervision of the Islamic Waqf in Jerusalem, thousands of



young volunteers from Jerusalem, the Galilee and Negev have participated in building and renovating Al-Masjid Al-Marwani. Moreover, carpets for its interior were donated by the Arabic Republic of Egypt in 1417AH/1996AD.

The renovation and rehabilitation of these large halls started in 1417 AH/1996 AD, it was named "Al-Musalla Al-Marwani" in honor of the Umayyads who descended from Marwan bin Al-Hakam, including Abd Al-Malik, Suleiman, Hisham, and Al-Walid who built most of the essential structures of Al-Aqsa Mosque.



5. The Women's Mosque (Ayoubi Era)

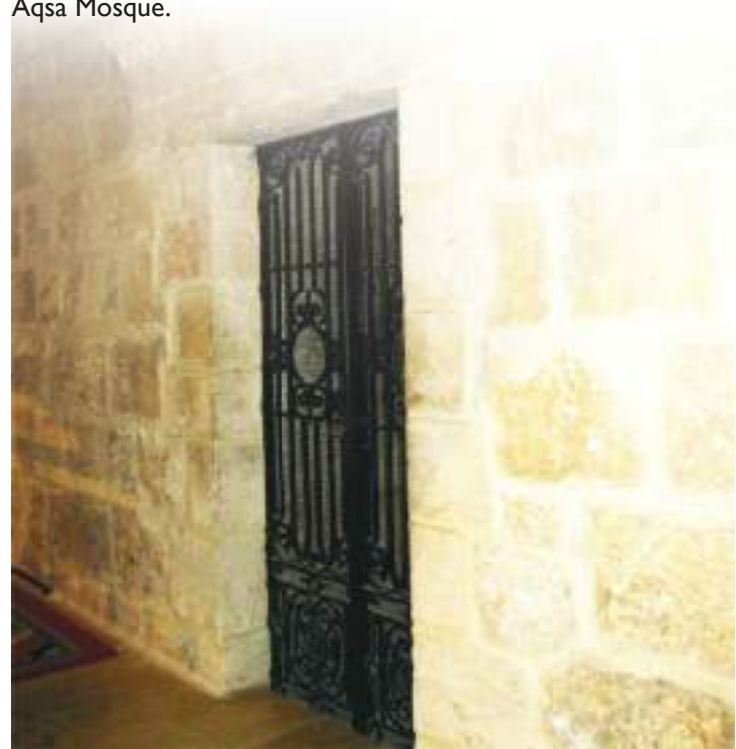
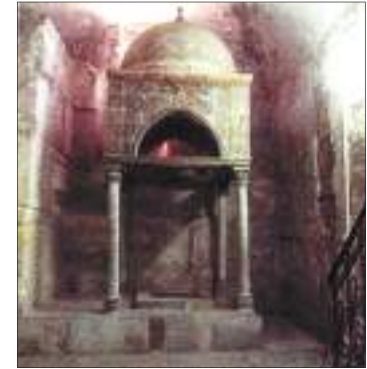
The building extends from Al-Aqsa's western wall to its southwestern corner. During the past three decades the building was divided into three sections:

- (1) The southwestern section, used as the southern hall of the Islamic Museum;
- (2) The central section, used to serve as Al-Aqsa's main library before it was moved to the Ancient Aqsa Mosque;
- (3) The eastern section, which is adjacent to Al-Qibly Mosque and used as a warehouse for the Islamic Waqf.



6. Cradle of Issa (Jesus) Mosque (Ottoman Era)

The Cradle of Issa Mosque (also referred to as “Christ’s Mosque”) is a small dome built during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1316 AH/1898 AD, and is located next to the middle of a staircase on the southeastern corner of Al-Musalla Al-Marwani. It consists of a dome which is based on four stone columns that were built over a stone basin called “the Cradle of Issa,” probably built during the Abbasid or Fatimid era. In spite of the mosque’s name, there is no evidence in Islamic tradition that places Jesus (PBUH) in this location. Moreover, Christian clergymen in Jerusalem issued a statement declaring that Christians do not have any monuments or holy sites anywhere inside Al-Aqsa Mosque.



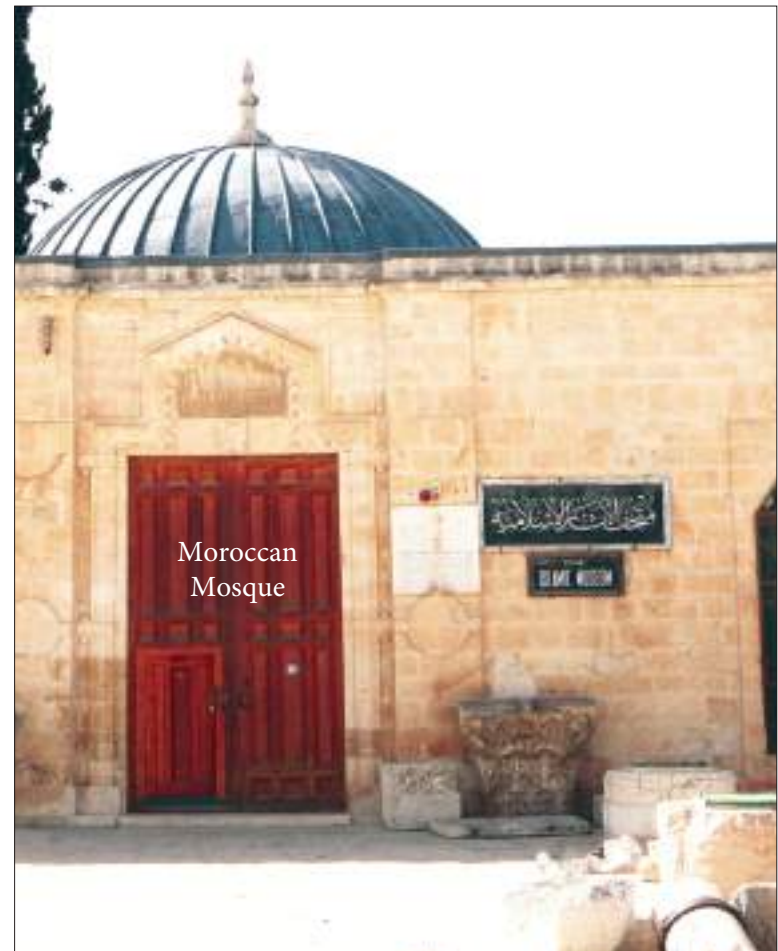
7. Al-Buraq Mosque (Umayyad/Mamluk Era)

Al-Buraq Mosque was built next to Al-Buraq Wall (Western Wall). It is called Al-Buraq Mosque because of a ring that is nailed to its wall which Muslims believe Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) used in order to tie Al-Buraq, a magnificent creature that carried him from Mecca to Jerusalem in the Night Journey of "Al-Isra' wa Al-Mi'raj." The main gate of Al-Buraq Mosque is located in Al-Aqsa's western wall, but is permanently sealed. Yet, the mosque is still open for prayers as worshipers can use another entrance located in Al-Aqsa's western corridor.



8. The Moroccan Mosque (Ayoubi Era)

This ancient mosque is located in the southwestern part of Al-Aqsa Mosque, next to the Moroccan Gate (Western Wall). It was built during the 6th or 7th Century AH/12th or 13th AD and pertains to the Ayoubi era; however, the accurate year for its construction and the name of its founder remain unknown. In the past the mosque was dedicated to the followers of the Maliki* School of Jurisprudence. It is now used as the western hall of the Islamic Museum where a number of Islamic historical pieces and monuments are displayed.



* There are four mainstream schools of thought for Islamic Fiqh Jurisprudence: Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbali, and Hanafi.

DOMES

9. The Dome of the Chain (Umayyad Era)

The Umayyad Caliph Abdul Malik bin Marwan ordered the building of this dome in 72 AH/691 AD. It is located to the east of the Dome of the Rock. Although some people believe it was built as a prototype for the Dome of the Rock, it is smaller in size and different in shape. Historians differ over the purpose the Dome of the Chain was constructed for. Some say it was used as an exchequer, but this theory is quite unlikely because of the building's open structure that would make keeping money safe inside of it a very difficult task. Others suggest it was used as a lounge for architects and builders when they were building the Dome of the Rock itself. As for the Dome's physical characteristics, it is an open building that has eleven sides which are based on eleven marble columns, while the dome is sitting on a hexagonal drum. The faience that decorates the dome was brought to Al-Aqsa Mosque upon the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent's orders in 969 AH/1561 AD. In 1433 AH/2012 AD, the Islamic Waqf Department and TIKa carried out a comprehensive renovation of the dome, which included replacing the faience decorating its drum with newer ones that were specially manufactured in Iznik, Turkey.



10. The Dome of Ascension (Ayoubi Era)

The Dome of Ascension was built in commemoration of Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) ascension to heaven (Al-Mi'raj). It is a small octagonal dome based on 30 marble columns; the open space between the columns was later sealed using marble slabs. The Dome has a niche pointing towards the Qibla, and its main entrance is located on its northern side. What makes this Dome stand out is the smaller dome on top of it that looks like a crown.



The Dome's accurate year of construction and its founder's name remain unknown; it was renovated by Prince Ezz Ad-Din Ottoman bin Ali Az-Zanjably, the Governor of Jerusalem, during the Ayoubi King Al-Adel's reign in 597 AH/1200 AD.

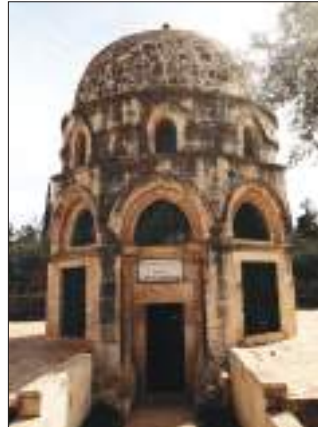
11. The Prophet's Dome and Niche (Ottoman Era)

The Prophet's Dome is an octagonal dome located northwest of the Dome of the Rock. In 945 AH/1538-1539 AD, Mohammad Bek, the governor of Gaza and Jerusalem during the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent's reign, built a niche on this location to mark the place where Muslims believe Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) led the prophets and angels in prayer at Al-Aqsa Mosque on the night of "Al-Isra' wa Al-Mi'raj." The Ottoman Sultan Abdul Al-Majid ordered the building of an octagonal dome that is based on eight marble columns over the niche.



12. Suleiman's Dome (Umayyad/ Ayoubi Era)

This dome is located in the northern part of Al-Aqsa Mosque to the southwest of the Gate of Darkness. It is believed that it was first built during the Umayyad era. It was rebuilt and renovated during the Ayoubi era since it is similar in characteristics to the Ayoubi Dome of Ascension. Some people say it was named in tribute to Prophet Suleiman (PBUH), while others believe it was named after its original founder, the Umayyad Caliph Suleiman bin Abdul Malek. The dome is octagonal and based on 24 marble columns; inside of it a small rock is displayed, believed to be a piece taken from the Holy Rock of Ascension, which is why it was protected by an iron fence in the past. The dome has a niche pointing towards the Qibla, and a small entrance on the north. Today, the building is used as headquarters for female preachers in the Jerusalem Waqf Directorate.



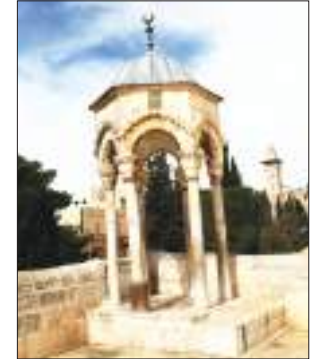
13. The Dome of Moses (Ayoubi Era)

This dome is located in the middle of the Moses Platform in the western courtyard of Al-Aqsa Mosque. It was built by the Ayoubi King Najm Ad-Din bin Al-Malk Al-Kamel in 647 AH/1249-1250 AD as a place of worship and a sanctuary for clergymen and imams. It has a number of simple niches inside and outside of it. Some historians say that it was named Dome of Moses in tribute to Prophet Moses (PBUH), while others say it was named after a sheikh who used to lead prayers in it. The dome is also famous by the name the "Dome of the Tree" because of its close location to a huge palm tree in the past.



14. Al-Khadr's Dome (Ottoman Era)

This small hexagonal dome was built in the 10th Century AH/16th Century AD on the Dome of the Rock Plateau, next to the northwestern arched gate, to mark the spot where Muslims believe a righteous man, Al-Khadr (PBUH), who is mentioned in verses 65-82 of Chapter 18 ("Al-Kahf") of the Noble Qu'ran, used to pray to Allah. The dome is based on six marble columns and includes a niche built with red stone inside.



15. Yusuf Agha's Dome (Ottoman Era)

Yusuf Agha, a governor of Jerusalem during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet IV, built this dome to the west of Al-Qibly Mosque in 1092 AH/1681 AD. It is a square-shaped building topped with a small dome. Today, it is used as an information office of Al-Aqsa Mosque.



16. Yusuf's Dome (Ayoubi/Ottoman Era)

The dome was built in 587 AH/1191 AD by the Ayoubi King Yusuf bin Ayoub, who is famous by the nickname Saladin. It was renovated in 1092 AH/1681 AD during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet IV. Its name was attributed to its founder Yusuf bin Ayoub, and in a later stage was attributed to its renovator the Ottoman governor Ali bin Yusuf Agha. The dome's structure is open from all sides, except for the southern side which is sealed by a wall. It is based on two stone columns and contains two inscriptions.



17. The Spirits Dome (Ottoman Era)

This is a small octagonal dome located on the Dome of the Rock's courtyard. It is based on eight marble columns attached to eight arches carrying the dome's drum. The Dome was probably built during the 10th Century AH/16th Century AD and was called the "Spirits Dome" because of its close location to a cave called the "Spirits Cave."



which is open from all sides and topped with a small dome. The building is based on four stone pillars built over a platform that is half a meter higher than the rest of Al-Aqsa's grounds. It is also known by the name "The Lovers of the Prophet's (PBUH) Dome" because Sufi Sheikhs used to gather under it for prayers and remembrance of Allah.



18. The Mohammadiyah Lodge Dome/ Al-Khalili (Ottoman Era)

Mohammad Bek Hafez, an Ottoman Governor of Jerusalem, ordered the building of this dome in 1112 AH/1700 AD. The dome is located to the northwest of the Dome of the Rock and consists of two rooms, one at the ground level, the other an underground basement. This dome is also known by the name "Sheikh Al-Khalili Dome" after a Sufi Sheikh who used to lead prayers there. Today, the dome is used as an office for the Committee of the Hashemite Fund for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock.



20. The Grammarian Dome (Ayoubi Era)

King Issa Al-Moatham ordered the building of this dome's basic structure in 604 AH/1207 AD and dedicated it to the teaching of the Arabic language and grammar. In 608 AH/1213 AD he added a dome on top of it. The building consists of two rooms and a hallway in the middle that is topped with two domes: the big silver dome lies on top of the western room, the smaller dome sits on top of the eastern room, while the hallway's roof is flat. The dome's entrance is located on its northern side and is decorated with two marble columns famous by the name of the "Unthankful Son." The structure remained a school for Arabic language and grammar until the 12th Century AH/17th Century AD and played a great role in Jerusalem's cultural and intellectual scene. During the past century, the dome was used as a library for the Islamic Supreme Council and as an architectural office for the restoration and reconstruction of the Dome of the Rock. Today, it is serving as an office for the acting Supreme Judge, Chairman of the Islamic Waqf Council and as headquarters for the Shari'a Appeal Court in Jerusalem.



19. The Sultan Mahmud II's Dome/The Lovers of the Prophet's (PBUH) Dome (Ottoman Era)

To leave a self-commemorating landmark inside Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II built this dome in the northern part of the mosque, next to the Gate of Darkness, in 1223 AH/1808 AD. The dome is made of a square building

MINARETS

21. The Bani Ghanim Gate Minaret (Ayoubi Era)

The Ayoubi judge Sharaf Ad-Din bin Abdul Rahman Bin As-Sahib built the Bani Ghanim Gate Minaret in 677 AH/1278 AD during the reign of Sultan Hussam Ad-Din Lajeen. It is a square-shaped minaret located near Bani Ghanim's Gate and considered the most decorated of Al-Aqsa's minarets. With a height of 38.5 meters it is the highest minaret inside Al-Aqsa with a staircase of 120 steps. The western tunnel which was dug by the Israeli Occupation Forces weakened the minaret's foundations, requiring its renovation in 1422 AH/2001 AD.



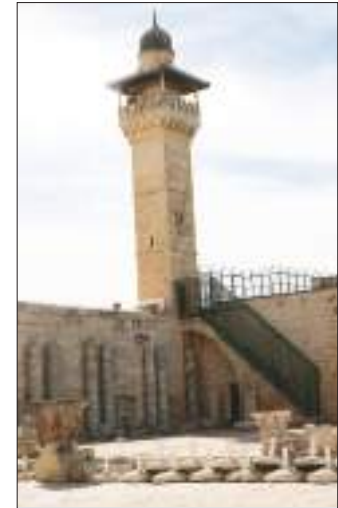
22. The Tribes Gate Minaret/The Salahya Minaret (Mamluk Era)

The Tribes Gate Minaret was first built by the Governor of Jerusalem Saif Ad-Din Qatlo Pasha during the Mamluk Sultan Al-Ashraf Sha'ban's reign next to the Tribes Gate. It used to be a square-shaped minaret until the Ottomans ordered its reconstruction in 1007 AH/1599 AD during the reign of Sultan Mehmet III, making it the only cylindrical-shaped minaret inside Al-Aqsa. The Tribes Minaret was renovated twice, first in 1345 AH/1927 AD after being damaged in an earthquake, and then in 1387 AH/1967 AD after being damaged during Israeli raids. The Al-Aqsa Mosque's Committee reconstructed the minaret and covered its dome with lead sheets.



23. The Moroccan Gate Minaret (Mamluk Era)

The Mamluk Judge Sharf Ad-Din bin Fakhr Ad-Din Al-Khalili built the Moroccan Gate Minaret in 677 AH/1278 AD next to the Moroccan Gate. The 23-meters high minaret is the shortest minaret inside Al-Aqsa Mosque and is standing without any foundations. The top of the minaret was damaged in the earthquake that hit Jerusalem in 1340 AH/1922 AD and was repaired by the Islamic Supreme Council which complemented it with a dome, later covered with lead sheets by the Hashemite Fund for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock.



24. The Gate of the Chain Minaret (Mamluk Era)

Prince Saif Ad-Din Tankz bin Abdullah An-Nasiri built this minaret over Al-Aqsa's northern corridor in 730 AH/1329 AD next to the Gate of the Chain. The square-shaped minaret can be accessed through Al-Ashrafiya School using an 80 steps staircase. It is built on a squared base and topped with a covered porch resting on a set of stone columns. The minaret was restored by the Supreme Islamic Council in 1340 AH/1922 AD after being damaged in an earthquake. Israeli forces banned Muslims from entering and using this minaret to "protect" Jewish worshipers at Al-Buraq Wall ("Western Wall"), which the minaret overlooks.



Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from Al-Masjid Al-Haram to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa

ARCHED GATES

Arched gates, also called “scales,” comprise a number of stone or marble columns that are linked together through arches. A number of arched gates surround the Dome of the Rock’s plateau, each one of them connected to a staircase. In addition to facilitating worshipers’ accessibility to the four-meter high plateau, the gates were built to serve a decorative function.

25. The Southern Arched Gate

This arched gate was first built during the Abbasid era and renovated twice after that: once during the Fatimid era and once by the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1311 AH/1893 AD. It consists of two stone pillars intersected by three marble columns topped with a number of arches. The gate has a sundial that was carved in the middle of its southern façade in 1325 AH/1907 AD, by the Supreme Islamic Council which was founded in 1922 under the British Mandate. The Council provided it with a distinguished feature present in no other arched gate surrounding the Dome of the Rock.

26. The Eastern Arched Gate

The accurate year or era in which this gate was constructed remains unknown. Some historians claim it was built during the Abbasid era, while others say it was built under the Fatimids. However, it is most likely that it was built during the Abbasid era and renovated by the Fatimids later. The gate consists of two stone pillars that have four marble columns topped with arches between them.

27. The Western Arched Gate

The Western Arched Gate was built in 340 AH/951 AD and its founder remains unknown. It consists of two stone pillars that have three marble columns topped with a number of arches between them.

28. The Northwestern Arched Gate

The Northwestern Arched Gate was built by the Mamluk King Al-Ashraf Sha’ban in 778 AH/1376 AD, and was renovated in 926 AH/1520 AD by the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. It consists of two stone pillars that have two marble columns topped with arches between them.

29. The Northeastern Arched Gate

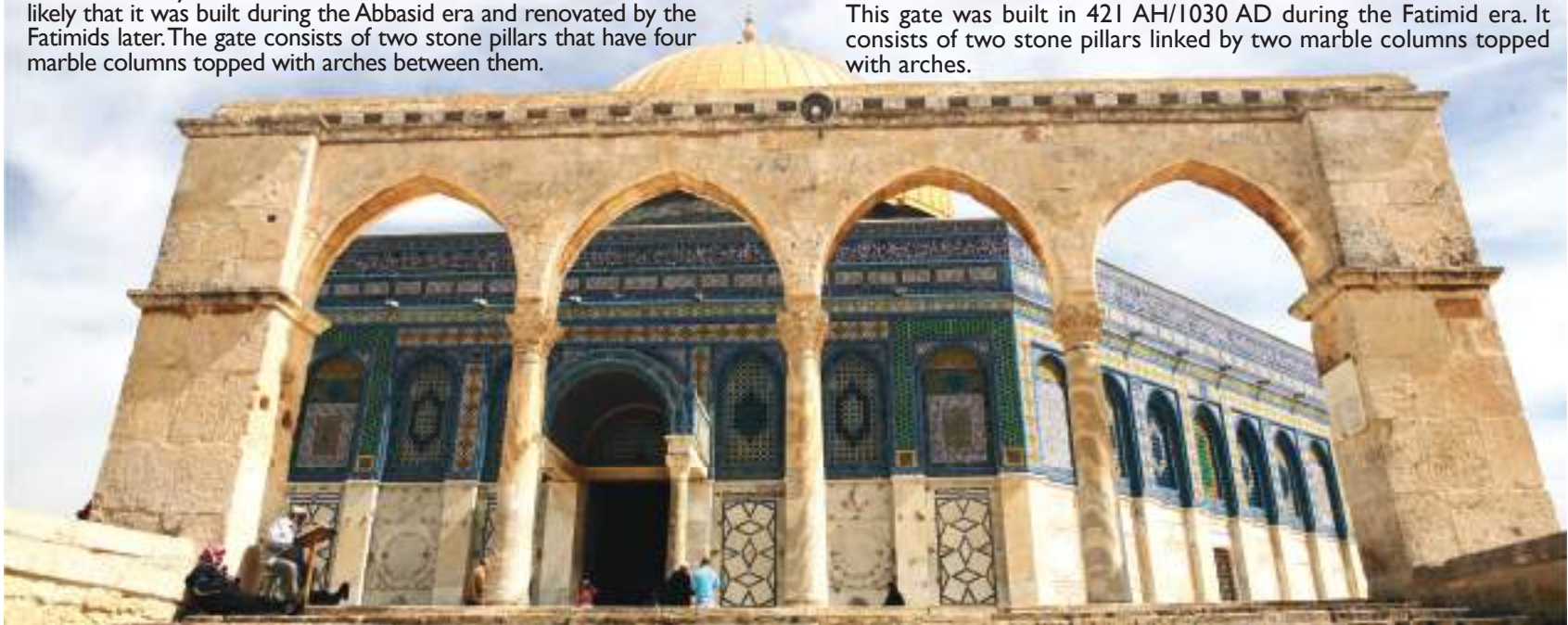
Sultan Mohammad bin Qalawun built this gate in 726 AH/1325 AD. It consists of two stone trusses connected by two thin stone columns topped with arches.

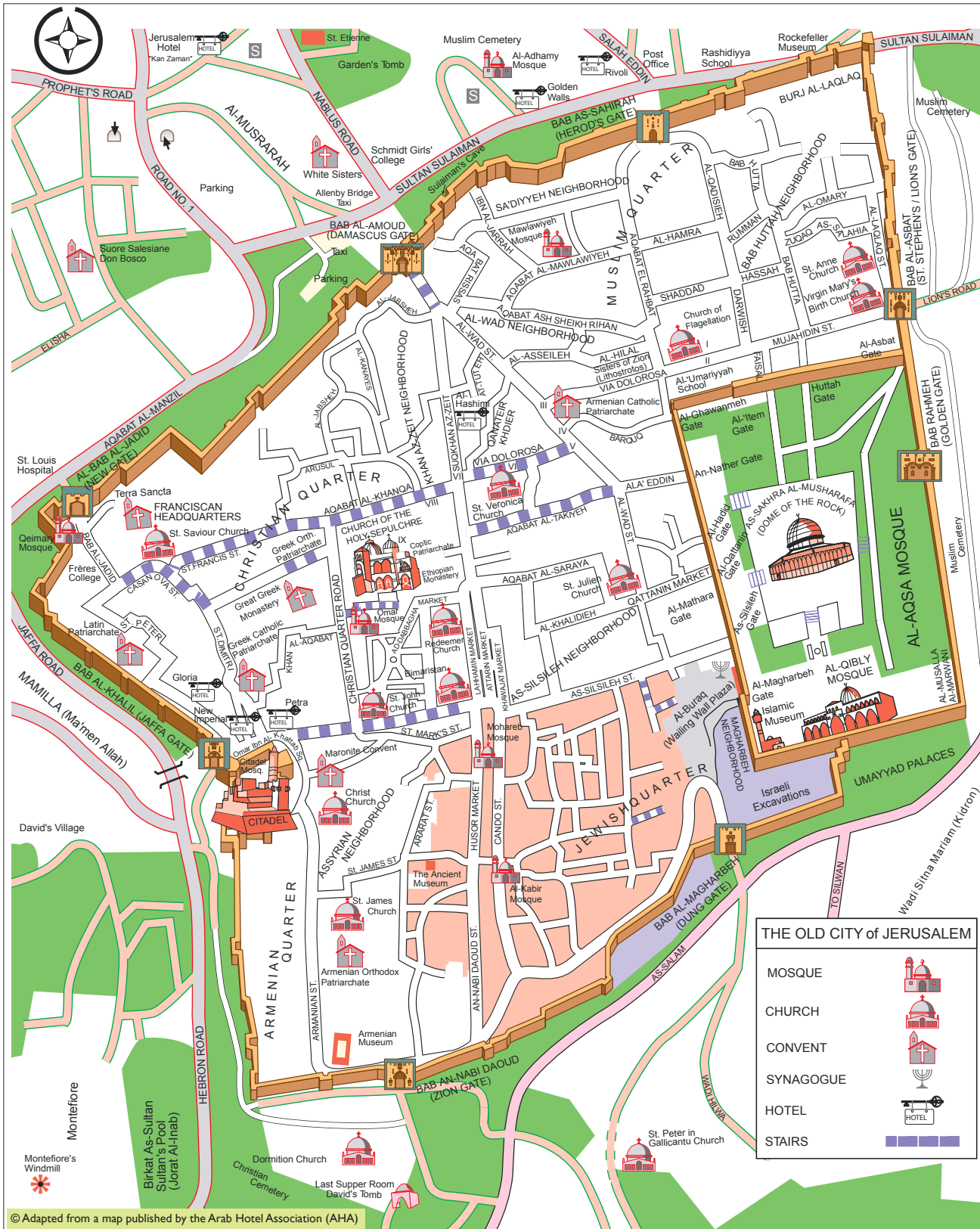
30. The Southwestern Arched Gate

Prince Naser Ad-Din An-Nashashibi, the governor of Jerusalem during Sultan Qaitbay’s reign, supervised the building of this gate in 877 AH/1472-1473 AD. It consists of two stone pillars intersected by two marble columns topped with three arches.

31. The Southeastern Arched Gate

This gate was built in 421 AH/1030 AD during the Fatimid era. It consists of two stone pillars linked by two marble columns topped with arches.





SCHOOLS

32. Al-Khutniya School (Ayoubi Era)

The Khutniya School was built during Saladin's reign in 587 AH/1191 AD adjacent to Al-Qibly Mosque's southern wall, and was named after Sheikh Al-Khutni, a scholar who taught Islamic Sciences there. The school's original structure was subject to several changes with the adding of some rooms and restrooms. Today, only a few arches and windows remain of the school's original building.



33. Al-Fakhriya School (Mamluk Era)

Judge Fakhr Ad-Din Mohammad bin Fadl Allah built this school in 730 AH/1329-1330 AD. It was originally an Islamic religious school and was later turned into a Sufi lodge. Israeli forces demolished parts of the school, leaving only three rooms and a small mosque out of its original building. The school's mosque structure is simple; it is an oblong room which is based on three stone pillars and topped with three magnificent domes that were added to the building during the Ottoman era. The mosque has also a beautiful red-brick niche pointing towards the Qibla.



34. Al-Duwaidaryah School (Mamluk Era)

Prince Alam Ad-Din Abu Musa Sanjar Al-Duwaidar built this school near the Gate of Darkness in 695 AH/1295 AD. In addition to being an Islamic school teaching the Shafi'i jurisprudence, it also served as a hospice. The school remained an educational place until the late Ottoman era.



Remarkably, it was devoted to teaching girls. It continued with this function during the time of the British Mandate. The school is made up of a two-storey building with a beautiful entrance decorated with stalactites;* it also contains a mosque. Today, the building is used as a school called Al-Bakriyah School for People with Special Needs.

35. At-Tankaziyah School (Mamluk Era)

The Governor of Great Syria Prince Saif Ad-Din Tankaz An-Nasri built this school in 729 AH/1328 AD. The school is located between the Gate of the Chain to the north and Al-Buraq Wall to the south. It was originally dedicated to teaching Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) traditions (Sunnah and Hadith) and was turned into a courthouse during the Mamluk Sultan Qaitbay's reign. Under the Ottomans it became a Shari'a Court, until the early days of the British Mandate when the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin Al-Husseini made it his place of residence. The building went back to being a school for teaching Islamic jurisprudence until it was confiscated by the Israeli Authorities in 1388 AH/1969 AD and turned into a Border Police Station to monitor and oversee Al-Aqsa Mosque.



* A characteristic of Islamic architecture and decoration. It consists of a series of little niches, bracketed out one above the other, or of projecting prismatic forms in rows and tiers that are connected at their upper ends by miniature squinch arches.

36. Al-Farisyah School (Mamluk Era)

Al-Farisyah School is named after its founder Prince Faris Al-Baki bin Al-Amir Qatlo bin Abdullah. The school was built in 755 AH/1352 AD, on top of Al-Aqsa Mosque's northern corridor, where a staircase leads to its arched entrance. Inside the school are found an open courtyard and a staircase connecting the place to the adjacent Aminyah School, as the two schools' structures overlap. Today, the school is used as a place of residence for a number of Jerusalemite families.



37. Al-Ashrafiyah School (Mamluk Era)

Prince Hassan bin Tatr Ath-Thahiry built this school as a gift for King Ath-Thaher Khashqoum in 872 AH/1426 AD. As the latter died before the construction was completed, Prince Ath-Thahiry decided to dedicate it to Sultan Al-Ashraf Qaitbay who assigned scholars and teachers to the place. When Sultan Qaitbay came to Jerusalem, he visited the school but was not quite impressed by the building, so he demolished it and ordered its reconstruction in 885 AH/1470 AD. Al-Ashrafiyah School is considered to be the third architectural jewel of Al-Aqsa compound, besides Al-Qibly Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. Half of the school is located inside Al-Aqsa, while the other half is outside the Mosque's borders. The school consists of a two-storey building, and has a beautiful entrance decorated with white and red bricks. It has also a mosque that was once used by the followers of the Hanbali school. There are two graves inside its mosque, with one thought to belong to Sheikh Al-Khalil. Today, a significant part of the school is used as Al-Aqsa Shar'ia School for Girls, another part is used as an office for the Department of Manuscripts subordinated to the Islamic Waqf Directorate, while the remaining parts house some Jerusalemite families. In 1420 AH/2000 AD, the Islamic Waqf Department and the Welfare Association carried out a comprehensive renovation of the building.



38. Al-Malakiyah School (Mamluk Era)

King Joukndar Al-Malaki An-Nasiri built this school in 741 AH/1340 AD during the reign of Sultan An-Naser Mohammad bin Qalawun. The school is a two-storey building with a beautiful decorated entrance which leads to a vestibule (a small room or hall between an entrance and the interior of the building or house) connected to a central open courtyard; its largest room overlooks Al-Aqsa Mosque's courtyards. This school is currently used as residence for some Jerusalemite families.



39. Al-Jawiliyah School (Mamluk Era)

Alm Ad-Din Sanjr bin Abdullah Al-Jawli, Governor of Jerusalem during King An-Naser bin Qalawun's reign, built this school on the northwestern side of Al-Aqsa in 712-720 AH/1312-1320 AD. The school is made up of a two-storey building that has an open courtyard surrounded by a number of rooms; its southern façade overlooks Al-Aqsa Mosque's courtyards. The school was turned into a city hall in the 9th Century AH/15th Century AD when the Ottomans took over Jerusalem; it later became a governmental building before returning to being a city hall again. Today, it is used as part of Al-Omariyah School.



40. Al-Khatuniyah School (Mamluk Era)

Lady Agl Khatun endowed this school in the 7th Century AH/13th Century AD. Its eastern windows overlook Al-Aqsa Mosque's courtyard. Originally it was dedicated to teaching Qur'an and Islamic jurisprudence. Several Islamic and national figures are buried inside this school, including Prince Mohammad Ali Al-Hindi, an Indian Prince who defended the Palestinian cause; Musa Kathem Al-Husseini, head of the nationalist Executive Committee of the Palestine Arab Congress and Mayor of Jerusalem under the Ottomans; Sharif Abdul Hamid bin Awn, father-in-law of King Abdullah of Jordan; Ahmad Hilmi Abdel Baqi, first Palestinian Prime Minister under the 1948 All-Palestine Government; Abdul Qader Al-Husseini, grandson of Musa Kathem Al-Husseini, commander of local Arab forces during the 1948 War and leader of the famous Al-Qastal battle; his son Faisal Al-Husseini, the PLO representative in Jerusalem (Orient House); and Abdul Hamid Shoman, founder of the Arab Bank.



41. Al-Asa'rdiyah School (Mamluk Era)

Majd Ad-Din Abdul Ghani bin Saif Ad-Din Abu Bakr Yusuf Al-Asa'rdi ordered the building of this school in 760 AH/1385 AD. It was officially endowed in 770 AH/1369 AD. The school's entrance is located in Al-Aqsa's



northern corridor; it consists of a two-storey building and an open courtyard. The school is topped with three beautiful domes and possesses a mosque overlooking Al-Aqsa's courtyard. Today, the building is used as a residence.

42. Al-Araguniyah School (Mamluk Era)

Prince Aragon Al-Kamili started building this school in 758 AH/1356 AD but he died before its construction was completed. Consequently, the mission was carried on by Rokn Ad-Din Baibars. The school is located between the Cotton Merchants Gate and the Iron Gate at the western end of Al-Aqsa Mosque. It consists of a two-storey building with a beautiful entrance decorated with red and white bricks and is located in the southern part of the Iron Gate alley. The entrance contains an inscription of the school's founder's name and the year of construction. The place also houses two tombs, one belonging to its founder, Prince Aragon, and the other to the Hashemite King Al-Hussein bin Ali. Today, the school is used as a house.



43. Al-Aminiyah School (Mamluk Era)

Amin Ad-Din Abdullah built this two-storey school overlooking Al-Aqsa Mosque's northern corridor in 730 AH/1330 AD. A number of Muslim scholars are buried inside the building, whose structure overlaps with Al-Farisyah School. Today the school building is used as a house.



44. Al-Basitiyah School (Mamluk Era)

Al-Basitiyah School is located in the north of Al-Aqsa Mosque, to the east of the Gate of Darkness next to Al-Duawaid-aryah School. It was endowed by Judge Zein Ad-Din Abdul-Basit Khalil Al-Dimashqi/Al-Qahiri who was in charge of the treasury and army during the reign of King Al-Mu'ayyad Saif Ad-Din Sheikh Al-Mamluki 815-824 AH/1412-1421 AD.



The school's foundation is credited to Sheikh Al-Islam Shams Ad-Din Mohammad Al-Harawi, inspector of the two noble mosques (Al-Aqsa and Al-Ibrahimi), who commenced its construction but passed away before its completion. It consists of three rooms and an outdoor yard. The school was concerned with teaching Shafi'i jurisprudence, Hadith and the Holy Qur'an to orphans, especially Sufis. Today, it serves as a residential building.

45. Al-Manjakiyah School (Mamluk Era)

This school is located on the western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque, to the left when entering the mosque from the Inspector's Gate. It is attributed to its founder and Waqf registrar, Saif Ad-Din Manjak Al-Yousifi An-Nasiri, and is dated from the 8th Century AH/14th Century AD.



It comprises two floors which have a large covered corridor and include many rooms and halls of different sizes. Built initially as a school, it was turned into a house towards the end of the Ottoman era. It also served as a shelter for foreigners who visited

Jerusalem. During the British Mandate it became an elementary school and was later renovated by the Supreme Islamic Council to use as its headquarters. Today it serves as the headquarters of the Jerusalem Waqf Directorate which is subordinated to the Jordanian Ministry of Endowment and Islamic Affairs.

46. The Ottoman School (Mamluk era)

The Ottoman School is located at the Ablution Gate, next to Al-Ashrafiyah School. It is named after Asfahan Shah Khatun Bint Mahmoud Al-'Uthmaniyah, the Turkish lady who established it in 840 AH/1436 AD.

The school consists of two floors and can be reached through a beautiful Mamluk entrance surmounted by an inscription evoking its foundation and decorated with alternating red and white stones. The school consists of a number of rooms and a small open courtyard overlooking Al-Aqsa Mosque with a façade made of red and white stones. Of the two tombs situated at the left side of the entrance, one houses the remnants of Asfahan.



The building was reconstructed by the Supreme Islamic Council but the school and its mosque were damaged by Israeli excavations beneath it. The Israeli authorities have confiscated the school's mosque, allegedly to create ventilation for the underneath tunnel.

CORRIDORS

47. The Northern Corridor (Mamluk Era)

King Issa Al-Moatham built the oldest section of the northern corridor, extending to the west from the Gate of Darkness, in 610 AH/1213 AD. An inscription can be found on this section of the corridor documenting the name of its founder and the year of its construction. The rest of the corridor was built during various Islamic eras. A number of schools were built over the corridor: Al-Aminiyah School, Al-Asa'rdiyah School, Al-Farisyah School, Al-Malakiyah School, and Al-Sabibiyah School. The corridor is made up of huge stone columns that are topped with arched ceilings and overlapping vaults and hallways. It is paved with stone floors that are slightly higher than the rest of Al-Aqsa's courtyards. During the Ottoman era the corridor was sealed with stone partitions and turned into a lodge for poor pilgrims.



48. The Western Corridor (Mamluk Era)

This corridor was built during the Mamluk era between 707-737 AH/1307-1336 AD. It consists of stone columns topped with arched ceilings and a number of overlapping hallways. The corridor paved with stone floors that are slightly higher than the rest of Al-Aqsa's courtyards. In the past, the western corridor's hallways were used for scholarly gatherings.



Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from Al-Masjid Al-Haram to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa

GATES

There are 15 gates leading to Al-Aqsa Mosque, ten of which are open while the remaining five are currently closed. The keys for the Moroccan Gate are with the Israeli authorities since they occupied East Jerusalem in 1387 AH/1967 AD. The Islamic Waqf Directorate holds the keys of the rest of the gates, but opens them only with the permission of the Israeli police who control access to Al-Aqsa Mosque, often denying entry to Muslim men younger than 50 years of age (or younger than 45 sometimes). The Israeli police have a station to the northwest of the Dome of the Rock inside Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The Open Gates

49. The Tribes Gate (Ayoubi Era)

The Tribes Gate was built in 610 AH/1213 AD. It is a four-meter high arched gate located on the northeast side of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. It was renovated several times; the latest time by the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent.



50. The Gate of Remission (Ayoubi/Ottoman Era)

The Gate of Remission is one of the oldest gates inside Al-Aqsa; it is located in the Mosque's northern corridor between the Gate of the Tribes and the Gate of Darkness. The accurate year in which the gate was built remains unknown. It was renovated during the Ayoubi and Ottoman eras. It is a simple gate topped with stone hangers that were used to carry fire lamps in the past. This gate leads to the As-Sadiyah Quarter in the Old City.



51. The Gate of Darkness (The Gate of Faisal) (Ayoubi Era)

The Gate of Darkness is located in Al-Aqsa's northern part; it was last renovated in 610 AH/1213 AD by the Ayoubi King Al-Moatham Sharf Ad-Din Issa. The gate is known by a variety of names such as the Gate of Darkness, the Gate of Faisal (in tribute to the Hashemite King Faisal's visit to Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1348 AH/1930 AD), the Gate of the Honor of the Prophets (after the Honor of the Prophets Quarter to which the gate leads), and the Duwaidaryah Gate (because of its close location to Al-Duwaidaryah School).



52. The Gate of Bani Ghanim (Mamluk Era)

The Gate is located in the northwest part of Al-Aqsa Mosque and was last renovated in 707AH/1308 AD. It is a relatively small gate named after the Old City's Bani Ghanim Quarter, to which it leads. In the past, the Gate was called Al-Khalil (Hebron) Gate after Prophet Ibrahim Al-Khalil (PBUH). The Islamic Waqf Directorate renovated it after it was burnt by an Israeli extremist in 1419 AH/1998 AD.



54. The Iron Gate (Mamluk Era)

The Iron Gate is located in the western corridor of Al-Aqsa Mosque between the Inspector's Gate and the Cotton Merchants Gate; it was last renovated in 755-758 AH/1354-1357 AD. It is also called Aragon's Gate, after its renovator and founder of the Aragunyah School, Prince Aragon Al-Kamili.



53. The Inspector's Gate (Mamluk Era)

The Inspector's Gate is located in Al-Aqsa Mosque's western corridor to the south of Bani Ghanim's Gate. It was renovated in 600 AH/1203 AD by King Moathem Sharaf Ad-Din. It is a huge gate with a 4.5-meter high entrance. The gate takes its name from the Inspector of the two Noble Mosques (Al-Aqsa Mosque and Al-Ibrahimi Mosque) who was believed to reside nearby during the Mamluk era. In the past it was also called Michael's Gate, the Jail Gate (because of the proximity of an Ottoman jail located at the adjacent Ribat Al-Mansouri), and the Council Gate (after the Supreme Islamic Council).



55. The Cotton Merchants Gate (Mamluk Era)

The Mamluk Sultan Mohammad bin Qaloun built the Cotton Merchants Gate in 737 AH/1336 AD, in the western part of Al-Aqsa Mosque, between the Iron Gate and the Ablution Gate. The gate leads to the Cotton Market in the Old City of Jerusalem, from which it derives its name. This gate is considered one of Al-Aqsa Mosque's most beautiful gates, with decorations made up of Islamic motifs and stalactites.



56. The Ablution Gate (Ayoubi Era)

This gate is located in the western corridor of Al-Aqsa Mosque, near the Cotton Merchants Gate, close to the Dome of the Rock. It is the only gate of Al-Aqsa that does not lead to one of the Old City's quarters but to an ablution fountain built by the Ayoubi Sultan Al-Adel Abu Bakr Ayoub. The gate and the ablution fountain were last renovated in 666 AH/1267 AD.



58. The Gate of the Chain (Ayoubi Era)

The Gate of the Chain, which was built during the Ayoubi era, is one of Al-Aqsa Mosque's main entrances. It is located in the southern part of Al-Aqsa's western wall. The gate is relatively high and topped with ornamented bricks. The Ayoubis renovated it in 600 AH/1200 AD. It has a double wooden door with a small opening that allows a single person to pass through when the double door is closed.



57. The Tranquility Gate (Ayoubi Era)

The Tranquility Gate is one of Al-Aqsa Mosque's main gates. It is located to the north of the Gate of the Chain, and is also known as the Wizards' Gate and David's Gate. The gate was built and renovated during the Ayoubi era; it is relatively high and decorated with overlapping ornamented stones. The gate has a double wooden door with a small opening that allows a single person to pass through when the double door is closed. Today, the gate remains closed.



59. The Moroccan Gate (Mamluk Era)

The Moroccan Gate is located in Al-Aqsa Mosque's western wall (Al-Buraq Wall). It was last renovated in 713AH/1313AD. The gate leads to the Moroccan Quarter that was demolished by the Israeli Occupation Forces in 1387 AH/1967 AD to build the Wailing Wall Plaza meant to provide more space and facilities to Jewish worshippers. The Israeli forces ban Muslims from using this gate, allegedly for security reasons.



The Closed Gates

60. The Golden Gate (Umayyad Era)

The Golden Gate is an ancient historical door carved inside Al-Aqsa's eastern wall. It consists of two gates, one to the south (Ar-Rahma - "The Mercy") and one to the north (At-Tawbah - "The Repentance"). The Mercy Gate was named after the Mercy Graveyard, located in front of it, which contains the remnants of Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) companions Ash-Shadad bin Aws and Obada bin As-Samet. Experts say that this door was probably built during the Umayyad



era and that Imam Al-Ghazzali, the prominent Islamic scholar and philosopher, wrote his famous book *The Revival of Religious Sciences* while staying in a room located above the gate. This door is currently closed; it was shut by Saladin after conquering Jerusalem to protect the city from future raids. HM King Abdullah II Endowment established the Integral Chair for the Study of Imam Ghazali Work at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa (*The Revival of the Religious Science Ihyā' Ulum El-Din*) in 1433 AH/2012 AD.

61. The Funerals Gate (Al-Buraq Gate)

The Funerals Gate is one of Al-Aqsa's hidden gates, located on its eastern wall. Its name stems from the fact that it was used by Muslims restrictedly to carry out funerals in Ar-Rahma ("The Mercy") Graveyard. Today, the gate is permanently closed.



62. The Double Gate

This gate is located to the West of the Triple Door (Huldah's Gate); it was used by Umayyad Caliphs when they visited Al-Aqsa as it connects Al-Qibly Mosque to their palaces located outside Al-Aqsa's southern wall. Today, the gate is permanently closed and the interior corridor connected to it has been turned into a mosque called the "Ancient Aqsa."



63. The Triple Gate/The Huldah Gate (Fatimid Era)

The Fatimid Caliph Ath-Thaher L'izaz Din Allah ordered the building of the Triple Gate in 452 AH/1034 AD. It is located in the middle of the southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque. It consists of three entrances that



overlook the Umayyad palaces outside the southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque and lead to the western wall of Al-Masjid Al-Marwani. Saladin closed these doors to protect the city from future raids.

64. The Single Gate (Fatimid Era)

This gate was rebuilt by the Fatimid Caliph Ath-Thaher L'izaz Din Allah in 425 AH/1034 AD. It is located on the southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque, to the east of the Triple Gate, and is permanently closed.



Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from Al-Masjid Al-Haram to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa

WATER SOURCES

There are 32 water sources inside Al-Aqsa Mosque: two pools, two cisterns, eight sabeels (public water sources meant to service people for free), and twenty seven wells that were built by Muslims to provide running water sources to perform ablutions (wadu'), drink, and irrigate the plants and trees inside the compound.

65. Al-Ka'as (Ayoubi Era)

Al-Ka'as is an ablution fountain that was built by the Ayoubi Sultan Al-Adel Abu Bakr bin Ayoub in 589 AH/1193 AD. It is a circular basin surrounded by an ornamented iron fence encircled by stone stools. It contains a central fountain and a number of side faucets used for ablutions. Al-Ka'as was renovated once by Sultan Qaitbay and last by Prince Tankz An-Nasiri in 728 AH/1327 AD.



66. King Issa Al-Moathem's (Water Tank) Cistern (Ayoubi Era)

King Issa Al-Moathem ordered building the cistern in 607 AH/1210 AD just after the erection of the Grammarian Dome 604 AH/1207 AD. The cistern is made up of three hallways that are separated by constructed partitions and are covered with overlapping vaults. It has three entrances on its southern side. The cistern's year of construction and its founder's name are engraved over the middle door. During the Mamluk Sultan Al-Mansour Qalawun's reign, part of the cistern was used as a storage room for Al-Aqsa Mosque, while the other part was used as a mosque by Hanbalis. The cistern later suffered from negligence and is used today by Al-Aqsa's Gardening Department.



67. Sabeel Qaitbay (Mamluk Era)

Sultan Saif Ad-Din Ennal built this sabeel in 860 AH/1456 AD. As only a well had remained of its original structure, the Mamluk Sultan Qaitbay reconstructed it and added a colorful brick and marble floored building, topped with an octagonal dome ornamented with Islamic motifs. The sabeel was renovated again by the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1300 AH/1882-1883 AD. Today, it is made up of two floors; a well is situated on the ground floor and a tank used for storing water on the second.



68. An-Narenj Pool (Mamluk Era)

The An-Narenj (“bitter oranges”) pool is located on the western courtyard of Al-Aqsa Mosque between Sabeel Qasem Pasha and Sabeel Qaitbay’s platform. The Mamluk Sultan Qaitbay renovated it in 887 AH/1483 AD when he built Al-Ashrafiyah School. The square-shaped pool contains in its center a marble-floored fountain which is out of use today. The Al-Aqsa Reconstruction Committee renovated the pool and turned it into an ablution fountain by adding 24 faucets on three of its sides. It is supplied with water from the nearby tank of Sabeel Qasem Pasha.



69. Sabeel Qasem Pasha (Ottoman Era)

Sabeel Qasem Pasha is located on the southwestern side of Al-Aqsa Mosque close to the Gate of the Chain. Built by the Prince of Jerusalem Qasem Pasha in 933 AH/1527 AD during the reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, it is an octagonal sabeel with 16 faucets which is topped with a wooden sunshade. It is also called the Sabeel of the Courthouse.



70. Sabeel Suleiman (Ottoman Era)

Sabeel Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent is located near the Gate of Darkness over a platform that carries the same name; it was endowed in 948 AH/1541 AD. In 1417 AH/1997 AD the Islamic Heritage Committee in coordination with the Waqf Directorate supplemented it with an ablution fountain which is situated between the sabeel’s building and the Dome of the Prophet’s Lovers.



Wells

There are 27 wells in Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. Most of them are rich with water and supply the various water structures used for ablutions, drinking and irrigation.



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PULPITS (MINBAR)

A pulpit is a speaker's stand in a mosque. Almost every mosque in the Islamic world includes a pulpit which is used to give sermons on Fridays and on special occasions such as Eid Al-Adha and Eid Al-Fitr. These sermons are considered part of Muslim prayer's rituals.

71. Nour Ad-Din Zinki's (Saladin's) Pulpit (Ayoubi Era)

Nour Ad-Din Zinki had this pulpit built in Aleppo in 564 AH/1168 AD. His intention was to place it inside Al-Aqsa Mosque after its liberation from the Crusaders, but he died beforehand. When Saladin conquered the Crusaders and liberated Jerusalem, he shipped Nour Ad-Din Zinki's Pulpit from Aleppo and placed it in Al-Qibly Mosque. The pulpit is made of cedar wood decorated with ivory and sea shells. Its gate is topped with a magnificent crown believed to be the emblem of the Tankaziyah state, most probably added to its structure by Prince Tankz An-Nasiri in 731



AH/1330 AD. The pulpit includes a staircase that is topped with an arch and a wooden porch.

In 1389 AH/1969 AD, Dennis Michael Rohan, an Australian Christian Zionist, set Al-Qibly Mosque on fire. The historical pulpit was completely destroyed in the arson. It was temporarily replaced with a simpler one until an identical pulpit built in Jordan with the same original materials was brought to Al-Qibly Mosque upon the orders of King Abdullah II in 1428 AH/2007 AD.

72. Burhan Ad-Din's Pulpit (Mamluk Era)

This pulpit is located in the southern part of the Dome of the Rock's courtyard to the west of the southern arched gate which leads to Al-Qibly Mosque. The Supreme Judge Burhan Ad-Din bin Jamaa' ordered building a marble pulpit in 709 AH/1309 AD to replace a small portable one made of wood. The pulpit has a small entrance and a number of steps leading to a stone seat reserved for the speaker. It is topped with an attractive dome called the "Dome of the Scale" because of its adjacent location to one of the arched gates that were known as scales in the past. There are two niches carved in the body of the pulpit: one can be seen under the speaker's chair while the other is on its eastern side next to the arched gate pillar. The pulpit is the only exterior pulpit within Al-Aqsa's Mosque which has been used in summer time as well as religious festivals.



THE ISLAMIC MUSEUM

73. The Islamic Museum

The Islamic Museum was established in 1341 AH/1923 AD by the Supreme Islamic Council. It is considered to be the first museum founded in Palestine. Initially, it was housed at Ar-Ribat Al-Mansouri which is located opposite the current Islamic Waqf headquarters, immediately outside Al-Nazer Gate. In 1348 AH/1929 AD, the museum was moved from there to its current location at the southwestern corner of Al-Aqsa Mosque, next to the Moroccan Gate.



The museum has two halls that form a right angle. The western hall was a mosque known as the Moroccan Mosque, while the southern hall is part of the Women's Mosque.

The Islamic Museum includes rare archeological and artistic collections which pertain to the various Islamic historical eras. In addition, the museum has about 750 manuscripts of the Holy Qur'an with the oldest copy dating back to the 2nd Century AH/8th Century AD. There is also a copy of the Holy Qur'an from the Mamluk Sultan Barsbay, which was written between the years 825-840 AH/1422-1437 AD. With its dimensions of 110 cm x 170 cm it is considered the largest copy of the Holy Qur'an in Palestine.



Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from Al-Masjid Al-Haram to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa

AL-BURAQ WALL

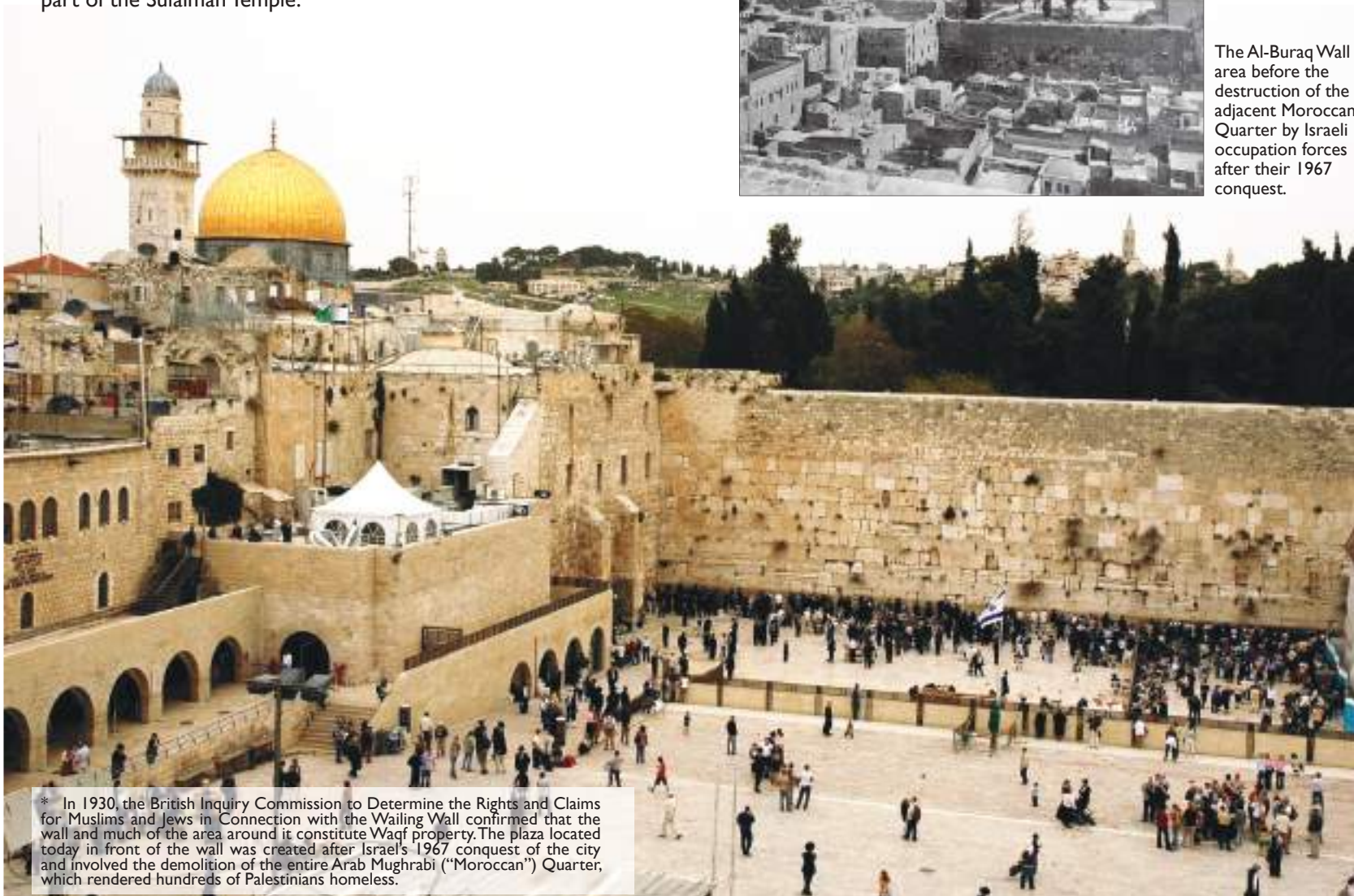
74. Al-Buraq Wall

Al-Buraq Wall represents the southwestern section of Al-Aqsa Mosque's wall, some 50 meters in length and approximately 20 meters in height. It is part of Al-Aqsa Mosque and considered an Islamic property.* The Jews call it the "Wailing Wall," the "Western Wall" or the "Kotel," and claim it is the remaining part of the Sulaiman Temple.

According to Muslim tradition this is the wall where Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) tied his magnificent creature, Al-Buraq, before ascending to heaven on his journey from Mecca to Jerusalem (*Al-Isra' wa Al-Mi'raj*), where he received his revelations of Islam and led the other prophets in prayer at Al-Aqsa Mosque.



The Al-Buraq Wall area before the destruction of the adjacent Moroccan Quarter by Israeli occupation forces after their 1967 conquest.



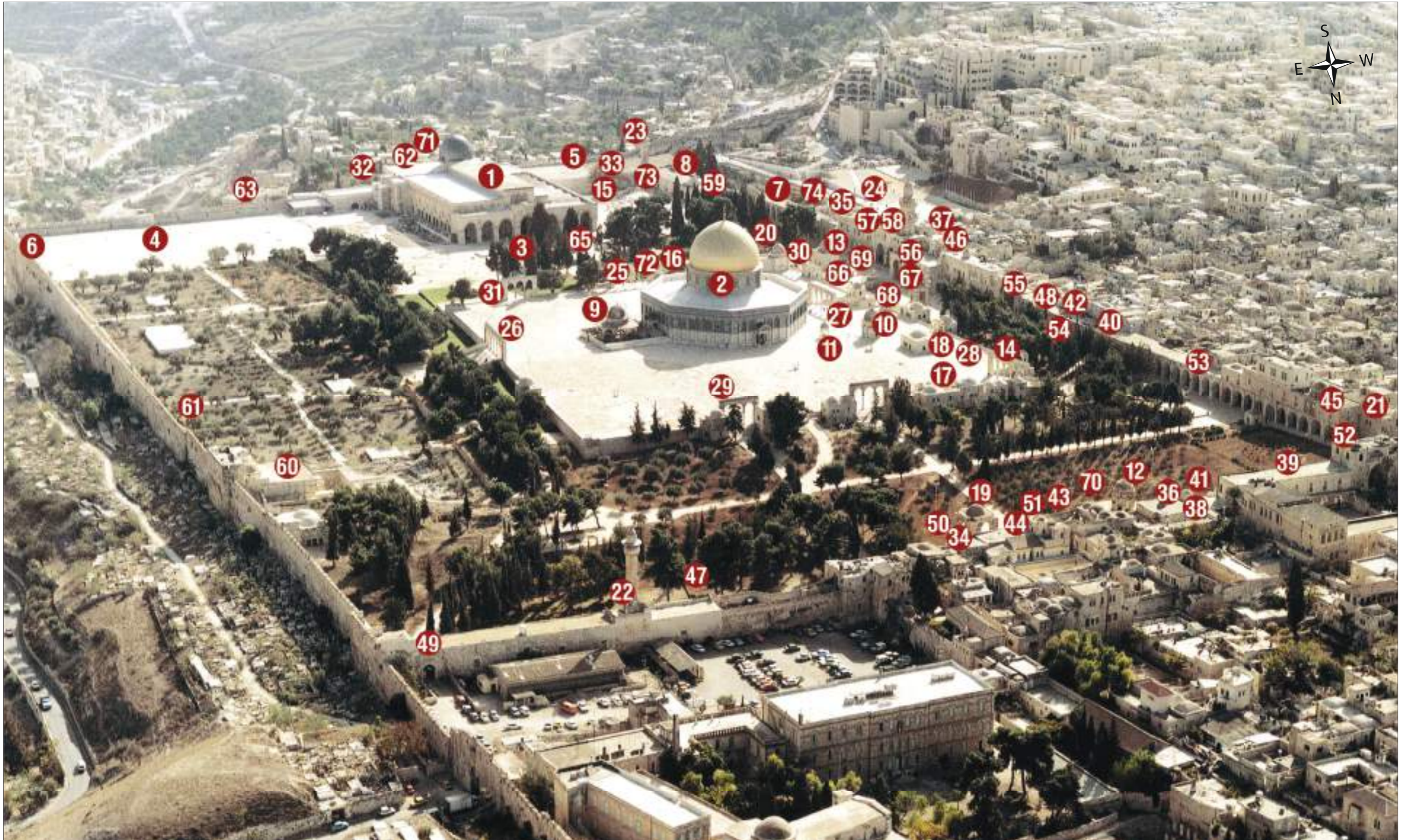
* In 1930, the British Inquiry Commission to Determine the Rights and Claims for Muslims and Jews in Connection with the Wailing Wall confirmed that the wall and much of the area around it constitute Waqf property. The plaza located today in front of the wall was created after Israel's 1967 conquest of the city and involved the demolition of the entire Arab Mughrabi ("Moroccan") Quarter, which rendered hundreds of Palestinians homeless.

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنَ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

PLATFORMS

A platform is a flat space made of stone which is elevated from Al-Aqsa's surface. It usually comprises a few steps and a carved niche pointing towards the Qibla. There are 26 platforms in Al-Aqsa Mosque. In the past these platforms were allocated for prayers as well as scholarly and preaching gatherings for the followers of the four mainstream schools of thought in Islamic jurisprudence ("Fiqh"): Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbali, and Hanafi. They continue to serve the same function today. Among the famous Islamic scholars who taught at Al-Aqsa Mosque were Mujir Al-Din Al-Hanbali and his book "The Glorious History of Jerusalem and Hebron" (*Al-Uns al-Jalil fi Tarikh Al-Quds wal-Khalil*) in 900 AH/1494 AD, and Shaikh Yacoub Al-Budeiri who taught religious science (*ulum al-din*) at Bab Al-Nather in 1287AH/ 1870 AD, and Murad Affandi Al-Masri who taught Arabic calligraphy in early 13th Century AH\ 19th Century AD, and the famous Abu al-Faraj 'Abd al-Wahid ibn Ahmad ash-Shirazi known as Al-Maqdese who taught ("fiqh") as well. Out of the 26 platforms only two were built recently while the rest pertain to the various historic Islamic eras, namely the Mamluk and Ottoman.







Map Legend

1. Al-Qibly Mosque
2. The Dome of the Rock
3. The Ancient Aqsa
4. Al-Musalla Al-Marwani
5. The Women's Mosque
6. Issa (Jesus) Cradle Mosque
7. Al-Buraq Mosque
8. The Moroccan Mosque
9. The Dome of the Chain
10. The Dome of Ascension
11. The Prophet's Dome and Niche
12. Suleiman's Dome
13. Moses' Dome
14. Al-Kahdr's Dome
15. Yusuf Agha's Dome
16. Yusuf's Dome
17. The Spirits Dome
18. The Mohammadiyah Lodge Dome/
Al-Khalili
19. The Sultan Mahmud II's Dome/
The lovers of the Prophet's (PBUH)
Dome
20. The Grammarian Dome
21. The Bani Ghanim Gate Minaret
22. The Tribes Gate Minaret/The Salahya
Minaret
23. The Moroccan Gate Minaret
24. The Gate of the Chain Minaret
25. The Southern Arched Gate
26. The Eastern Arched Gate
27. The Western Arched Gate
28. The Northwestern Arched Gate
29. The Northeastern Arched Gate
30. The Southwestern Arched Gate
31. The Southeastern Arched Gate
32. Al-Khutniya School
33. Al-Fakhriya School
34. Al-Duwaidaryah School
35. At-Tankaziyah School
36. Al-Farisayah School
37. Al-Ashrafiyah School
38. Al-Malakiyah School
39. Al-Jawiliyah School
40. Al-Khatuniyah School
41. Al-Asa'rdiyah School
42. Al-Araguniyah School
43. Al-Aminiyah School
44. Al-Basitiyah School
45. Al-Manjakiyah School
46. The Ottoman School
47. The Northern Corridor
48. The Western Corridor
49. The Tribes Gate
50. The Gate of Remission
51. The Gate of Darkness (The
Gate of Faisal)
52. The Gate of Bani Ghanim
53. The Inspector's Gate
54. The Iron Gate
55. The Cotton Merchants Gate
56. The Ablution Gate
57. The Tranquility Gate
58. The Gate of the Chain
59. The Moroccan Gate
60. The Golden Gate
61. The Funerals Gate
62. The Double Gate
63. The Triple Gate/Huldah Gate
64. The Single Gate
65. Al-Ka'as
66. King Issa Al-Moathem's Cistern
67. Sabeel Qaitbay
68. An-Narenj Pool
69. Sabeel Qasem Pasha
70. Sabeel Suleiman
71. Nour Ad-Din Zinki's (Saladin's)
Pulpit
72. Burhan Ad-Din's Pulpit
73. The Islamic Museum
74. Al-Buraq Wall

The above numbers correspond to the points on the map and their respective entry in the text of this brochure.