



Jerusalem Tourism Cluster

**THEMATIC  
TRAILS AND  
TOURS IN  
JERUSALEM**

Dr. Yusuf Said Al-Natsheh  
October 2011

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# Foreword



The Jerusalem Tourism Cluster is pleased to present its first publication, *Thematic Trails and Tours in Jerusalem*. The book provides an extensive wealth of historical, heritage, cultural and archaeological information, featuring the Old City of Jerusalem in words and pictures. The book offers ten trails and tours that, together, provide a comprehensive view of life and events in Jerusalem as known to its original residents.

The idea behind this book began as one of the projects that the Jerusalem Tourism Cluster sought to undertake, in order to offer to the people of Jerusalem, and to its visitors, a substantial guide to the city's landmarks and resources. Visitors are introduced to its various historical eras and periods, its people, local neighborhoods and places of historical and cultural interest, so that Jerusalem is not seen as the product of a limited era.

This book offers readers a set of trails, mostly inside the walls of

the Old City of Jerusalem. These trails were established according to specialized themes, designed to extract the various points of interest that Jerusalem has to offer from historical, archaeological, heritage, demographic and religious perspectives.

As such, the book is founded on a solid base of scientific research, accuracy and credibility, rendering it a tourism guide and a source of information on a variety of intellectual, religious, architectural, historical and heritage issues. The book is beneficial to citizens, tourists, researchers and academics alike.

*Thematic Trails and Tours in Jerusalem* takes readers on a journey through history to highlight the unique contribution that the Palestinian society of Jerusalem can offer to visitors of the city. The book seeks to identify the available capacities of the Jerusalemite society in order to build and

develop a set of programs that yield economic, cultural and social benefits.

The Jerusalem Tourism Cluster would like to express its highest regard and appreciation to specialized writer and researcher, Dr. Yusuf al-Natsheh, the son of Jerusalem, who is an authority on Jerusalem's neighborhoods, streets and holy sites. We appreciate the great effort that went into the achievement of this vital cultural reference. The book was initially published in Arabic in order to introduce local residents of Jerusalem, students and visitors from various areas of Palestine to the sites and locations that can be visited and explored in Jerusalem, through short, yet meaningful tours to the heart of the Old City, with its narrow streets and immense cultural and architectural heritage.

The Jerusalem Tourism Cluster will translate this book into various languages and will publish other parts of it to offer readers and visitors the opportunity to uncover the secrets of Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem Tourism Cluster will also make this book available to school students and organizations working in the Old City as a manner of contributing to and promoting the sense of pride and belonging to Jerusalem and all that it has to offer, so everyone can work together to

raise the level of services that can be provided to visitors at the various sites, not only in terms of historical content, but also in terms of physical facilities and services.

As partnership and networking comprise the essence of the Jerusalem Tourism Cluster's work, this book was published in close cooperation with the Arab Hotels Association. In turn, we would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the Association's Executive Committee for its efforts to launch this book.

After our duly expressed appreciation to the writer, the sponsors and all those who contributed to this book, there remains but one issue: a fervent call for diligent and hard work to continue highlighting the

Palestinian identity that lies in the economic, social and cultural daily fabric of Jerusalem's society. This will give readers, and indeed anyone, the opportunity to learn the truth about Jerusalem and its rich core of heritage and civilization.

Finally, we reiterate the words of the poet, Mahmoud Darwish: 'He who writes the story inherits its land.'

*Raed Saadeh*  
*Chairman of the Preparatory*  
*Committee*

Jerusalem Tourism Cluste



# Acknowledgement

The Jerusalem Tourism Cluster and its Preparatory Committee would like to extend their deepest thanks to the Arab Hotels Association and to Dr. Yusuf Al-Natsheh for their tremendous efforts in completing this work.

We extend our appreciation to all those who made this book possible.

Jerusalem Tourism Cluster

# About the Jerusalem Tourism Cluster

The Jerusalem Tourism Cluster is a non-profit network that works to build linkages between sectors related to tourism, directly or indirectly, for the purpose of enhancing the benefits that this sector has to offer in Jerusalem, as an economic driver that can promote the competitiveness and uniqueness of Palestinian identity in East Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem Tourism Cluster includes representatives from various tourism organizations as well as the commercial, cultural, religious, professional and educational sectors, and any other sectors connected to touristic activity in East Jerusalem.

## Vision

A unique policy product in East Jerusalem capable of competitiveness and encompassing the Palestinian identity, as well as closely-knit relations with the local community.

## Goals

The Jerusalem Tourism Cluster works to fulfill a number of goals in the tourism, commercial and cultural sectors, as follows:

1. Networking among sectors related to tourism, directly or indirectly, for the purpose of improving effectiveness, which will allow for the engagement of resources and dormant, existing assets.
2. Improving the quality, excellence and competitive positioning of tourism services through the engagement of resources and existing assets.
3. Improving the economic performance of the Jerusalem community in order to mitigate the flight of capital overseas, develop and nurture the economy of East Jerusalem.
4. Designing tourism programs and trails that are Palestinian in character and that include folkloric programs and activities to highlight Palestinian culture and heritage, promoting visits to Jerusalem and the Old City by local and foreign visitors.

# Dedication

To my colleague, 'Alia al-Zu'bi, who always dreamed of creating a guide to Jerusalem's trails;

To my colleagues who work for the sake of Jerusalem and who are happy to see others work;

To all those who contributed to and supported this book, its development and translation.

Dr. Yusuf al-Natsheh

# Preface



add description here

Despite its small area, the Old City of Jerusalem is rich and abounds with important sites and memories of religious, cultural, and architectural dimensions related to the heritage



add description here

of the three monotheistic religions. With Islam and the Arab civilization dominating it throughout the past 14 centuries, during which time the Holy City enjoyed tranquility and peace, preserving it from the destruction of previous eras, features of this cultural heritage can still be seen in most corners of the Old City and its vicinity, forming a unique diversity and originality rarely seen in other cities. Sadly, despite this rich architectural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem, the common, though misleading belief among local residents, visitors, and even tour guides is that the sites worth visiting in it are the al-Aqsa Mosque, Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Western Wall, and perhaps the Old City Wall and a few other religious sites. Most current tourism programs focus mostly on these sites, mainly due to the lack of information on other locations and the absence of diverse institutions and staff to highlight and adopt other sites by travel agents and specialized, trained tour guides.

The truth of the matter is that there is an extensive range of interesting and historically significant locations to choose from in the Old City, offering diversity, benefit and enjoyment, particularly if adequate means of exploration, such as sufficient information and guides of experiential tourism, are available.

This book comes in order to close some of these gaps, encourage domestic tourism, develop a sense of patriotic belonging by the local Arab resident to the Old City, open new avenues of knowledge, and stand

up to the campaign that seeks to marginalize and bury Arab Islamic heritage under Israeli occupation. The researcher took the initiative, along with a group of supporters and others interested in Jerusalem's heritage, to identify a set of touristic trails and tours within the Old City and around it, not to be an alternative to currently available tourism programs or trails but to supplement them. Indeed, these trails are designed to offer a different, balanced viewpoint and to affect areas of focus and attention at all levels, supporting and supplementing what is already in practice in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Many people and sectors are expected to benefit from this book, including tour and travel agents, tour guides, hotels, organizations in social and educational services, school and university students, citizens in search of self-acquisitioned knowledge, as well as tourists and visitors to Jerusalem from Europe, the west, and the Muslim world, who seek knowledge beyond the religious and spiritual sites.

It is hoped that this book will be followed by various activities that will enable it, in the short term, to help increase job opportunities of tour guides in Jerusalem, grow and diversify tourism programs in the city, and offer citizens and visitors alike a varied package of leading trails. In the long term, its higher aim is to connect citizens to their diverse heritage, enhance and promote cultural awareness, present this diversity to visitors and showcase the depth of Arab Muslim and Christian civilization in this Old City. Thus,

the activities that are hoped to be implemented to support the book would include training and qualifying a group of tour guides on these trails through a specialized course, as well as translating the book into English and, later, into other languages.

One of the major motives for writing this book is the absence of such a treatment from Arabic literature. The majority of that which is available in Arabic is limited to dispersed writings about buildings, listed in several books according to date of construction or purpose. In texts of other languages, references to Jerusalem have been brief and have failed to focus on the architecture of the Old City. This book was produced in a format as to be simple but useful, to be neither dull nor repetitious, and to be devoid of excessive technicalities and details. It aims to address the educated, the curious, and the student at all levels, to treat historical and architectural aspects, and to be the ultimate guide and companion for visitors to the Old City.

Fulfilling these aspirations, the book includes this Preface, which highlights the Arab Islamic architectural richness and heritage of the city of Jerusalem, as well as the fact that currently available tourism programs and social and cultural activities are limited to a few, prominent religious sites, while promising opportunities do exist in terms of proposing diverse, new trails and tours. The Preface also clarifies the book's target audiences, its aspired goals, the motives for writing it, and the basic components of this research.

The Preface is followed by a concise historical and architectural overview of Jerusalem, highlighting its location, climate, topography, core, extension and development, as well as its most prominent sites. This overview is followed by the main foundation of the book, which is composed of ten select trails under the following headings: Walls and Gates; Markets and Bazaars; Via Dolorosa and Churches; Al-Isra and Al-Mi'raj; Fountains and Water; Sufism and its Institutions; Women's Architecture; Mosaic Architecture (Penetration and Openness) of 1850-1950; Mount of Olives; Jerusalem's Wilderness (Desert).

Six of these trails are noticeably inside the Old City of Jerusalem. One trail, the Walls and Gates, relates to the Old City's parameter, while the Mosaic Architecture trail merges the Old City with its surrounding outside. Only one trail, the Mount of Olives, overlooks the Old City. The final trail is located in Jerusalem's wilderness outside the borders of the Old City. There is the possibility of adding other trails in future, which offers an incentive to conduct further studies and research. Meanwhile, the selection of these trails was based on a sense of diversity, balance and humor in order to meet various desires and tastes. Additionally, a special trail was dedicated to women, in recognition of their efforts and stature.

Each of the trails in this book has its own introduction that provides a general description, an overview of particular requirements, a map<sup>1</sup> of the main sites and components, and the estimated time needed to complete

the trail. Each site (landmark) on the trail is clarified with information that includes the name, the location, the founder, architectural information and characteristics, significance and importance of the site, as well as a mention of the most important sources or references on it. Photographs are also included to help identify the trail's sites and components.

In order to maximize the benefit of this book, the historical overview of Jerusalem includes a ruler (chronology of events) detailing the historic periods of the city. In addition, a list is provided of the most significant events that occurred in the city from the time of the Islamic Conquest to date, as well as a glossary of architectural and technical terms that were mentioned in the book. Finally, a list of resources and references is included, regarding the history, architecture and archaeology of the city of Jerusalem, and providing additional reading material for those interested.

In conclusion, one can only endeavor and hope that one's endeavors will be fulfilled. The author hopes that the trails will be well received, and that his efforts will be a building block in the cultural development of Jerusalem and an encouraging incentive to carry out further serious research on the civilization, architecture and culture of Arab Jerusalem, which is deserving of such attention and care.

Yusuf Said al-Natsheh

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1 - The maps provided in this book are simple sketches to guide the reader in direction, rather than maps drawn to a precise scale.

# Historical and Architectural

## Overview of the Old City of Jerusalem Location



A street in Old Jerusalem



Jerusalem, the capital city of Palestine, is situated at 35°13 'E longitude and 31°52 'N latitude. It sits at around 750 meters above sea level, but some of its surrounding mountains exceed that by 100 meters or more. Jerusalem's location is important and sensitive, being at the centre of the Palestinian territories. It also sits on top of the mountain range that constitutes a dividing line between the Jordan Valley to the east and the Mediterranean Sea to the west, and is linked to a series of roads that penetrate the elevated areas and mountain summits, joining the Mediterranean Sea and the coastal plains on the one hand and the Jordan Valley and the desert on the other. Jerusalem is about 30 kilometers from Jericho and 60 kilometers from Jaffa, using available roads.

## Climate

Jerusalem is located in the Mediterranean region climatic zone, and its climate is affected by its topography and proximity to the sea. The average ambient temperature in January is 8 degrees Celsius; the highest recorded temperature in June was 44 degrees Celsius. Some winters witness snowfall on the city and its higher elevations. Average annual rainfall amounts to 550 millimeters, mostly occurring in January and February. This is close to the average annual rainfall on the city of London.

## Core and Topography

The city of Jerusalem sprang from a core (nucleus) south of the present Old City, on a hill historically known as al-Dhour (Ophel), located between al-Aqsa Mosque and the village of Silwan. This location was selected for its fortified characteristics and fertile soil, as well as the availability of water, although it is hard water. Later on, after a long and involved history, the core disappeared and human activity moved north, to settle in a nearby location over four hills and three valleys, forming what is now known as the Old City of Jerusalem. The hills are: Muria (al-Aqsa Mosque), Bezita (Harat al-Sa'diyya), Acra (Christian Quarter), and the Citadel Hill (Zion<sup>2</sup>). The valleys are al-Rababa (Hinnom), surrounding the city from the west at Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate) and Jurat al-'Innab, Juhannam (Kidron) from the east, and a third valley penetrating the Old City at its centre, from the north of Bab al-'Amoud (Damascus Gate) to Bab al-Maghariba (Dung Gate), and known in Arabic as al-Wad (the Valley). It was also known as Wad al-Tawahin (Valley of Mills) during the Mamluk period, and as the Grand Street during the Ottoman period. In western literature, it was known as Wad al-Jiibn (Tyropoeon). This topography affected the city's history and its architectural development.

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2 - It is worthy to note that the term 'Zion' has many meanings, one of which is the Jebusite Fort.

## Jerusalem: The City of Monotheism

Unlike other historical or modern cities, Jerusalem is characterized by a unique phenomenon, namely, that it is holy and important for followers of the three monotheistic religions (Islam, Christianity, and Judaism). The city was made holy three times in its history, hence its importance in Islam, which considers it the city of prophets and messengers. Belief in prophets and messengers and their divine messages is a tenet of the Muslim faith, these messages that called for a single God. Jerusalem is the city of monotheism, and the followers of its three faiths take pride in being the followers of Ibrahim, the father of all prophets and messengers and the first to call for monotheism, in all its purity and sublimity.



Jerusalem, city of Unification of the heavenly

## **The Spiritual and Religious Status of Jerusalem**

There are many old and new cities that are larger, more strategically located, or with greater economic resources than Jerusalem, but none competes with Jerusalem's spiritual or religious status. Jerusalem is cherished, loved and hallowed by hundreds of millions of people around the globe, and enjoyed this status in the past as well as now. It is the only city in the world that followers of the three monotheistic religions look up to, but also compete over. When this competition, however, reaches the level of possessiveness by a few, accompanied by racism and hegemony – as we see today – the city is placed in a precarious position. Its status and holiness have brought it fame and prosperity over the years, but have also brought it and its people a great deal of suffering and destruction.

## **The Complexity of Jerusalem's History**

The history of Jerusalem generally suffers huge contradictions, which increase in complexity the deeper in history we look. Among the features characterizing the city's history are the lack of documents, compared to other historical cities, the numerous powers that ruled it, its variety of cultures, and the great number of times that the city was destroyed and rebuilt. In addition, the history of the city is connected to religious events, and very often, history becomes entangled with folklore, reality with fiction, and true with imagined history.

## **Jerusalem through Jewish Eyes**

This contradicting situation is reflected in those who cherish the city. Some of them believe that it is the City of King David and his son Solomon, and that they lived in it and made it the capital of their kingdoms, that it is the city to which the Ark of the Covenant was transported, and where Solomon built the Temple to worship God monotheistically. It is the city of longing, passion, and nostalgia of prophets, the exiled, and the deprived from residing in it, and was mentioned hundreds of times in the Torah (Old Testament).

## **Jerusalem through Christian Eyes**

To many others, however, Jerusalem is the city visited by Jesus Christ when He was a child and an adult, before preaching His message of love, peace, and salvation. In it, He performed His miracles and preached throughout its neighborhoods. He cried for it and rightly predicted the nearness of its destruction. In it, according to the Christian faith, He was imprisoned,

tortured, crucified, killed and buried. It is the route of His suffering, and the place from which He rose and ascended to heaven. Jerusalem is the birthplace of the early churches and the destination of pilgrims and visitors, the place of messengers, monks, and clergymen of all sects and beliefs.

## Jerusalem through Arab Muslim Eyes

Others perceive Jerusalem not only as the city connected to the prophets of Allah(God), such as David, Solomon, Christ, and others mentioned in the Holy Quran, but also as the Holy Land blessed by Allah in His Holy Quran. It is the land of the Noble Isra' and Mi'raj (the night journey miracle), the first Qibla(direction on Muslim prayer), and the sought destination to which believers travel, in addition to Mecca and Medinah. It is the land to which Mecca and Medinah will come on the Day of Judgement according to Muslim literature, and the spot where a number of companions of the Prophet, followers, pious men, and Sufis were laid to rest. Jerusalem is the city that Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab conquered amicably, unlike most of its previous and subsequent conquerors, who destroyed it and shed the blood of its people. The city hosts al-Aqsa Mosque, which contains the Dome of the Rock and al-Jami' al-Aqsa (the Friday Congregation mosque), and many architectural remains of eternal heritage which enriched Jerusalem with cultural and philosophical trends and knowledge, making it a popular destination for scientists, scholars, and Sufis. In addition to all this, Jerusalem inspired writers, poets, and orators when the Franks occupied it in 1099 AD (492 H). It is the city where Muslims allowed the People of the Book (Christians and Jews) to live peacefully, and allowed the Jews to return to it twice after they were deprived of living in it, once after the Umari conquest in 638 AD (15 H), and the second after the Salah al-Din conquest after the battle of Hittin in 1187 AD (583 H).

A speech by Muhyieddin ibn al-Zakki, Judge of Damascus and Aleppo, delivered on the first Friday on which he prayed at Al-Aqsa Mosque after it was liberated by Saladin, explains the foundations of Jerusalem's stature in Islam:

*It is the homeland of your father Ibrahim, the ascension place by your Prophet (Muhammad), may peace be upon Him, and the Qibla to which you prayed at the outset of Islam. It is the region of prophets, destination of the pious, mausoleum of messengers, source of revelation, and the core of the final word. It is the land of congregation for Judgement Day and the holy land mentioned in Allah's (God) Holy Book. It is al-Aqsa Mosque, where Prophet Mohammad prayed with the close angels, and the land where Allah (God) sent His messenger with the word to Mary and His spirit Christ, who was blessed by God with His message. It is the first of the two Qiblas, the second of the two Holy Mosques and the third of the holy sanctuaries, to which the pious travel after the first two.*

Another speech by al Muqadisi al Bashari, from Jerusalem, in a knowledge gathering in Basra, expresses the stature of Jerusalem:

*One day I was among selected counsel with elected judge Abu Yiyha Ibn Bahram in Basra, and Egypt was mentioned, till I was asked which country was greater. I said, 'Ours.' They asked: 'Which is tastier?' I said, 'Ours.' They asked: 'Which is better?' I said, 'Ours.' They asked: 'Which has more bounty?' I said, 'Ours.' They asked: 'Which is bigger?' I said, 'Ours.' Members of the counsel were surprised, and told me that I am an educated man and have said unacceptable things [...] I said: 'When I said it was greater, it is because it combines this world with the afterlife... It is more pleasant because its cold and heat are not harmful; it is beautiful because it is not paralleled in beauty of architecture or cleanliness or quality of its mosque; it is full of bounty because Allah (God), the Almighty, has gathered in it the fruit of the valleys, the plains and the mountains, the almonds, walnuts, figs and bananas. It is pious because of its standing on Judgement Day and was made higher in status than Mecca and Medina, which will be transported to it on this day along with all of creation. Which land is thus greater? Be pleased with that and acknowledge it...*

## Jerusalem's Names

Throughout its long history, Jerusalem was known by many names, first of which was 'Uru Salem.' 'Salem, Salim' or 'Shalem' was a Canaanite god, and 'Uru' probably means 'foundation,' making it 'the city of Salem.' This was mentioned – though in a different context – in the Texts of Damnation, which date back to the period of the Pharaoh Sinocet III (1879 - 1842 BC). Based on much evidence and speculation, including the names of the first two princes from Jerusalem which were 'Yaqer-Amo' and 'Sez-Amo,' which are Amorite names, some experts believe that Jerusalem was first established by the Amorites during the third millennium BC. According to the Bible, the Amorites are the original inhabitants of the land of Canaan, and their language was mostly known as the Canaanite language. Jerusalem was also called 'Jebus,' after its Jebusite inhabitants, as was mentioned in many Hieroglyphic writings. According to the Bible, the Jebusites are a branch of the Canaanites. Jerusalem was also called the 'City of David,' but the name did not survive. Rather, the first, old name was adopted, though it was pronounced and spelled in different forms, such as 'Urshalim,' from which 'Yurushalim' and 'Jerusalem' were derived. Later, the Emperor Hadrian (117 - 138 AD) called it 'Aelia Capitolina'. Muslims used the first part of this name and also used 'Bayt al-Maqdes,' 'al-Bayt al-Muqaddas' (the Holy House) and 'al-Quds.' The latter name is the most commonly used at present. Nowadays, the city has been given many names, including the City of Allah (God), the City of Peace, the Gate of Peace, and the City of Heaven, although some of these names contradict its current reality of a city lacking peace.

## Scanty, Contradicting Information about the City's Development

Despite Jerusalem's solemn religious and historical status, information available about the start of the city's core, located south of al-Aqsa Mosque in the neighborhood of Silwan, is not compatible with this status. Information is scanty and contradictory, and subject to clear differences in interpretation by scholars and experts. While some scholars place the achievements of David and Solomon among those of the great empires of Egypt and Mesopotamia, a group of scholars believe that these achievements are exaggerated and were written at a later period in time. [Perhaps you need a reference here. Which group of scholars?] Others consider these names fictitious, since there is no material evidence available from these eras, to our day. There is also severe disagreement over the beginning of the city's history and who inhabited it first. The Israelis believe that its history starts three thousand years ago, from the first millennium BC, the start of the David and Solomon era, while the Palestinians and many experts believe, based on archaeological findings and literature, that the city's history starts at least four thousand years ago.

## Architectural Development of the City

Leaving the core part of the Old City and heading towards the part inside the Walls, extending north from the Jebusite core part, it becomes clear that the architectural development in the Old City of Jerusalem today is the result of cumulative efforts of architectural activities, building and demolition, and that this development can be understood and divided into two main areas. The first is the city's planning, street organization, and wall lines, and was imposed by historical architectural developments that preceded the arrival of Muslim Arabs in it, in addition to topographic considerations such as valleys, mountains and other factors. The city boundaries and its main streets, as we see them today, are the results of Roman planning and reflect Roman methods of army camp planning. This started in the period of King Herod (37 - 4 BC) and continued through the reign of Emperor Hadrian (117 - 138 AD) and Emperor Justinian (527 - 565 AD.) The second area is in the existing architectural structures, which represent the face and appearance of the Holy City today, making it a medieval Arab Muslim city, or rather an architectural museum, full of architectural and decorative elements such as drinking fountains, domes, arches bridging roadsides and narrow alleys, tiled floors, oriels, colored stones with plant and geometrical motifs, muqarnasat (decorative stalactite designs), minarets, mihrabs (praying niches), and other elements. Most of these buildings were established and prospered during the Arab Islamic period. Furthermore, a spectacular group of churches from the Franks era and the more recent era (1840 - 1917 AD) are found in the Holy City.

## The Islamic Character of Jerusalem

Some researchers believe that Jerusalem is only partially similar in characteristics to Islamic cities, since its al-Aqsa Mosque is not located in the city center. However, the Mosque's sensitive location on a high hill overlooking the Old City, the small size of the city and the large size of the Mosque (one seventh the size of the City), and the direction of movement in the city towards the Mosque have compensated for its non-central location.

## Who Built Jerusalem?

A number of notables who ruled the city over its long history contributed to developing and building it, including Herod (37 - 4 BC), Hadrian (117 - 138 AD) Constantine the Great (308 - 337 AD), Justinian (527 - 565 AD), 'Aebd al Malik ibn Marwan (685 - 705 AD / 65 - 86 H), Salah Eddin aAl-Ayyubi (Saladin - ruled 1169 - 1193 AD / 564 - 589 H), al-Amir(prince) Tankiz al-Nasiri (died 17 July 1340 AD / 21 Muharram 741H), Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun (ruled three times, the last of which was 1310 - 1341 AD / 709 - 741 H), Sultan Suleiman al-Qanuni (1520 - 1566 AD / 926 - 974 H) and his wife Khasaki Sultan.

## Incomplete Remains of Buildings Prior to the Islamic Period

It is noteworthy that we never find complete or semi-complete historical buildings in Jerusalem from the periods preceding the Islamic conquest, with the exception of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and its annexes. Otherwise, all that remains are small parts of buildings, with archaeological excavations revealing limited structures, although the literature describes them as huge and opulent. This is attributed to many reasons, including the fact that the city developed in a relatively narrow slither of land and passed through tragic historical events, resulting in its destruction many times over. This required building it in a relatively limited space due to the topography, including surrounding mountains and valleys, constricting its expansion for a long time.

## Herod's Contribution

Despite the dense construction activity in Jerusalem during the reign of Herod the Great (37 - 4 BC), the Roman ruler from Moabite origins who had great projects in Jerusalem, all that can be attributed to this period is a limited group of remains, if compared with the descriptions of the buildings. Only the base of one of the three towers of the the extravagant grand palace's northern part, which he built west of the city, where the Citadel and the Armenian Quarter are located today, remains. From the fortified citadel that he built and named

'Antonia' after the Emperor Antonius, only few external cavities engraved in rock remain. One can see these cavities, created to support one side of the arches supporting arcades, in the northern wall of al-Aqsa Mosque. Regarding his architectural activities in Jerusalem, what remains can be seen in the southeastern and southwestern corners of al-Aqsa mosque compound, most lower courses in al-Buraq(Western) Wall, what is presently known as al-Buraq Gate (Barclay's Gate), the remains of the Robinson Arch, and a group of arches known as Qantarat Um al-Banat (Wilson Arch). These structures do not form a complete unit but are remnants of what once was. This is mainly attributed to the total destruction inflicted by the 10th Roman Legion, led by Titus in 70 AD.

### **Architectural Remains of Hadrian's Period**

What remains from the period of Hadrian (117 - 138 AD), who rebuilt the city and turned it into a Roman colony, is very limited compared to the construction efforts that he exerted in building the new city along the Greco-Roman model and naming the city 'Aelia Capitolina.' What can be attributed to him conclusively is restricted to the lower part of Bab al-'Amud (Damascus Gate) and part of the main road immediately following it, as well as another arch at al-Zawiya al-Naqshabandiyya along Via Dolorosa, a structure which, until recently, was thought to be an arch of triumph. Some studies, however, believe that it represents the boundaries and eastern entrance to the Roman city. Perhaps the reason behind this scarcity is that Hadrian's structures were mostly temples and buildings related to pagan practices, which were later removed with their symbols when Christianity started to spread in the reign of Constantine the Great (308 - 337 AD), a practice which deepened when Christianity became the official religion of the Byzantine state.

### **Small Number of Byzantine Structures**

Although the Byzantine period witnessed a robust construction era, represented mainly in building a number of churches, monasteries and public buildings, a trend which continued until the Arab Islamic conquest (637 AD /15 H), what remains intact of these churches, with the exception of significant parts of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, is considered very little and is only in the form of small remnants. These Byzantine churches were affected by the hostile climate prevailing between the Byzantine state and the Sassanid dynasty, which reached its peak during the Persian invasion of 614 AD, when a large number of churches, monestaries and buildings was destroyed. After the city was reclaimed and the holy memorial Cross returned to Jerusalem in 629 AD, attempts were made, most significantly by the monk Modestus, to bring those churches and structures back into existence, but the resources available to him were limited and the task too large.



## Vitality of Jerusalem and the Tolerance of Islam



add description here

Despite the wars and tragedies that Jerusalem endured, it witnessed periods of stability, civilization and architectural and social achievements, and its religious and spiritual status was not deeply affected by political events. We should not forget that it is also a social city where people lived continuously, making it outstanding in many ways, in addition to its spiritual position. Jerusalem encompasses a varied social mosaic, by virtue of the tolerance of the Islamic faith. Despite continued prohibitions during many eras and restrictions of life in Jerusalem to specific ethnic or religious groups, Islam in Jerusalem opened its arms to Christians and Jews to live in the city according to principles of peaceful coexistence and mutual respect, despite occasional, minor setbacks. Hence, the city welcomed its visitors and pilgrims, regardless of color, creed or religion, and embraced many religious and cultural institutions.

The city suffered throughout its history from water shortage, which made its leaders excavate and maintain a number of pools and build sabils (drinking water fountains) to provide passers by and visitors with fresh water. The city also suffered from poor domestic economic resources, which instigated rulers and others who loved it to provide grants, gifts and Awqaf (religious endowments) lavishly.

## Jerusalem and Modern Changes

The 19th century witnessed dramatic changes which affected the city's various aspects of life, in population, architecture and education, especially after 1831 AD, under Muhammad Ali Pasha and his son, Ibrahim, and after the Ottoman rule returned with the help of European countries in 1840 AD. Despite this, a number of European consulates were established and undertook the protection of minorities and Jewish and Christian foreign communities. People moved out of the Old City for the first time to live around it in 1860 AD. New styles infiltrated the city's architectural fabric, and traditional methods and styles of building which prevailed during the Ottoman period came to a gradual stop. New European styles started to appear, reflecting the characteristics of each country which was keen to develop and deepen its interests in the Holy City, especially European countries, structures of which comprised monasteries, schools, churches, hospitals, printing presses, and modern hotels. The demographic makeup of the Old City was shaken in the last quarter of the 19th century as a result of Zionist migration.

The Ottoman Empire attempted to keep up with these developments by declaring Jerusalem an independent sanjak (Turkish administrative division) directly connected to Istanbul. Towards the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, modern offices and institutions spread in the city,

including a Municipal Council (1863) which provided services related to streets and street-lighting, public toilets, refuse collection, and others. Telegraph services were introduced (1864), roads were built for carriages (1867), the Hijaz Railroad was established (1892), a public park was inaugurated (1892), the city police was established (1886), and a museum and a theater were opened (1901). These changes continued and deepened under the British Mandate (1917 - 1948), but the complication of the political situation and the struggle between the indigenous population and Jewish immigrants, which led to the Nakba (catastrophe), marginalized the importance of these changes and transformations.

## The Four Quarters of Jerusalem: Are they Really Four?



add description here

During the second half of the 19th century, it was commonly spread that Jerusalem was divided into four neig hborhoods (Christian, Armenian, Jewish and Muslim). A large number of reservations can be highlighted regarding this oppressive division, including the fact that it is based on religious foundations, contradicting the city's historical development and marginalizing the national depth of most resdients of the Old City, deepening attempts

to deprive it of its Arab character, and placing the small minority on equal footing with the majority. Moreover, this division implies that Armenians are not Christians, that most Christians are not Arabs or Palestinians, and that the Muslim majority is not Arab. This division also does not take into consideration that branding a neighborhood as Christian or Muslim does not necessarily indicate that all of its residents or architecture are Christian or Muslim. Many properties in the Christian Quarter are owned and occupied by Muslims. The same applies to the Muslim Quarter, which comprises Christian residents and property. In fact, a large number of monasteries, shrines, and buildings are located inside the Muslim Quarter in the Bab al-Asbat (Lions Gate) area. The best example of this is the stages of Via Dolorosa. This division is not compatible with the development and neighborhoods of Jerusalem, and involves a great deal of contradictions and shortcomings. It does not reflect the past, but rather reflects and enforces the coercive changes through which the city passed and continues to do so today.

## Coercive Changes

Jerusalem witnessed, since 1967, a coercive change when Israeli forces unilaterally annexed the city, without recognition by any state and in violation of international resolutions. This was followed by a series of works and projects in the Jewish Quarter, expanding this traditional, small neighborhood at the expense of adjacent Islamic neighborhoods. It was also followed by a series of illegal excavations and cultural construction projects aimed at marginalizing and obscuring the Arab Islamic heritage of the city. This policy, together with stressing cultural projects, including museums, popular centers, excavations, and tunnels, for which huge budgets were allocated, as well as the absence of a constructive Arab Palestinian reaction, have increased the undermining of Jerusalem's past, present, and future and replacing them with a modern alternative.

Despite coercive changes and some negative issues surrounding Jerusalem, visitors of the walled Holy City will find history, architecture, religious institutions, markets, and various features, such as domes, minarets, museums and churches. Among the main features of Jerusalem are its Wall, oriental Suqs and bazaars, church of the Holy Sepulcher and group of other churches, as well as al-Aqsa Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, and the surrounding structures and monuments. Jerusalem is also famous for its social festivals and religious processions.



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## Jerusalem Timeline

Roman Period	63 BC - 325 AD
Herod and his Family	37 BC - 70 AD
Aelia Capitolina Period	117- 325 AD
Byzantine Period	325 - 637 AD
Constantine to the Persian Invasion	325 - 614 AD
Persian Rule	614 - 628 AD
Return of Byzantine Control until the Arab Conquest	628 - 637 AD
Islamic Periods	637 - 1917 AD / 15 - 1336 H (Hijra)
Early Arab Islamic Period	637 - 1099 AD / 15 - 491 H
The Fatimid Caliphate	968 - 1071 AD / 358 - 464 H
Unsettled Governance Period (Turks and Seljuqs)	968 - 1098 AD / 464 - 491 H

Crusaders Period	1099 - 1187 AD / 492 - 583 H
Ayyubid Dynasty	1187 - 1250 AD / 583 - 648 H
Mamluk Dynasty	1250 - 1517 AD / 648 - 922 H
Bahri Mamluks	1250 - 1382 AD / 648 - 784 H
Burji Mamluks	1382 - 1517 AD / 784 - 922 H
Ottoman Empire	1517 - 1917 AD / 922 - 1336 H
Golden Age: 6th Century	1517 - 1600 AD / 922 - 1010 H
Recession and Prevalence of Construction	1600 - 1831 AD / 1010 - 1247 H
Muhammad Ali Era	1831 - 1840 AD / 1246 - 1256 H
Organizations Period	1840 - 1917 AD / 1256 - 1336 H
British Mandate Period	1917 - 1948 AD / 1336 - 1368 H
Jordanian Rule	1948 - 1967 AD / 1368 - 1387 H
Israeli Occupation	1967 - / 1387 -

# Proposed Trails and Tours

## Introduction and Guidelines

### Trail Requirements

The trails proposed in this book can be enjoyed by people of all ages, and the requirements are simple: a comfortable pair of shoes, water and snacks for children and diabetics. Protection against the sun and heat may be needed, including a hat, sunglasses, and sun-block cream, if the trails are enjoyed during the hot days of summer. Don't forget your camera, a map, a notebook, and, of course, a copy of this book!

For visiting religious sites, make sure you wear decent attire. Avoid short and tight clothes. Show respect, be quiet, and observe instructions and regulations in such places.

### Freedom of Choice

The trails outlined in this guide can be enjoyed consecutively or separately, and there is no need to adhere to the arrangement presented here. Trails can be chosen based on weather conditions or the season of the year. Trails can be mixed and matched, and the visitor can choose parts of the Wall and gates, then move to

Suqs (markets), Church of the Holy Sepulcher, or al-Aqsa Mosque. The idea is to have a program and enjoy your tours. Tour guides, teachers, and leaders are advised to expand on the information mentioned in this book, which is concise and brief. The list of references provides ample information for further research and comparison.

### Crossing Trails

The author would like to draw attention to the fact that some landmarks in these trails cross or overlap, in spite of concerted efforts to avoid this. This means that a street may be walked more than once, due to the small area of the Old City, whose streets and alleys are interwoven and have buildings with various functions. Anyone who is familiar with the alleys and streets of the Old City may take shortcuts and avoid walking the same route twice. Landmarks on the trail may also be rearranged, brought forward or delayed as desired.

It is useful to remember that most churches, with the exception of the Holy Sepulcher, are open between 8:30 am and noon, and between 2:30 and 5:00 pm. Mosques are closed to visitors during prayer time, which varies according to summer or winter hours or special occasions.

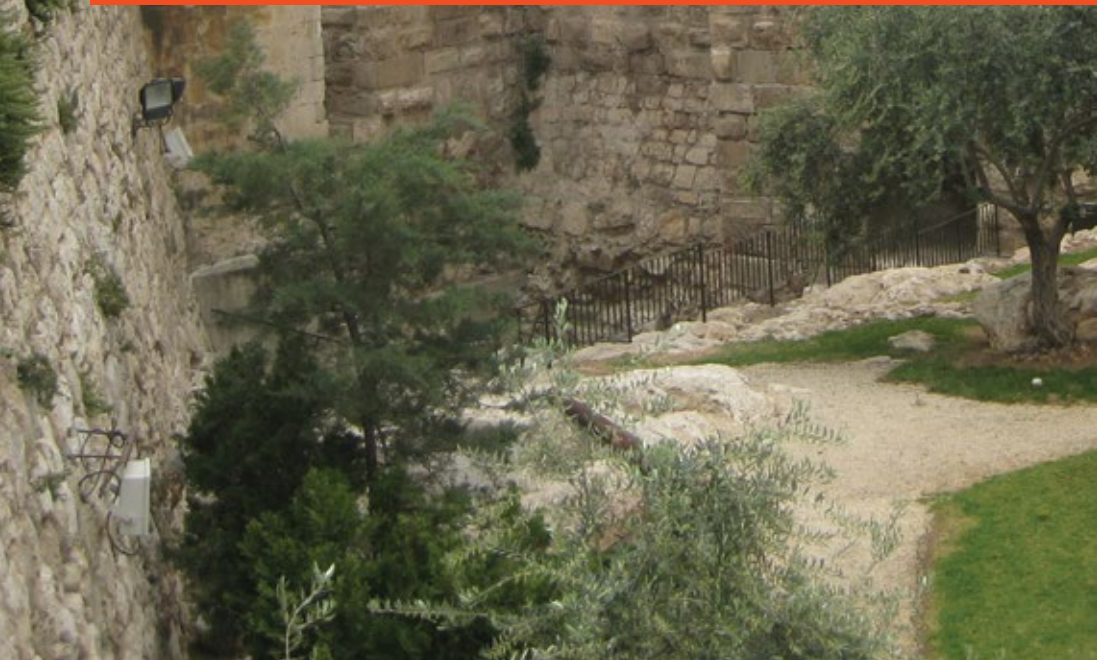


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# 1.The Wall and Gates of Jerusalem



## Trail's Nature and Stations

The first thing that visitors and residents see when they enter the city of Jerusalem, and the last thing they see when they leave, is the Wall of the Old City. This majestic monument surrounds the City like a bracelet on a wrist; thus, it was selected as the first trail in the City, given the many options it offers. The trail can be long, lasting anywhere between three and five hours, and coming full circle along the entire length of the Wall, which is around 4,325 meters. The trail can also be of medium length, encompassing only half of the Wall's parameter, such as the walk from Bab al-'Amud (Damascus Gate) to Bab al-Nabi Daoud (Zion Gate), whether walking eastwards to Bab al-Sahira (Herod's Gate) or westwards towards Bab al-Jadid (New Gate). This takes around two to three hours. One can always cut it short and settle for a visit along a quarter of the length of the Wall. There is also an opportunity to climb onto the Wall in the area of Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate) for a fee, to view the Old City with its scenery and architecture. It is recommended to start the trail at Bab al-'Amud, given its significance and importance as the main gateway into the Holy City and one of the most prominent gates of the Jerusalem Wall. Nevertheless, one can start the trail from any of the gates, going clockwise or anti-clockwise. The city's topography is varied, offering level areas, high ones and others that are low. It is worth noting that the best rest areas are near Bab al-'Amud and Bab al-Khalil, while the area between Bab al-Sahira and Bab al-Maghariba (Dung Gate) has no services.

The trail's main stations are: Bab al-'Amud, Bab al-Sahira, al-Rashidiyya School Tower, Burj al-Laqlaq (Stork Tower), Bab al-Asbat, Bab al-Maghariba, Bab al-Nabi Daoud, Bab al-Khalil, the Citadel, and Bab al-Jadid.

## Introduction

### The Importance of the Jerusalem Wall

The Wall of Jerusalem carries major significance. It is one of the most prominent features of the City of Jerusalem and is characterized by the fact that it is complete, unlike the partially surviving walls that surround other historical cities. In addition, the evident parts of the Wall were notably built during a single architectural era. The Wall's structure abounds with geometric and floral reliefs and motifs, as well as writings, representative of the architectural schools of the Mamluk and Ottoman periods. Apart from its historical value and significance, the Wall is essentially an embracing protector of the Holy City and its heritage.

## Statistical Data about the Jerusalem Wall

The current Wall of Jerusalem was built at the beginning of the Ottoman era upon the orders of Sultan Suleiman I (Suleiman al-Qanuni or Suleiman the Magnificent) (1520-1566 AD / 926-974 H); the actual construction of the Wall was carried out between 1537-1541 AD (944-947 H) and continued for almost five years. The height of the Wall varies from one area to another, depending on the topography of the terrain, but ranges between five and 15 meters. The Wall is three meters thick in some areas, particularly at its base, but the prevalent thickness is around 1.5 meters. It hosts 34 watchtowers, the most known of which are Burj al-Laqlaq (1538-1539 AD / 945 H) and Burj Kibrit (1540-1541 AD / 947 H). The Wall also hosts around 379 arrow slits and 17 machicolations, as well as several other military defense features, such as towers, turrets, observation terraces, low entrances, and moats that surround some of the walls. The Wall displays a large set of complex, rich decorations that had required time and effort to design and implement. These decorative elements are embossed floral motifs comprising small flowers, fruits, leaves and tree branches. The flowers were engraved in layers, with a varied number of leaves ranging from one to 16. Additionally, composite geometrical formations can be seen on the Wall, displaying the finest shapes of stars, three-, six-, eight-, or ten-sided.

## The Jerusalem Gates

The current Jerusalem Wall has seven open gates, five ancient, original ones and two which were added later. The five original gates are: Bab al-'Amud (1537-1538 AD / 944 H), Bab al-Sahira (1537-1538 AD / 944 H), Bab al-Asbat (1538-1539 AD / 945 H), Bab al-Nabi Daoud (1540 AD / 947 H), and Bab al-Khalil (1538-1539 AD / 945 H).



# Bab al-'Amud (Damascus Gate) (1537-1538 AD / 944 H)



Bab al-'Amud is one of the prominent examples of architecture in the 10th Century Hijra/16th Century AD, not only in Jerusalem, but in all the towns and cities of Palestine. It is the most beautiful gate of the Jerusalem Wall and the richest in terms of architectural and decorative design, not to mention its size and expansive area.

## Location

Bab al-'Amud is located in the northern part of the Jerusalem Wall, where al-Wadi al-Markazi (Central Valley), commonly known to Jerusalem's residents as al-Wad, begins its descent, cutting through the old city from north to south. During the Mamluk and Ottoman eras, this road was known as the Sultan's Street and Tariq Wadi al-Tawahin (Mills Valley Road), as well as al-Shari' al-'Azam (Grand Street).

## Names

Bab al-Amud was known by many names throughout history, such as Bab Nablus (Nablus Gate), Bab Dimashq (Damascus Gate), and Bab al-Qiddis Stephan (St. Stephen's Gate)<sup>3</sup>. The name Bab al-'Amud, however, is the most well-known and refers to the column ['amud] that used to stand in the inner courtyard of the gate, welcoming visitors, and featuring a statue of Emperor

<sup>3</sup> - Please see names of Bab al-Asbat.

Hadrian, in keeping with the common practice of decorating Greek and Roman cities with statues of rulers and pagan gods.



## Sections

Bab al-'Amud is comprised of two sections: upper and lower. The lower section was built by Hadrian (117-138 AD) in 135 AD when he rebuilt the city of Jerusalem and named it Aelia Capitolina. The gate was a grand, memorial entrance comprising three arches, as well as the semi-circular arch that was uncovered by excavations and that can be seen nowadays slightly to the east, below the Ottoman doorway. The upper section was designed and built by the Ottomans.

## Plan

Bab al-'Amud was purposefully built at a right-angle slant. This was a design principle of military architecture in the Middle Ages, aimed at exposing and hindering attackers in the event that they managed to break through the main gate to the city. This slanting is noted as soon as one enters through the gate, having to walk eastwards (left) instead of forward and southwards.

## Architecture

The northern façade of Bab Al-Amoud is monumental, extending nearly 41.85 meters and rising 16.80 meters until the beginning of the upper terraces of the Wall. The northern façade is comprised of two large towers that flank an entryway 19.95 meters long. The entryway recedes 6.15 meters on the western side and 6.27 meters on the eastern side, presenting the gate at its center. Both recessions lie at an obtuse angle of 110 degrees.

Just above the opening of Bab al-'Amud is a stone ledge, directly over which a straight arch supports a rectangular foundation stone measuring 1.80 x 0.60 meters, with two lines of protruding Ottoman inscription which read:

*Has orderd the construction of this blessed Wall, our master, the greatest sultan and the honourable Hakan, the sultan of the of Rum(Greek)the Arabs and*

*the non-Arabs(Persians){the sultan sulieiman son of sutlan Salim Khan, may allah perpetude his reign and sultanate on the date of the year 944(1537-1438)}*

The entrance is crowned by a pointed arch, decorated with two lines of a floral motif based on a five petal leaf. The arch is framed by closely lined, small palm trees. The arch at the entrance is enveloped by a unique set of stone discs with floral and geometric motifs, but some of these discs have no decoration. In between these discs, a group of arrow slits were opened for defense purposes. Several machicolations were set up above the door, to facilitate throwing materials that would hinder any attack and harm the attackers. These machicolations can be seen if one stops at the entrance and looks up over the doorway. Over the entrance arch, a rectangular window was also constructed, allowing for an expansive view of the area. This window is used today by Israeli occupation soldiers to observe and harass the city's residents and visitors.

## Architect

It was rumored that Sinan, the talented engineer under Sultan Suleiman I (Sultan Suleiman al-Kanuni) and the most famous engineer of the High Gate (al-Bab al-'Ali) in Istanbul in the 10th Century H / 16th Century AD, was the designer of Bab al-'Amud. The author has researched this claim in detail and concluded that Sinan did not have

any contribution to the architectural development of Jerusalem or to the construction of Bab al-'Amud, and that the designer of Bab al-'Amud is most likely Darwish al-Halabi, an architect from the city of Aleppo in Syria who had settled in Jerusalem. This speculation is based on three aspects: the elements of decoration, the information found in the records of Jerusalem's Shari'a Court, and the architectural design. Administrative and financial oversight, on the other hand, was given to Muhammad Celebi al-Naqqash, who was named frequently in the records of the Jerusalem Shari'a Court as being the custodian of funds for the Sultan and the Jerusalem Wall. Today, we know that the funds were not sent directly from Istanbul as much as they were transferred from Syria and Palestinian cities such as Nablus and Ramleh.

After visiting Bab al-'Amud and examining its architectural and decorative richness, the visitor moves eastwards towards Bab al-Sahira, keeping as close as possible to the Wall in order to see the topography around it, since the Wall becomes only a few meters high. Walking a few meters ahead, one can see the entrance to al-Kittan Cave (Suleiman's Cave), and, continuing further, while observing the different stones of the Wall, the visitor will reach Bab al-Sahira.



## **Bab al-Sahira (Herod's Gate) (1537- 1538 AD/ 944 H)**

### **Location and Name**

Bab Al-Sahira is a small, modest gate, but it is richly decorative. It is located in the northern part of the Jerusalem Wall to the east of Bab al-'Amud, leading to Harat (neighborhood) al-Sa'diyya and Harat Bab Hitta. The word al-Sahira in Arabic means the expansive level area, but its pronunciation changed to al-Zahira due to colloquial distortion. As a result, the gate also came to be known as Bab al-Zuhur (Flowers Gate) in Hebrew, although there is nothing in the gate's architectural design to suggest the presence of any floral formations deserving of such a name. The gate was also known as Herod's Gate, referring to Herod Antipas, who had a home in the area, accessible through a gate in this location. It was also known as Madeleine's Gate during the Crusaders era. Bab al-Sahira is relatively small, compared to Bab al-'Amud or Bab al-Asbat, but its construction was confirmed to be in the era of the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I (Suleiman al-Qanuni) in 1537-1538 AD (944 H).

## Plan

The current entrance of Bab al-Sahira is modern, dating back to the early 20th century. The original entrance was from the eastern side, in keeping with the construction style of walls in the middle ages, namely, the importance of having a low passageway or a right angle. This does not exist nowadays; the entry to the gate is in a straight line. The gate has a small entrance topped by a pointed arch. Between the entrance and the arch is a plate that is merely decorative and devoid of the usual inscription. The entrance leads to a vaulted parlor, leading, in turn, to a passageway that shifts to the left and opens up into the city.

## Geometric Motifs and their True Indications

The geometric decorations on the internal façade of the gate are worth noting. Three stone circles encompass geometric motifs. Some of them are hexagonal shapes that comprise two isosceles triangles, commonly known as Suleiman's Ring or the Star of David. This particular shape is an original motif of Islamic art. It has nothing to do with rumors that it is an emblem of Israel today or a motto or rank of Suleiman al-Qanuni. Had this been the case, this motif would have been placed on Bab al-'Amud or other gates, and not on a modest interior façade. It is therefore a purely Islamic, decorative motif.

Moving east, the visitor will see a decline in the ground, indicating the location of the moat that used to surround the northern Wall<sup>4</sup>. After a few more steps, stopping at the tower opposite al-Rashidiyya School, this decline becomes clear, and one can see how much the ground surrounding the tower has risen since the Wall's construction. The tower, with its beautiful decorations, and the inscription plate stand at eye level, while in other places at the Wall, such decorations are noticeably at a higher level.

Moving on a few meters eastwards, the visitor reaches the northeast part of the Wall and the Old City, where Burj al-Laqlaq stands.

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4 - The moat was filled (leveled) in early 2011 by Israeli authorities.



## Burj al-Laqlaq (Stork Tower) (1538-1539 AD / 945 H)



Burj al-Laqlaq constitutes the northeast angle of the Jerusalem Wall and is located across from the Palestinian Museum (Rockefeller).

### Founder

Burj al-Laqlaq was built during the reign of Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I (Suleiman al-Qanuni) in 1538-1539 AD (945 H), as indicated by the inscription on the eastern façade of the tower. It is possible that the base of this tower is ancient, but its current architecture is undoubtedly Ottoman.

### Tower's Decorations

Burj al-Laqlaq has four facades, the

most famous of which are the northern and eastern ones, which have a set of geometrical and floral motifs on stone discs and some arrow slits. There is also a large stone motif comprising a sea shell, from which 20 hollow sides emanate from a protruding stone slab with braided tentacles.

Burj al-Laqlaq is composed of two floors accessible through a small entrance on the west side. The first floor includes a semi-square room whose northern, eastern and southern walls are parts of the Jerusalem Wall, and display long shaped slits for archery.

The next stop is Bab al-Asbat (Lions' Gate). To get to it from Burj al-Laqlaq, the visitor must walk a few hundred meters along the eastern part of the Jerusalem Wall.

## Bab al-Asbat (Lions' Gate) (1538- 1539 AD / 945 H)



### Location

Bab al-Asbat is the only gate that has been open in the eastern part of the Jerusalem Wall from the time of its construction until today. The gate was linked to a group of myths that have no basis in truth and that contradict historical facts. Bab al-Asbat is accessible through an inclining road from Wadi Qadrun (Wadi Juhannam), which separates two Islamic

cemetaries, known as Bab al-Rahma (Gate of Mercy) cemetery to the south, and al-Yusufiyya cemetery, named after Yousef Ibn Shadi, better known as Salaheddin al-Ayyubi (Saladin), to the north.

### Names

Bab al-Asbat was known by a variety of names, most of which are still used these days. In addition to Bab al-Asbat, some of these names are Bab Sitna Mariam (Mother Mary Gate), Bab Al-Qiddis Stephan (St. Stephen's Gate)<sup>5</sup>, and Bab I-Usud (Lions Gate), in addition to the other names of Bab al-Ghanam (Sheep's Gate), Bab al-Ghuwr (Jordan Valley Gate) and Bab Ariha (Jericho Gate). Its name of Bab al-Asbat<sup>6</sup> is indicative of the principles of tolerance and absence of bigotry on the part of Muslims, who never hesitated to name buildings and places after prophets and personalities of Judaism and Christianity. The Holy Quran referred to this tolerance:

*‘The Messenger [Prophet] believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and [so do] believers. They all believe in Allah, and His angels, His scriptures and His messengers. They say ‘We do not differentiate between any of His messengers’ [al-Baqara, 285].*

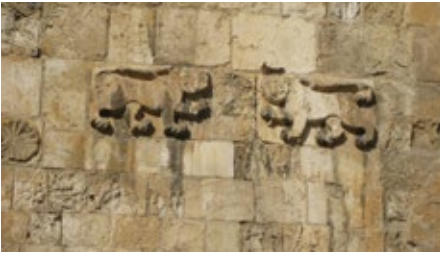
5 - It is worthy to note that Damascus Gate was also called St. Stephen's Gate in some periods, and there is a church north of it that still carries this name.

6 - Asbat is the puller of sibb, which indicate to son of Jacob who were the head of the twelve tribes of Israel.

The gate was also famously known as the Lions Gate, due to the statues of four lions: two north and two south of the gate's lintel. These lions constituted the emblem of the Mamluk Sultan Baibars (1260-1277 AD / 658-676 H), which was used on all his properties of buildings, coins and tools of that era.

The lions were moved from the ruins of the Khan that was established by al-Zahir Bibars in Jerusalem to the southwest of Bab Al-Khalil, where the old railroad station was located.

### Myths of the Lions of Bab Al-Asbat



Several myths revolved around the lions of Bab Al-Asbat. One myth said that these lions were going to devour Sultan Salim, the father of Sultan Suleiman I (Suleiman Al-Qanuni), if he attempted to destroy Jerusalem. Needless to say, this myth is unworthy of any comments due to its weak claim and its contradiction with the historically proven actions and respect that Sultan Salim had towards Jerusalem. It was said that he was overjoyed at the conquest of Jerusalem, as it is the first site of pilgrimage for Muslims. It was also said that scholars and the pious went out to welcome Salim Shah and hand

him over the keys to al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. He then offered gifts to all the notables of the city, exempted them from high taxes and confirmed their job positions. According to Wikipedia, Suleiman had placed these lions in celebration of the victory of the Ottomans over the Mamluks in 1517 AD. Yet, there are more than two decades between the time of the Battle of Marj Dabek and the construction of Bab al-Asbat, which ultimately refutes this claim, in addition to the fact that Salim was the one who defeated the Mamluks and not Suleiman. Wikipedia continues with its errors, saying that Suleiman placed these lions after a dream he had about being attacked by lions was interpreted as being due to his high taxation policy.

Turkish traveler Evliya Celebi in 1671 AD (1082 H) told a story explaining why Sultan Suleiman I (Suleiman al-Qanuni) (1520-1566 AD / 926-972 H) was interested in Jerusalem. He attributed this interest to a dream that the sultan had in which Prophet Muhammad told him: 'I order you to disperse funds on decorating Mecca and Medina and on fortifying the Jerusalem citadel to fend off the infidels when they try to overtake Jerusalem in the era of your successors. You must decorate its Haram [Holy Sanctuary] by building a sabil [fountain] in it, grant its dervishes annual funds, decorate the Dome of the Rock and rebuild Jerusalem.'

More than a decade separates Sultan Suleiman I's era and Celebi's writings. As such, this story must be taken

with caution, because it represents the knowledge of Celebi's era; in addition, there were other, practical and religious reasons, discussed by many experts, that made Sultan Suleiman I pay attention to Jerusalem and its architecture. After all, his era was a golden one for Jerusalem and his architecture continues to stand witness to his extreme care and attention towards the city.

Indeed, this story has seen changes, where the appearance of Prophet Muhammad in the dream was replaced by the appearance of the four lions, cutting the sultan into pieces. When he asked for an interpretation of the dream, he was told that this was the result of the wrath of God, because the sultan did not show interest in the city of Jerusalem and neglected its state of broken walls and its burnt castle. Consequently, the sultan gave orders to begin work in the city. Its walls were renovated, the gates were opened and the lions were carved on Bab al-Asbat. There is little doubt that this myth has no basis in truth. It was circulated in the second half of the 19th century to provide an interesting explanation for the lions on the façade.

## Founder

Bab al-Asbat has a foundation plaque pinned on its interior southern façade. The plaque, which is 80 x 40 cm, is in good condition, although the second line of the inscription is faded in some areas. The inscription is written in Ottoman style and reads:



*Has ordered the construction of this blessed Wall, our Master, the sultan Sulieman, son of sultan Salim Khan, may Allah perpetuate his reign and his sultanate, on the date of the year 945 (1538-1539AD).*

## Façades

Bab al-Asbat has three façades: a rich, eastern façade facing who approaches the Old City, and western and southern façades that are predominantly simple in design. The eastern façade has a huge stone face, its lower section rising 11 courses, and was constructed from large rough stones. In the center of this façade, an entrance was opened, topped by a straight lintel composed of 13 stones. Directly above the lintel, a rectangular stone plaque was placed, but without any inscription on it, suggesting that it was for decorative purposes like other plaques found on the Wall and in other Ottoman architecture. The plaque is flanked on the northern and southern sides by stone discs without decoration, on top of which is a bossed stone with a hollowed geometrical relief. The entrance is crowned by a large, pointed lintel, surrounded by the protruding engraving of four lions, two on each side and facing forward. The engraved lions show power and agility,

particularly in the facial expressions and the paws, as well as the tails of each lion, although the pair of lions on the northern side is suffering from some level of erosion. There are also five arrow slits in the eastern façade of Bab al-Asbat for observation and archery purposes.

## Plan

Like other gates of the Jerusalem Wall, Bab al-Asbat was designed at a slant and a right angle, to hinder and expose attackers if they succeeded in penetrating the main gate. Today, it is possible to walk straight through the gate, since the wall opposite the entrance was removed to facilitate the passage of cars. This was probably done during the British Mandate. Several machicolations were set up above the entrance to throw materials and to hinder potential attackers.

At this point, the visitor may decide to conclude the tour of the Wall, in which case s/he may enter the Old City through al-Mujahidin Street to start on other trails or visit al-Aqsa Mosque. If the visitor wishes to continue on the entire trail of the Jerusalem Wall, the path moves along through Bab al-Rahma cemetery, with a view of the Mount of Olives. The sheer size of the stones in this part of the eastern Wall must be noted, given that the wall of al-Aqsa Mosque and the Jerusalem Wall join together a few meters from Bab al-Asbat. At this point in the trail, the tombstones of ‘Ubadah ibn al-Samet and Shaddad Bbn Aws (companions of the Prophet Muhammad) can be seen. Moving

along the façade of Bab al-Rahmah and Bab al-Tawba (Golden Gate), the trail continues south. Looking up to the top of the Wall, a prominent column, known as al-Sirat, comes into view. A few meters later, the trail reaches the southeastern part of the Jerusalem Wall and the wall of al-Aqsa Mosque. Here, the visitor must take the paved road to reach Bab al-Magharibah (Dung Gate) in the southern part of the Wall. The road here begins to slope upwards, complying with the city’s topography.

## Bab al-Magharibah (Dung Gate)



It is noteworthy that the gate called Bab al-Magharibah today is not one of the original gates of the Jerusalem Wall. It originates from a tower that was built in 1540 AD / 947 H, and later expanded into a gate in 1953 AD to allow for the movement of cars and to facilitate the passage of those living near the Old City. Therefore, this gate is essentially an opening in the Wall and does not have any slanted or right-angle design.

To the west of Bab al-Magharibah, the Wall continues to rise with the terrain, reaching a square tower similar to Burj al-Laqlaq, known as Burj Kibrit (Sulfur Tower). The Wall continues west of this tower until it reaches Bab al-Nabi Daoud (Zion Gate).

# Bab al-Nabi Daoud (Zion Gate)

## (1540 AD / 947 H)



### Location

Bab al-Nabi Daoud is located in the western section of the southern part of the Wall. Its name originates from the fact that it was, and continues to be, a passageway leading to the shrine of the Prophet David, a large architectural complex that is commonly acknowledged by the followers of the three monotheistic religions. The majority of architectural activities on this shrine are attributed to the Ottoman period. In western literature, this gate was named Zion Gate, on account of its proximity to Zion's cenacle or upper room, the place that Christians believe to be the site of the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with his disciples.

### Plan

The gate's layout is similar to that of other gates in terms of the slanted entry and the decorations, although the arrow slits and overviews of the gate are more similar to those of Bab al-Rahmah and Bab al-Tawba. An inscription on the inside of the gate refers to the Wall's establishment by Sultan Suleiman I in 947 H.

There are two ways to reach Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate). The first is the simplest, which involves entering from Bab al-Nabi Daoud, turning west (left) on the road leading to the Armenian Monastery, and walking along the road until reaching the eastern entrance of the Citadel and the courtyard of the Umar Ibn al-Khattab Square at Bab al-Khalil. The second way is longer and relatively more difficult. It involves walking on the road along the Wall until reaching Bab al-Khalil from the outside where Birkit al-Sultan (The Sultan's Pond), also known as Jawrat al-Inab (Jujube), is located. Indeed, both these trails are worth experiencing if time permits.

# Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate) (1538-1539 AD / 945 H)



relatively longer than similar inscriptions on

other gates and towers. The inscription is similar to those on the fountains of Sultan Suleiman I (Suleiman al-Qanuni), which suggests that the team that was responsible for constructing the fountains was involved in construction in the area of Bab al-Khalil. The inscription, in addition to having the sultan's titles and date, reads:

*Has ordered the construction of this blessed wall, our master, the greatest sultan and honourable Hakan, who rules the necks of the nations, sultan of the Rum, the Arabs and the non-Arabs( Persians-ajams) sultan of the two Seas and two continents, the sultan Sulieman, son of Sultan Salim Khan, may Allah perpetuate his reign and his sultanate, in the month of Jumada al-awwal of the year 945(October 1538).*

## Location and Name

Bab al-Khalil is located in the western Wall of the Old City, near the northwest corner of the Citadel. The gate was known as Bab Mihrab Daoud in the early Islamic period, Bab Daoud in the Franks era, and today it is called Bab al-Khalil (Hebron Gate) in Arabic and Jaffa Gate in English and Hebrew.

## Characteristics

Bab al-Khalil comprises an entrance topped by a pointed stone lintel, which shows a commemorative inscription with the Sultan's name and titles and the construction date. The opening of the entrance is covered by two, huge, copper fortified wooden shutters. The entrance leads to a hallway covered by a van vaulte, then to a passageway that turns left (eastwards) into the Old City.

Bab al-Khalil is characterized by a foundation inscription that is

## Emperor Wilhelm's Gateway

Between Bab al-Khalil and the Citadel, there is an opening in the Wall that allows for the movement of cars and pedestrians. Originally, this opening was closed, but was opened in 1898 to facilitate the entry of German Emperor Wilhelm II and his wife Augusta Victoria to the Holy City, where they stayed at the new Imperial Hotel in the area of Bab al-Khalil7.

7 - See below trials no. 8 about Imperial Hotel.



## The Citadel

(Entrance fee applicable. Open daily 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)



### Position

One of the most prominent features of Jerusalem, the Citadel is located in the western part of the Jerusalem Wall, near Bab al-Khalil to the south. The Citadel is a model of Islamic military architecture. It was built in a strategic location to defend the western entrance of the Old City, and the selection of this site was directly influenced by the presence of fortifications dating back to past eras. As it stands today, the Citadel dates back to the era of Sultan Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun, who

ordered its reconstruction in 1310 AD (710 H), according to a foundation inscription that was located over the main entrance and recorded by Swiss epigraphist Max van Berchem in 1894, but which has since disappeared. Historian al-Qalqashandi also mentioned that Sultan Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun had ordered the renovation of the citadel in 1316 AD (716 H). The Citadel constituted a central military site in Jerusalem where the city's protection garrison, led by the Citadel's commander, was positioned, as well as headquarters for the Mamluk administration in the city. British archaeologist Jones, who carried out excavations in the site in the 1930s and 1940s, concluded that the outer wall of the Citadel, including the towers, forms a single architectural unit dating back to the early Mamluk era. This style of architecture can be seen in many of the contemporary Mamluk citadels, especially in Jordan, such as Karak and Shobak Castles. Nevertheless, the building contains sections from the earlier Hellenistic, Roman and Islamic eras, as well as other sections from the late Ottoman era.

### Layout

The Citadel offers a non-homogenous, rectangular shape, comprising high walls and five high towers, surrounded by outer fortifications and a moat. The Citadel is accessed from the outer eastern gate, added by Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I (Suleiman al-Qanuni) in 1532 AD / 939 H, leading to a wooden bridge over the outer moat, then to defense fortifications, and finally over a stone



bridge and an inner moat to the main inner gate. The gate's entrance is topped by a stone filling that most likely contained the missing foundation inscription. The entrance leans to the right and then to the left, leading to a vaulted octagonal room with a ventilation window. Inside this room, a stone staircase leads to the roof of the northeastern tower, known as the Tower of David, which is presumably dated back to Herod's reign in the 1st Century B.C. From the top of the tower, the view of the Old City is captivating, especially the Dome of the Rock.

## Development

Archeological excavations in the courtyard of the Citadel revealed part of a wall and two huge square towers dating back to the period between the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, as well as a circular tower and part of a wall that appear to belong to the first citadel that was established here during the Umayyad era. The hallway of the upper floor of the southwestern tower was turned into a mosque in the era of Sultan Suleiman al-Qanuni in 1531-1532 AD / 938 H, and includes a beautiful niche (mihrab) and pulpet

(minbar). On the eastern wall of this mosque, two foundation inscriptions can be seen, but not in their original locations. The first inscription speaks of the construction of a tower in the Citadel by the Ayyubid King al-Mu'azam Isa in 1213-1214 AD / 610 H, while the second speaks of the construction of a mosque by Sultan Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun when he ordered the reconstruction of the Citadel in 1310 AD / 710 H. The mosque's minaret was added in 1655 AD / 1065 H.

Bab al-Khalil provides a beautiful view of one of the valleys surrounding the Old City, namely, the Western or al-Rababa valley, as well as a large part of West Jerusalem. Seeing the western part of the Jerusalem Wall and the Prophet David Mount in the background is worthwhile. To continue the Wall trail requires leaving Jaffa Gate from the outside and walking north along the pedestrian walkway adjacent to the paved road, reaching the northwestern corner of the Jerusalem Wall, where the Collège Des Frères and the Tankrid Tower from the Franks era. Turning east and walking a few meters along the road takes us to Bab al-Jadid, the last station of the Jerusalem Wall trail.



## Bab al-Jadid (New Gate)

Bab Jadid is similar to Bab al-Magharibah, being more of an opening in the Wall than an original gate. The opening was turned into a gate in 1899 in the era of Sultan Abdel Hamid, which is why the gate is sometimes known as Bab Abdel Hamid. Bab al-Jadid is known as such (The New Gate) due to its relatively recent construction. It was opened to facilitate the movement of residents of the northwest part of the Old City, a part that began to be built in the second half of the 19th century.

Leaving Bab Jadid and moving eastwards to Bab al-'Amud, this trail is complete.

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## 2. Sugs and Bazaars



## Trail's Character and Stations

This trail focuses on traditional and contemporary economic and commercial life in the Old City of Jerusalem, highlighting architectural monuments related to commercial activities, such as the Khans and the Bazaars, as well as describing the current effects of occupation on the city's markets and industries. It is an enjoyable trail, but requires perseverance and tolerance, given that most Suqs are narrow alleys that are crowded with peddler stands and frequented by many small carts. It is difficult to plan this walk for large groups or children, as they may scatter if the call for shopping takes over their better judgment. Despite these precautions, Suqs exhibit daily social activity, portraying memories, historical flavors, oriental variety, and an uniqueness rarely found in other places. One cannot but mention Jerusalem's famous sesame bread (Ka'ak bsumsum), Zalatimo's sweet pastry (Mutabbaq), Ja'far's cheese pastry (Knafeh), al-'Amad's dense sweet confection, halva (Halaweh), Abu Shukri's hummus, coffee and tea in Suq al-Qattanin, lounging in al-Dabbagha and Aftimos Suq, and the spices of Suq al-Attarin. It is recommended to start the trail at the northern end of Suq Khan al-Zait and conclude it at Suq al-Qattanin near al-Aqsa Mosque. In other words, this trail is concentrated in the heart and center of the Old City.

The trail requires 3 - 4 hours, depending on the pace of sightseers. Its stations are:

Suq Khan al-Zait

Suq Aftimos and Al-Dabbagha

Suq al-Sagha

The Bazaar and Suwaikat al-Husur (Straw Mats)

The Three Suqs' Roofs

Suqs of Lahhamin (Butchers), 'Attarin (Spice traders) and Khawajat (well-off people and foreigners)

Khan al-Sultan

Suq Al-Qattanin



## Introduction

Islamic cities in the middle ages were characterized by a number of prominent features, particularly the presence of one or more major Suqs (markets). Cairo is famous for Khan al-Khalili; Damascus for Suq al-Hamidiyya; Baghdad for Suq al-Safafir (coppersmiths), and Istanbul for Suq al-Masri.

## Old and Numerous Suqs of Jerusalem

As for Jerusalem, it is famous for a number of Suqs, some of which were mentioned by early historians and travelers. Nasir Khusrau, a Persian and Tajik poet, philosopher, Isma'ili scholar, traveler and one of the greatest writers in Persian literature, described Jerusalem as having 'beautiful Suqs, high buildings and many artisans, with each group having its own Suq.'

In truth, the Suqs of Jerusalem are old, but have been continuously rejuvenated as a result of uninterrupted habitation in the city. Mujir al-Din, a Jerusalemite qadi (judge) and Palestinian historian who chronicled the history of Jerusalem and Hebron in the Middle Ages (al-Uns al-Jalil fi-tarikh al-Quds wal-Khalil - 'The Glorious History of Jerusalem and Hebron') explains that Salameh Ibn Qaisar recounted the story of Umar Ibn al-Khattab, who upon conquering Jerusalem, reorganized its Suqs, particularly the three major Suqs. According to Mujir al-Din: '...[in] the three existing Suqs... antiquity is now gone... replaced by contemporary urban development.'

## Examples of the Suqs of the Old City

Most Jerusalem Suqs were named, as was customary in Arab Islamic cities, after the goods sold or made in them. Mujir al-Din listed the City's most famous Suqs as the Middle Suq, Suq al-Bazzazin (silk market), Suq al-Tujjar (traders), Suq al-Haririyah (silk), Suq al-Khudar (vegetables), Suq al-Zait (oil), Suq al-Sagha (goldsmiths), Suq al-Tabbakheen (Chefs' Market), Suq al-Fakhr (specialized in making soap), Suq al-Qashash, Suq Khan al-Fahm (charcoal), Suq al-Qattanin (cotton traders), Suq al-Qumash (cloth), Suq al-Mubaydin (copper whitewashers), Suq al-Ma'rifa (knowledge), and the Grand Suq (which comprises the three Suqs, al-Attarin, al-Lahhamin, and al-Khawajat, specializing in cloth and garments). In addition, there are Suq al-'Utour (fragrances), Suq al-Dukhaniyya (tobacco), and Suq al-Khazaf (ceramics). There are also smaller markets, referred to as Suwaikat (small Suq), such as Bab-Hutta and Bab-al-Qattanin. Aref al-Aref, a Palestinian journalist, historian and politician who served as mayor of East Jerusalem in the 1950s during Jordanian rule, itemized the city's Suqs in the early 1950's, adding Suwayket

'Alloun near Jaffa Gate, Suq Al-Bazaar, Suq Al-Nahhaseen (coppersmiths), Suq al-Bashura, Suq Bab al-Silsilah, Suq Bab Hutta, Suq Bab al-Jadid (New Gate), Suq Aftimos, Suq Harat al-Nasara (Christian Quarter), and Suq Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate).

## History of the Jerusalem Suqs

The history of these Suqs goes back to many historical periods, some as far as Roman times, others to the era of the Franks. But the clearest and most comprehensive period to which Jerusalem Suqs are attributed are the Ayyubids, Mamluks and Ottomans. Commercial activity in Jerusalem was concentrated in a number of important facilities, named throughout the historical eras as khans, bazaars, Qaisariyya, and wakala (agency). These facilities were dispersed throughout the city's streets and alleys, with each street divided into a number of Suqs, large or small, with the small ones called 'suwaykas.'

### *'In Activity there is Blessing'*

These Suqs were the heart of the city, throbbing with commercial and social activity. They continue to be active, hampered on holidays by severe overcrowding, and by competition over the small area of the Suq between store owners, peddler stands, and shoppers. Although most of these Suqs are paved and tiled, they are generally narrow and somewhat dark, even during the day, such as Suq Bab al-Silsila near Khan al-Sultan.

## Suq Khan al-Zait



Suq Khan al-Zait is the first landmark on this trail. It is recommended to start at the northern end, as this Suq is on the road leading from the intersection a few meters south of Bab al-'Amud (Damascus Gate) and extends to the Nabi Daoud Gate (Zion Gate) south of the city, crossing the city from north to south.

### Suq Names and Sections

During the Roman and Byzantine eras, this road was called the cardo. It was renovated by the Emperor Hadrian in 123 AD and extended to the end of Suq al-Attarin (spice market) today. When Emperor Justinian built the New Church towards the end of the fifth century, he extended the cardo to reach the southern end of the Old City, where the Nabi Daoud Gate is located today. This street is divided into a number of sections, each with a name and specialization. The first section is known as Suq Khan al-Zait (olive oil), extending from the Damascus Gate intersection until the beginning of Suq al-Attarin. Until the middle of the twentieth century, Suq Khan al-Zait had a number of olive presses and soap making facilities. Each press had a large storage area for olive oil; this is most likely the source of the Suq's name.

## Suq Description

Suq Khan al-Zait is a long one, with shops along both sides, and is paved with stone tiles typical of Jerusalem. The first part of this Suq, extending from its northern beginning to just before its intersection with the Christian Quarter Road and 'Aqabat al-Mufti, is uncovered, while the other parts of this Suq are covered by a stone roof, protecting shoppers from natural elements. The roof cover is characterized by a series of lintels featuring cross-vaults, in the middle of which are large openings for light and ventilation. This architectural fabric most likely dates back to the Mamluk era, although it seems to have been renovated on several occasions afterwards. Suq Khan al-Zait and Suq al-Attarin, immediately after it, are considered among the most significant features of the Old City. Shops along Suq Khan al-Zait offer a large and rich variety of modern consumer goods which cater for the needs of tourists and residents alike, including popular restaurants, confectionery and nut shops, falafel stands, butcheries, vegetable stands and souvenirs. The Suq, however, has lost its traditional specialization of soap manufacturing and olive pressing, given the need to adapt to modern times.

## Side Roads from Suq Khan al-Zait

Roads and alleys branch off this Suq, connecting the city's east and west. These are, from north to south: 'Aqabat al-Battikh westward, and 'Aqabat al-Tuta opposite it. These old names were mentioned in the Shari'a Court of Jerusalem. Next is the Christian Quarter Road ('Aqabat al-Khanqa al-Salahiyya), faced by 'Aqabat al-Mufti Street. This is followed by 'Aqabat al-Takiyya on the eastern side, faced slightly few meters to the south by the Coptic Monastery (Deir al-Aqbat) and the Sultan Monastery (Deir al-Sultan) roads. Finally, al-Dabbagha Road and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher are faced to the east by 'Aqabat al-Saraiyya Road.



## Suq Aftimos

Towards the end of Suq Khan al-Zait and the start of Suq l-Attaien, it is recommended to walk westwards into al-Dabbagha Street to reach Suq Aftimos. A few dozen meters on, one can see the German Church of St. Savior and the arches of Suq Aftimos' northern entrance. This is a wide space, bustling with life and architectural variety, including a Russian church, a German church, Umar Ibn al-Khattab Mosque minaret, oriental shops, and groups of locals, expatriates and tourists from around the world.

### Name and Location

Suq Aftimos is one of the most recent Suqs of the Old City of Jerusalem. It was named after the Greek Archimandrite Aftimos, who built it at the beginning of the twentieth century, completing it in 1902. The Suq is located west of the German Church of St. Savior and southeast of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

## Architectural Characteristics of the Suq

This Suq is characterized by its western architectural style, with its northern entrance composed of an arch of triumph, comprising three large sub-arches with staggered bricks and white-colored stone, clearly highlighting the influence of Jerusalem's Islamic architecture. In the middle of the Suq is a large, pretty fountain with a classical design, depicting nymphs and animal figures spewing water. Shops are lined on both sides of the Suq and around the fountain. A significant leather-dyeing industry prospered in close proximity to this Suq, giving the name Dabbagha (dyeing) to the area until recently; however, it ended probably around the end of the nineteenth century, especially after the land was offered as a present by the Ottoman Sultan to Emperor Wilhelm II, when he visited Jerusalem towards the end of the nineteenth century. The Suq's activity is now concentrated on selling leather products and bags to visitors and tourists, in addition to souvenir shops, restaurants, and cafes, offering a variety of western and local drinks and cuisines in a comfortable environment.



## Suq al-Sagha (Goldsmiths)

What remains of Suq al-Sagha is located south of Suq Aftimos fountain, and some of Suq al-Sagha's shops are an extension of Suq Aftimos, as it is only a few meters down from it.

During the second half of the twentieth century, this Suq centered on the end of the Muristan Street, leading to the Bazaar Street south of Suq Aftimos. It was dominated by skilled Armenian goldsmiths, and its activity can still be felt in the Old City, though rather weakly, after a number of local goldsmiths joined it.

It is noteworthy that the location of many Suqs was not static over time. During the era of Mujir al-Din in the fifteenth century, Suq al-Sagha was located near al-Aqsa Mosque, at the beginning of Bab al-Silsilah Street. The profession lost its concentration in one location, and today, jewelry shops are dispersed throughout Suq Al-Attarin, Suq Khan al-Zait, and 'Aqabat al-Mufti.

## The Bazaar



Suq al-Bazaar can be accessed on foot by walking to the end of the Muristan Street ('Bimaristan,' a Persian word which means 'hospital,' where 'bimar' means 'sick' and 'stan' means 'place') and then heading east (left). The Bazaar is located a few steps away, on the northern side of the street.

### The Bazaar's Origin as a Hospital

Suq al-Bazaar used to extend from Suwaikat 'Allun near Jaffa Gate

up to the junction of Suq al-Husur and Suq al-Lahhamin. However, it later contracted to include the area between the Muristan Street and Suq al-Lahhamin. The Suq was centered on the remnants of the Bimaristan building, or the Salahi Hospital, named after Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi (Saladin), who assigned doctors and made it a center for treating the sick in Jerusalem. After the hospital deteriorated and stopped operating, it was used as a center for selling fruits and vegetables, especially during 1950 to 1980.

### Bazaar Plan

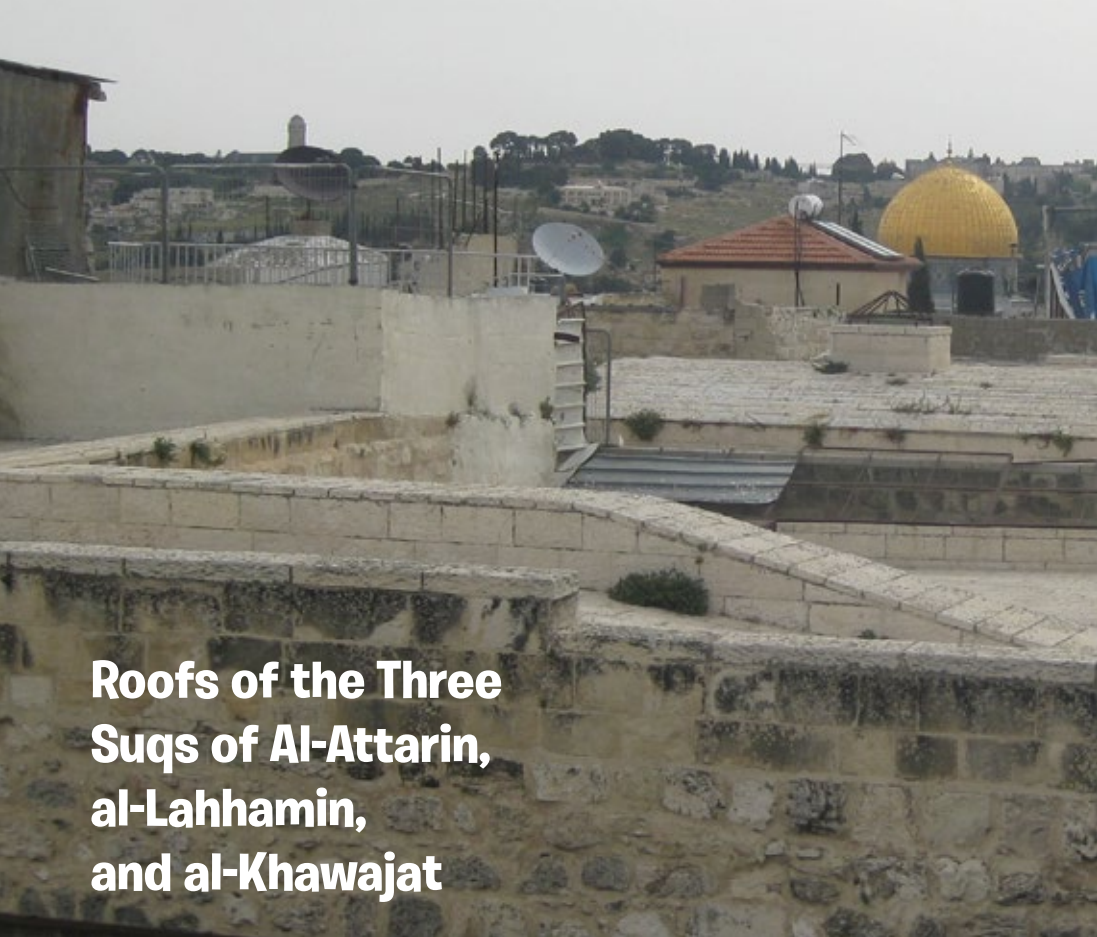
The Bazaar, practically what remained of the Bimaristan, is composed of a group of corridors extending from north to south, supported by a group of arches separated by tiled spaces, and covered by cross-vaults with openings for light and ventilation. With large numbers of people moving out of the Old City due to the difficulties of living inside it, the Suq lost its customer base and closed down for some time. Later, it became a souvenir market. There is currently a plan to develop and upgrade it to provide services to visitors and tourists such as food, drinks, sweets, and Palestinian Arab traditional products. Visitors should remember that this site witnessed prosperous times, when skilled physicians treated all races of patients, and their reputation was recorded in medical references.

## Suwaikat I-Husur (Straw Mats Small Market)



This Suq used to be located a few steps directly east of the Bazaar, and could be accessed through a narrow alley. It is also located at the southern end of Suq al-Lahhamin (Butchers' Market). It formed an entrance to the Syriac neighborhood, and a small Suq composed of a few shops producing straw floor mats of all types and sizes, as well as bamboo baskets, in beautiful designs and colorful plant motifs. The Suq was active and prosperous until the early 1970s when this traditional industry shrank in Jerusalem, moving to other Palestinian locations such as Jericho and Wadi al-Bathan near Nablus.





## Roofs of the Three Suqs of Al-Attarin, al-Lahhamin, and al-Khawajat

At the eastern end of Suq al-Husur, a metal staircase leads to the roofs of al-Attarin, al-Lahhamin and al-Khawajat Suqs, as well as Khan al-Sultan. Ascending to this roof is highly recommended for a panoramic view of the Old City with its domes, minarets and towers, Mount of Olives, the Jerusalem wilderness horizon, the Dome of the Rock to the east, the domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and other sites like the Citadel to the west. A second reason is that since the Suqs are narrow and difficult to navigate, the roof offers a quieter and wider place for guidance and viewing. The roof can also serve as a place for rest, reading, meditation, and having a light snack. Care must be taken for sun protection in the summer, and to avoid slipping while moving around or using the metal staircase.

Although these roofs are Islamic waqf property, the Municipality of Jerusalem insisted on opening them to the public, on the pretext that the Jewish Quarter does not have open spaces and that these roofs represent a convenient breathing space for it, which explains the heavy presence of Orthodox Jews there sometimes.



# The Three Suqs (al-Attarin, al-Lahhamin, al-Khawajat)

*'Travelers mentioned that they had never seen anything like these three Suqs in terms of organization and construction in any country, and that this is part of the beauty of Jerusalem.'*

Mujir aDin al-Hanbali

## Suq Al-Attarin



Suq al-Attarin is the middle one among the three Suqs and is also the middle of the cardo street, extending from the end of Suq Khan al-Zait until the beginning of I-Bashura, or

the beginning of Harat al-Sharaf (the Jewish neighbourhood). It is recommended that visitors visit this Suq in full, given its small size. Note that this Suq is relatively narrow, and fully covered with cross-vaults, with openings in the middle for light and ventilation. When the sun's rays pass through these vents and reflect on the colorful goods exhibited in shops, they add a poetic touch to the Suq and make passing through it an enjoyment that is worth the effort.

## No Specialization in Spices

Until recently, this Suq specialized in Arabian and Oriental spices, from which it took its name. However, the quickening pace of life and Jerusalem's openness to modernity reduced the importance and number of these shops, which are now reduced to only three. Other shops exhibit various types of goods, particularly cloth and shoes. The variety and colors of offered goods gives the Suq an oriental bazaar touch.

## Pathway between the Three Suqs

A path in the middle of Suq al-Attarin connects the three Suqs, and instead of crossing the whole Suq to reach the next one, one can cross to parts of the other two Suqs, namely, Suq Al-Lahhamin, parallel to the west, and part of Suq al-Khawajat, parallel to the east.

## Suq al-Lahhamin (Butchers' Market)



This Suq comprises a large number of shops selling meat and vegetables. Half a century ago, many of these shops specialized in Arab, traditional blacksmithing, using hammering and blowing, as well as copper and other metal works. A group of local artisans, particularly Armenians, excelled in whitewashing copper utensils and cooking pots, and the Suq was often referred to as Suq al-Nahhasin (coppersmiths).





## Suq al-Khawajat (Well-Off Market)

The eastern section of the Suq is known as Suq al-Khawajat, referring to traders of cloth and textiles. At present, only the southern part of the Suq is open, as the northern part requires renovation after large parts of it caved in following the 1927 earthquake. The result of this is referred to as al-Sabra (Cactus), which is an Islamic Waqf for the Nusayba family, and is targeted by Zionist and other settlement organizations that want to make this land an extension of the Jewish Quarter south of it.

### Architectural Fabric and Origin of the Suqs

The architectural history of these three Suqs dates back to the Ayyubid era. Some of the

Suqs' foundations may go farther back to Roman times, with some renovations in the Crusader era, done, as seen by archaeological excavations, on the lines and foundations of the Roman and Byzantine Suqs. The three Suqs are covered with cross-vaults, with openings for light and ventilation. Their floors are paved with the famous Jerusalemite stone tiles mentioned by Nasir Khusrau, who visited the city during the Fatimid era in the 5th century AH. Mujir al-Din also mentioned the three Suqs, saying: 'The three Suqs were built by the Romans, extending from south to north, and have exits towards each other. The first is Suq al-Attarin, endowed to Waqf by Salah al-Din... ,to serve as his Salahiyya school, the second Suq is for selling vegetables, and the third to the east is for cloth and textiles, with the last two Suqs endowed to the Waqf of the Noble al-Aqsa Mosque.'



## Khan al-Sultan

After visiting the three Suqs, at the southern end of Suq al-Khawajat is the start of the street to Bab al-Silsilah. Ten meters further down, one finds the entrance to Khan al-Sultan, also known as al-Wakala. It is attributed to the Mamluk Sultan al-Zahir Barquq, who renovated it in 1386 AD (788 H). The Khan is composed of two floors, the lower of which was used for keeping animals and receiving goods arriving to Jerusalem from the countryside, while the upper floor included private areas used for receiving guests, normally traveling traders. The income from this Khan was earmarked for al-Aqsa Mosque maintenance projects, amounting in the 9th Century H to about 400 gold dinars. This Khan was a center for commercial life, whereby goods were priced, taxed and distributed to retail traders. Until recently, the Khan

was a center for selling cheeses, dairy products and lard. Today, it is commercially deserted, used for storage or as living quarters for poor families whose financial situation is difficult but who wish to stay in Jerusalem, despite harassment.

## Suq al-Qattarin (Cotton Market)

The easiest way to move from Khan al-Sultan to Suq al-Qattarin is to walk down Bab al-Silsilah Street towards al-Aqsa Mosque, leaving the Khan and heading east (left), then following the Hakari Street to 'Aqabat al-Khalidiyya, where, at the eastern end, is the western entrance to Suq al-Qattarin. It is possible to continue walking down Bab al-Silsilah Street to the next junction at Daraj al-'Ain crossing. The end of this street leads to the entrance of Suq al-Qattarin.



## Position and Names of Suq Al-Qattanin

This Suq is considered one of the most complete and beautiful Suqs in Palestine. Creswell, the Islamic architecture scholar, considered it one of the most spectacular Suqs in the Levant. Mujir aDin, the historian of Jerusalem and Hebron, praised it at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century AH (16<sup>th</sup> century AD), saying: *'As for places in noble Jerusalem whose buildings are tightly and perfectly built, Suq al-Qattanin, standing adjacent to the Mosque's gate to the west, is very tall and perfectly constructed, and there are not many like it in other countries.'*

## Location and Names

Suq al-Qattanin is among the most famous Suqs in Jerusalem. It is adjacent to al-Aqsa Mosque and leads to it from the western side. In fact, it represents a vital connecting point between al-Aqsa Mosque and al-Wad Street. The current name, Suq al-Qattanin, is not its original name, but dates back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century AD/10<sup>th</sup> century H, when the Suq was famous for the sale of cotton and its derivatives. Sometimes, locals refer to it as the 'dark Suq' due to the variance in light compared to the open parts of al-Aqsa Mosque. It should be more rightly named after the person who built it, Prince Tankiz al-Nasiri, the powerful Levant commissioner (737 AD/1336-1337 H).

## Suq Facilities

Suq al-Qattanin contains a Khan (caravanserai) and two baths, and extends 95 meters from east to west. It is flanked, north and south, by two lines of shops, with thirty shops in each on the first level. The second level contains 60 private areas for visitors and travelers to stay. The Khan contains offices for the Islamic Awqaf Department (Islamic trust for managing edifices, mainly of al-Aqsa Mosque), and the Jerusalem (al-Quds) University.

## Founder of the Suq

The Suq, effectively a commercial center, was built during the reign of Sultan al-Malek Al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun, whose architectural contributions to Jerusalem surpassed the activities of any other Mamluk Sultan. It was built by Tankiz Al-Nasiri, the Levant commissioner in 1336-1337 AD/737 H. The income from Suq al-Qattanin was allocated on a 50-50 basis between the Aqsa Mosque Waqf and the Tankiziyya School.

## Architectural Description of the Suq

The Suq is covered by a series of cross vaults, dividing the roof into 30 square space, with an opening in each for illumination and ventilation. The Suq has two entrances from the east and west, with the eastern one forming one of the Haram's (Noble Sanctuary's) important gates. It was built with great care and is truly an architectural marvel. It is

composed of an arch with a three part lintel, surrounded by another receding half-circular arch supported by five staggered stone stalactites (*muqarnasat*). The gate's interlocking stones were carefully laid in red, black and grey (*Ablaq*), a common arrangement in Jerusalem's Islamic architecture, especially in Mamluke structures. Its western wall is simpler in its architectural design, comprising an elongated opening covered by a straight cover of seven interlocking stone systems, topped by a receded cover and a circular opening. Al this is housed in a long dome with a pointed end.

Suq al-Qattanin, like other Suqs of the Holy City, has lost its specialization in the trading of cotton. Today, the Suq offers all kinds of gifts and artifacts, rosary beads, souvenirs and clothes for visitors to al-Aqsa Mosque and the Old City.

## Other Suqs

There are a number of streets and alleys in the Old City which served as bustling Suqs, and continue to do so. Among them is Bab Hutta, the Christian Quarter Street, Bab al-Silsilah Street, extending from al-Aqsa Mosque in the east to Jaffa Gate in the west, as well as other Suqs mentioned in references. Among the main Suqs adjacent to the Old City in the north was Suq al-Musrarah. Today, Sultan Suleiman Street and Sultan Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi (Saladin) Street are among the main streets of Jerusalem, bustling with commercial activity around the Old City.

## Conclusion

Although Old City Suqs are suffering these days from economic obstacles, sharp competition, crippling taxes due to the policy of the Israeli occupation, and poor services, and despite the fact that some traditional artifacts have disappeared from shelves and stands, some of these Suqs continue to enjoy active commercial life. Residents or visitors passing through these streets will see village women, in their hand-embroidered and colorful dresses, with motifs from their regions and villages, selling organic village fruits and fresh vegetables, cheese, olives, thyme, and fresh mint. Peddler stands sell sesame bread (Ka'ak bsimsim), pita bread and thin bread. Other practices are long gone, such as auctioneering, assessment of goods offered, and calling loudly to promote goods or delicacies like Tamriyyeh (deep-fried pastry), organic eggs, sour yogurt, and organic cucumbers.



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An aerial photograph of a city, likely Jerusalem, featuring two prominent domes with blue-grey corrugated metal roofs and golden crosses. The foreground shows a red-tiled roof of a building. The background is filled with dense urban buildings under a clear blue sky.

## 3. Via Dolorosa and Churches

## Trail's Nature and Stations

This trail focuses on churches, especially the Holy Sepulcher, starting from Bab al-Asbat (Lions Gate) east of the Old City, from St. Anne's Church (al-Salahiyya School) through Via Dolorosa, and ending in the Armenian Monastery near Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate). It crosses the Old City from east, through south, to west. The trail is easy and can be completed in three to four hours, in the morning or afternoon, yet it is rich with events and miracles performed by Jesus Christ, as documented in Christian scripture, and reflects the culture of several Christian denominations in Jerusalem. It is important to remain quiet and respectful inside the churches and to observe proper attire requirements, opening and closing hours and instructions for visitors.

## Trail's Stations

St. Anne's Church (al-Salahiyya School)

Via Dolorosa Stations 1-9

The Holy Sepulcher and Stations 10-14

St. Alexander Russian Church

John the Baptist Church

St. Mark's Church

Nea Church

St. Jacob Armenian Cathedral

## Introduction

Jerusalem has a large number of important churches directly connected to miracles performed by Jesus Christ in the city. Churches and monasteries are not only in the Old City but in the areas around it, particularly the Mount of Olives (see the Mount of Olives Trail). The Byzantine period witnessed an active architectural movement, represented mainly in building a number of churches, monasteries, and public buildings, after Christianity was adopted as the official religion of the Byzantine state in the middle of the 4th century, and continued until the Arab Islamic conquest in 638 AD (15 H). However, little remains intact of these churches except for the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and what can be traced to the Byzantine era are only a few, small pieces, because these Byzantine churches were affected by the hostility between the Byzantine state and the Sassanid Persian Empire, culminating in the Persian invasion in 614 AD, when churches, monasteries, and buildings were destroyed. After the City was reclaimed and the Holy Cross returned to Jerusalem in 629 AD, a monk named Modestus took up the mission of rebuilding these churches and buildings, but the resources available to him were too limited and the mission too large, and many churches remained in shambles.

With the arrival of the Islamic conquest in 638 AD (15 H), relations between Muslims and ahl al-Kitab (Christians) were regulated in a peaceful agreement known as al-'Uhda al-Umariyya (the Guardianship of Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab), which permitted the renovation of old churches but most likely prohibited the building of new ones. During the Crusaders/Franks era (1099 - 1187 AD / 492 - 583 H), the city witnessed a period of active construction, renovation and rebuilding of many sites. A timeline of construction of churches and monasteries in Jerusalem and Palestine reveals three main stages: the Byzantine establishment era, the Franks era, when sites and remains of old churches were renovated and new churches were built, and the post 1840 AD era, when modern churches and monasteries were built on Byzantine and Franks sites. It is evident that many such churches and convents show signs of these three eras, albeit to varying degrees.



## **St. Anne's Church - al-Salahiyya School**

St. Anne's Church, or what was once a Shafi'i Jurisprudence school known as al-Salahiyya School, is located twenty meters west of Bab al-Asbat (Lions Gate), on the northern side of al-Mujahideen Street. The site is open all week except Sunday, but closes from midday to 2 pm daily. An entry fee is charged, with local residents exempt. After entering, a rich garden meets visitors, with a statue of Father Lavigerie, who established the order of White Fathers. The garden was built on the site of a nunnery established during the Franks era.

### **The Serapius Asclepius Order**

This site has a vibrant history from the late Greek era until today. Initially, it comprised a large pool of two troughs to collect water, the northern one measuring 40 x 40 meters and the southern measuring 65 x 50 meters, separated by a 60 meter long, 6 meter wide dam. Sick people started to congregate around the pools, seeking recovery by the pagan god of medicine, Serapius Asclepius. It is believed that Jesus Christ witnessed the remains of these practices at the site and performed a miracle of curing a sick man, proclaiming that the real cure comes from God.

## Building Byzantine and Franks Churches

After this miracle, and based on eastern traditions, which believe that St. Anne gave birth to Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ, in a cave near this pool, the site became a destination for Christian pilgrims. They started visiting surrounding caves, leading, during the Byzantine era, to building a huge basilica over the pool, extending to the pagan healing site. This basilica, however, was demolished during the Persian conquest, and was rebuilt by Modestus the Monk. During the Franks era, a small church was built on the site of the Byzantine basilica to commemorate Christ's miracle of healing the paralyzed man, and another, larger church was built over the cave where Virgin Mary is thought to have been born. This church is still standing, maintaining its foundations and Franks style architecture, and is among the most beautiful churches in Palestine.

## Shafi'i Jurisprudence School

After evicting the Franks from Jerusalem, this church was turned in 1192 AD (588 H) into a school of Islamic jurisprudence and known as al-Salahiyya, after its patron Sultan Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi (Saladin). It was among the most famous and important schools of Jerusalem since its establishment and until 1856 AD, when Ottoman Sultan Abdul Majid decided to offer it as a gift to French Emperor Napoleon III, as a symbol of the Ottoman Empire's appreciation of the French position in the Crimean war.

This school had the best and most educated scholars, and its property was considered the richest among all schools. It had a pioneering role in enhancing intellectual and jurisprudence life in Jerusalem.

The Franks basilica is located north of the garden, and is accessible through a gate south of the main middle gate of the church's northern side. Before entering the church, one can see the only remaining indication that the building was used as a Shafi'i jurisprudence school, namely, a plaque of 144 x 50 centimeters with an embossed inscription in Ayyubid calligraphy script, comprising five lines, as follows:

*In the Name of God the Merciful, most Compassionate. The Grace you have is a gift from Allah (God). Our master al-malik al-Nasir Salah al-Din wa al-Doniya, Sultan of Islam and Muslims, Abi al-Muzaffar Yousuf Ibn Ayyub Ibn Shadi, the reviver of the state of amir al-muminin, may God elevate his followers and grant him the good of life and the afterlife, has endowed this blessed school for scholars who adheres to Imam Abi Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Idriss Al-Shafi'i, may God bless him, in the year 588H.*

## Basilica's Interior

The basilica's interior comprises a rectangular hall with three aisles, the middle of which is the widest. The floor is covered with marble and the ceiling is cross-vaulted, supported by Gothic pillars resting on elongated stone foundations. The nave's ceiling is covered by a semi-circular dome, supported by huge pillars. The basilica has a relatively unadorned interior, a clear influence of St. Benedictus. The little adornment is limited firstly to the altar area, where scenes designed by French sculptor Phillipe Kaeplin in 1954 depict the Nativity on the left, the Descent from the Cross in the middle, and the Annunciation on the right, as well as Mary holding the body of Jesus after it was taken down from the Cross, and secondly, to the carved ornaments of some columnar crowns, where a bull's head can be seen: a symbol of St. Luke, and a human bust, symbolizing St. Matthew, as well as some incomplete column crowns.

## Basilica's Grotto

St. Anne's Basilica comprises a natural grotto, presently covered with a modern, stone dome in front of which is a small altar. The grotto is allegedly the birthplace of Virgin Mary, Christ's mother, according to the Eastern Church. Hence, the Franks built the Basilica we see today. Across from this enclosure is another one, which houses the Birth of Mary icon.

## Archaeological Excavations

It is useful to review the illustrations and charts which relate the archaeological artifacts to their buildings and timelines. There are colored, brief signs which help understand and trace the archaeological remains.

Excavations started in 1871 under the supervision of Architect Marcel Mauss and continued for a number of years with the participation and supervision of the order of White Fathers, until they were completed in 1957. The excavations revealed the two-basin pool, separation dam, Roman wells, remains of the healing temple and of a Byzantine church, the small Franks church's nave, as well as a number of caves and grottos, some of which were used to store water. A number of mosaic floors, some of which date to the Umayyad period, were also found. Pottery chards and coins discovered on the site helped specify its age.



## Via Dolorosa



To access the first station, Via Dolorosa (in Italian) or the Way of the Cross/the Way of Sorrow as it is known in English, follow al-Mujahideen Street towards al-Wad Street, turning right as you leave St. Anne's church, walking 400 meters and arriving at al-Umariyya School, the first station of Via Dolorosa. The location used to be known as Antonia Fortress, referring to Roman Emperor Antonius.

### **Via Dolorosa: Stations and Meaning in the Christian Tradition**

Via Dolorosa refers to the route that Jesus Christ took as he carried the Cross, after He was sentenced to crucifixion, and until his death and burial. The route is divided into 14 stations, nine of which are outside the Church of Holy Sepulcher and five inside it. The stations are idiomatic in the sense that they are names agreed on, rather than historical points. They developed and changed in a complex manner and continue to suffer from basic

disagreements, for example, some historians believe that the sentence was passed at Herod's Palace, where the Citadel is today, rather than at the Antonia Fortress where al-Umariyya School is. The current Via Dolorosa route was finally agreed on in the early 19th century, and is different from what it was in the times of Christ. It is a religious site for Christian sects, particularly Catholics, who march along the route to commemorate its events every Friday at 3:00 pm, starting from al-Umariyya School. Protestants do not recognize these stations, but most pilgrims and tourists walk the route and read the gospel along the stations. Via Dolorosa is a main feature of the Old City of Jerusalem, although streets and crossings have changed substantially since the time of Christ. The stations and their locations are as follows:

Main Events at the Station	Station Location
Christ's trial and sentence to death	Al-Umariyya School
Christ carries the Cross and is lashed	Al-Jald (Lashing) Church, across from Al-Umariyya School
Christ falls under the weight of the Cross	First crossing of Al-Mujahideen Street (Via Dolorosa) and al-Wad Street
Christ meets his mother Mary	A few meters south of the third station
Simon the Cyrene carries the Cross for Christ	Beginning of 'Aqabat al-Mufti junction with al-Wad Street
St. Veronica wipes Christ's face	Halfway down 'Aqabat al-Mufti Street
Christ falls again from the weight of the Cross	The crossing of 'Aqabat al-Mufti and Khan al-Zait
Christ faces the weeping Jerusalem women	Halfway down al-Khanqa al-Salahiyya southwards
Christ falls under the weight of the Cross for the third time.	The Coptic Church at the entrance of Deir al-Sultan.

The remaining five stations are inside the Church of Holy Sepulcher, as agreed by Christian scholars. These are: stripping Christ of his clothes, placing Christ on the Cross, Christ's death on the Cross (these three stations are at the Golgotha), taking Christ's body down from the Cross, and burying Christ.

## Church of the Holy Sepulcher



In the past, the street extended west along al-Khanqah al-Salahiyya road until a few meters after the entrance to Haralambos Monastery, where one of the entrances to the Holy Sepulcher was. This entrance was closed and later blocked.

Today, to reach the ninth station which leads to the Holy Sepulcher, one has to backtrack from al-Khanqah al-Salahiyya road and go east, turn right (south) at the seventh station in Khanal-Zait Street, walk a few meters after 'Aqabat Al-Takiyya junction, ascend the steps to the Coptic Monastery to the

west of Khan al-Zait Road, and follow the stairs to the road leading to the ninth station and to Deir al-Sultan, where the roof of St. Helena's church is. On the southwest side of Deir al-Sultan, a door leads to the entrance of the Holy Sepulcher, passing through the Four Knights church and the Angel church, both disputed by the Coptic and Ethiopian sects.

### Importance of the Holy Sepulcher

The Holy Sepulcher is the most important church in Jerusalem, and in the world for that matter. It was built during the Byzantine period and is in the heart of the Old City of Jerusalem. The church has been a destination for



pilgrims from all over the world since the 2nd century. It is the place where Jesus Christ was crucified, tortured, suffered, died, and was resurrected, and where his tomb is, according to Christian scriptures and beliefs. It is a unique church and belongs to all Christian sects; the large architectural complex comprises a number of small churches, with a total area of over 5,000 square meters.

### **Holy Sepulcher's Founder, Architect and Components**

All Christian sects, with the exception of one, small Protestant group headed by General Gordon, agree that Christ was buried and resurrected at the present location of the Holy Sepulcher. The Church was built by Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena, where Constantine sent an engineer called Zenobius, a Palmyran, to build the Holy Sepulcher. He started construction in the year 326 AD, and when the church was inaugurated in 335 AD, it comprised four basic architectural elements: an advance atrium accessed through three doors preceded by a staircase, a basilica composed of five aisles and one nave, an open courtyard and garden in whose southeast corner Christ is thought to have been crucified (Golgotha), and the Holy Sepulcher (Holy Tomb) in the middle of a rotunda. The Bishop of Jerusalem adorned the tomb, then added an aisle in the year 384, after the inauguration.

### **Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab and the Holy Sepulcher**

The Persians destroyed and burnt down the Holy Sepulcher in 614, along with other churches in Palestine, which instigated the Patriarch Modestus to head to Constantinople and strive to rebuild it, though at a smaller scale, but without any major change. The Muslim Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab turned down a proposal by the Patriarch Sophronius to pray in the Holy Sepulcher when the call for prayer was made while he was inside the church, so that Muslims would not do the same and take over the church later on. He went outside and prayed in an open space, where a mosque was built later, carrying his name.

## **Al-Hakim Orders the Destruction of the Church and the Franks Rebuild it**

Christians later suffered from the haphazard policy of the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim ai Amr Allah (996-1021 AD / 386-411 H), alongside all sectors of the Islamic community in Palestine and Egypt. The peak of suffering and hassle was when he ordered the governor to destroy the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in 1009 AD / 400 H, but he soon changed his mind, as was typical of his erratic behavior, and allowed its rebuilding. His son, al-Zahir, also allowed the rebuilt the Holy Tomb in 1027 AD / 418 H. During the Franks' control of Jerusalem and Palestine, they carried out amendments and additions to the Holy Sepulcher, culminating in a major project that majorly changed the plan of the Constantine Church, including the construction of a new church in 1149 AD known as the Catholicon, along the Romanesque style, with a dome overlooking the Tomb Rotunda. The Crucifixion site was brought inside the church building, and its lower part was made into a cemetery for some Frank kings. In 1170 AD, a tower was added for the church bells in front of the entrance, which was designed to open south instead of east. Despite this major change in the church plan, the Holy Sepulcher maintained its main elements of holiness, represented in the Holy Tomb and the Crucifixion site.

## **Saladin the Organizer**

This development of the Holy Sepulcher is what Salah al-Din witnessed after liberating Jerusalem from the Franks in 1187 AD / 583 H. Salah al-Din followed the footsteps of Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab in his tolerance and understanding of Christians and their rights, particularly eastern sects. He preserved churches, including the Holy Sepulcher, in accordance with prevailing Shari'a laws at the time and previous agreements concluded by the Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab and approved and adopted by Muslim caliphs and sultans. He also took preventive measures, such as closing the eastern gate of the church and restricting entry to the western gate, transferring the Patriarch's house into a Sufi Khanqah (a place of worship, meditation and learning) known as the Salahiyya Khanqah, and assigning the task of keeping the Holy Sepulcher's keys and opening and closing its door, morning and evening, to notable Jerusalem families like Nusseibah and Ghadiyah (Joudeh).

## Visiting the Church

### Entrance

The Church's double-door opening to the south leads into an atrium. It is a grand door, two floors high, the first part of which comprises two openings, with the northern one blocked. Above each is a huge lintel with carved inscriptions depicting events in the Christian faith. These lintels have been moved to the Palestinian Rockefeller Museum.

### The Golgotha

Entering the church, the visitor finds a modern staircase to the right (north) leading to the crucifixion site. The top of the rock is about five meters above the entrance level, and the area is divided into two parts, eastern and western, with a small chapel in each. The level and concentration of ornaments indicate the difference between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Western Catholic Church. The eastern part is the property of the Roman Catholic sect, and at its northern end is the Altar of the Crucifixion, ornamented with an embossed copper engraving. This altar dates back to 1588 AD and originated in the city of Florence in Italy. The walls and ceiling are adorned with mosaics depicting Christian events and concepts. The mosaics were created in 1937 AD except for some ceiling ornaments, which are from the Franks era in the 12th century. On the western Greek side, the remaining part of the crucifixion rock can be seen behind glass, with a crack that took place, according to Christian tradition, when Jesus Christ died after being stabbed by the Roman soldiers and stripped naked. Stripping Christ represents the 10th station of Via Dolorosa. Fixing Christ on the Cross with nails represents the 11th station. The 12th is his death, the 13th is taking His body down from the Cross, and the last is placing His body in the Tomb.

### Chapel of Adam and Stone of The Anointing

A descending staircase facing the ascending one leads to the Stone of The Anointing and Chapel of Adam, named according to the common tradition that Christ died where Adam was buried. At the end of this Greek Orthodox Church is a deep nave with a round dome, behind which is part of the Crucifixion Rock with a crack. A door in the western wall of the Chapel of Adam leads to the Stone of The Anointing, where Christ was washed before He was buried. Eight lanterns are placed above this rock, four of which (with gilded eggs) are for the Greek Orthodox sect, two for the Armenian sect, one for the Roman Catholic and one for the Coptic sect. On each side of the rock's ends are three candle

stands, one on each side for the Greek Orthodox, one for the Armenians and one for the Roman Catholics. To the west of the purple Stone of The Anointing is a stone wall, separating the entrance from the Catholicon Church. The lower part of the Stone of The Anointing was recently adorned with mosaics depicting the crucifixion, taking Christ down from the cross and preparation for his burial. To the west is the Armenian chapel, and the Three Mary's altar is to its right.

## **The Holy Tomb**

Turning slightly right reveals the Holy Tomb, located under a large rotunda resting on a group of pillars carrying a circular dome, at the center of which is an opening allowing a ray of sunlight into an otherwise dark space. The dome is adorned with twelve gilded petals, representing Christ's twelve disciples. From the outside, the dome is a prominent feature of Jerusalem's skyline, together with the gilded Dome of the Rock, though the latter is gilded in its entirety but only the cross on the Holy Sepulcher dome is gilded. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher includes many small chapels, rooms, halls and praying niches, as well a large number of archaeological artifacts and sites around the Holy Sepulcher related to the Constantine Church.



## St. Alexander's Church and Russian Excavations

### Site Importance and Access

In order to get a better idea about the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and examine its concealed parts, and to identify its borders and extensions since its construction during the era of Emperor Constantine the Great, it is recommended to visit St. Alexander's Church and the Russian excavations.

Leaving the Holy Sepulcher, make a left (east) turn past the entrance of Suq Aftimos and façade of the German Church of Our Savior. A brick-color wall just before the Khan Al-Zaitand Suq al-Attarin junction is part of St. Alexander's Church. Entering it requires a small fee of five shekels, and the site is open all week (except Sundays) from 9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and 3:00-5:00 p.m.

### The Old and the New

The external, architectural fabric of St. Alexander's does not reflect what is inside the site. The stone façades and the spacious internal structure and high walls reflect the mosaic<sup>8</sup> architectural style typical of the second half of the 19th century.

### Site Ownership and Excavations

The site was acquired in 1859 AD by the Russian government. After the establishment of the Russian Palestinian Orthodox Association by Emperor Alexander III on March 8, 1882, a series of excavations began in the site, financed by Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, Chairman of the Association and

8 - See Trail 8, The Mosaic Architecture



brother of Emperor Alexander III. The present building, which contains a modern church, offices, and archaeological artifacts found during excavations, was built later.

## Archaeological Remains Found



In order to understand the whole scene, it must be connected to the archaeological remains found at the Zalatio Confectioners, which can be generally described as follows:

- Remains of what is known as the Governance Gate, dating back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, and most likely built by King Herod (37-4 BC).
- The remains of an arch and two pillars dating back to the era of Emperor Hadrian

at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (123) AD, from the Venus (Aphrodite) Temple.

- Floors and walls from the front atrium: one of the four parts of the Helena and Constantine Church, dating back to the start of the 4th century AD.

## Inside the Structure

A long corridor leads to the modern church and the abovementioned archaeological remains. In the northeast corner of the end of the church building, a small opening contains large bells, ending with a door opening to the Zalatio shop, the start of the staircase leading to the Coptic Church and the entrance to the Holy Sepulcher from Deir al-Sultan, mentioned earlier.

## John the Baptist Church



It is now recommended to take a rest and a drink at one of the many cafés in and around Suq Aftimos, then head to St. John the Baptist Church, characterized by its silver dome, a few meters from the Suq Aftimos fountain to the southwest. This church is located at the eastern side of the southern sector of the Christian Quarter street, near the road leading to Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate). Its humble entrance is not indicative of what is inside, leading to a few steps and arriving at an open courtyard at the church entrance. The church dates back to the 5th century AD, and its plan includes a long narthex and three angles from the eastern, southern and northern sides. The church was demolished during the Persian war in 614 AD, and was rebuilt and renovated by John, the Patriarch of Alexandria. The present façade and the two small bell towers date back to the Franks era, with the church renovated by the traders of the Italian city of Amalfi in the 11th century AD. The church was a center for, a Crusader knights (Hospitalers), and is presently under the guardianship of the Greek Orthodox Church. Its silver domes can be seen from Suq Aftimos and elsewhere in the Old City.

## St. Mark's Church / Syrian Monastery

St. Mark's Church can be accessed from Prophet David Street, which crosses with the Christian Quarter Street. Turn south to Suq I-Husur and walk down the street until the intersection of St. Mark's Church Street, south of Suq al-Bazaar and east of the Armenian Quarter, near the end of the three Suqs to the south.

### Historical Background

The origins of this church date to the 5th century, but it was renovated and rebuilt over a number of eras, most



prominent of which was the Franks period. It is among the oldest churches of Jerusalem and was established by the Syrian sect, whose members consider themselves among the earliest Christian sects of Jerusalem. According to Syrian tradition, the location of this church was the home of St. Mark and the place of the Last Supper of Christ with His disciples. During renovation work in 1940, an inscription was discovered with Aramaic script, to the effect that the site was turned into a church in the name of the Virgin Mary after Christ's ascension and was rebuilt in the year 73 AD after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.



### Architectural Description of the Church

The church's façade is very simple in terms of architectural composition. The entrance is a rectangular door topped by a decorated pointed lintel and surrounded by molded motifs. The style of architecture suggests that it dates back to the Franks era. The church has a rectangular scheme extending from west to east. Its altar dome is based eastwards. The above-mentioned writing is affixed in the southern wall. In the northwest corner, an opening leads to an underground basement, which the Syrian sect believes was the site of the Last Supper, rather than Zion's cenacle at the shrine of the Prophet David. The church was renovated in 1733 AD and towards the end of the first half of the 20th century, and it has had several renovation projects in the last two decades. The monastery adjacent to this church includes several rooms and halls, as well as a library with valuable Aramaic and Syrian manuscripts.

## Nea Church



This church is located east of Bab al-Nabi Daoud (Zion's Gate). To access it, one must cross the Suq Al-Husur Street and join the Harat al-Sharaf Road that leads to Bab al-Nabi Daoud.

### Historical Background

The remains of this church are simply a pile of rubble, from which the basic plan of the church, built by Emperor Justinian in 543 AD, was charted. This church was the greatest church in Jerusalem after the Holy Sepulcher and was built to compete with it. It is located at the end of the road extending from Bab al-Amud (Damascus Gate) to Bab al-Nabi Daoud, which used to be known as the *cardo*. It is known that the *cardo*, built by Emperor Hadrian, used to extend until the end of Suq al-Attarin today, and Emperor Justinian extended it to its present status and established this great church. Until recently, just before 1967, some researchers thought that Nea Church was built near al-Aqsa Mosque. Sources of information about this church were descriptions by travelers and the Madaba Mosaic Map of Jerusalem.

### Church Plan

It is evident from excavations that the church was planned as a basilica, with the middle aisle larger than the side ones. The aisles end in triple naves, the middle one of which is the largest. Excavations have revealed Greek inscriptions, saying that the church was built upon the orders of Emperor Flavius Justinian.



## St. Jacob Armenian Cathedral / Armenian Monastery

It is easy to access St. James' Cathedral, located inside the Armenian Monastery, accessed by walking down the paved road ahead of Nea Church to the west.

### Historical Background

St. James Cathedral is one of the main features of the Armenian Quarter and Monastery. The Armenian Quarter is the northwest part of the Old City of Jerusalem. This church is also among the old churches of Jerusalem, with Armenian traditions dating it to the 4th century AD, but the current architecture

of the church dates back to the end of the 12th century, or the Franks era. The church's location is connected to St. John, one of Christ's disciples and the brother of St. Jacob. It is thought that John was killed by Herod Agrippa in this location.

### Plan and Decorative Elements

The original church was larger than the present building, but it seems to have been destroyed during the Persian invasion in 614 AD. The church was rebuilt more than once, including during the 8th century, but the present plan was made in the 12th century, during the Franks era. This church is distinguished by the ornamental blue tiles, similar to Turkish ones, covering its walls. They are similar to the tiles covering the Dome of the Rock, but the ornamental elements are different. The area of this church is about 24 x 17.5 meters and

it has the plan of a basilica, with three aisles, the center one of which is the largest. The eastern part of the church, or the nave, contains three altars, whose wooden ornaments date back to 1731 AD. The church also contains some chapels and the remains of a few dead, including St. James.

The Armenian monastery has a rich library containing an important number of manuscripts and Ottoman and Mamluk sultans' decrees. There is also a museum, schools, and a residential compound attached to the church and the monastery, all of which form the Armenian quarter.

With the visit to the Armenian Monastery and St. James Cathedral, the time will have come to end the tour with a cup of coffee or tea in the Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate) area, enjoying the historical setting and architectural beauty and variance.

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## 4. Al-Isra and Al-Mi'raj Trail

## Trail's Nature and Stations

This trail is related to a particular part of the al-Aqsa Mosque, focusing on sites and locations associated with the Isra and Mi'raj<sup>9</sup>, and of significance in Islam and Prophet Mohammad's life, as well as in the architectural development of al-Aqsa Mosque. This trail is easy and enjoyable, and highly spiritual. If contemplation, prayer, and reading the Holy Quran are to be part of the trail, then it would require several hours to complete. The trail requires patience, quiet, piety, and a demure dress code. Like all the trails, the stations on this trail are mere suggestions, and the visitor will be able to visit other sites and locations in and around the area of al-Aqsa Mosque.

The trail begins in the center of the Dome of the Rock, believed by Muslims to be the spot from which Prophet Mohammad ascended to the heavens, and ends at the beginning of al-Sharaf neighborhood, which overlooks al-Buraq Wall (the Western Wall).

The trail is composed of the following stations:

Qubbat al-Sakhra (The Dome of the Rock)

Qubbat al-Silsilah (The Dome of the Chain)

The Eastern Colonnade

Al-Marwani Mosque

Old -Aqsa mosque

Al-Jami' al-Aqsa (Friday prayer mosque)

Islamic Museum

Al-Ashrafiyya School

Al-Buraq Wall (the Western Wall)

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<sup>9</sup> - The Isra and Mi'raj are the two parts of a miracle night Journey that, according to Islamic faith, the prophet of Islam, Muhammad took during a single night around the year 621 AD.

## Introduction

### Location and Borders of al-Aqsa Mosque

Al-Aqsa Mosque is located on a raised platform in the southeast part of the Old City of Jerusalem. The mosque sits on a trapezoidal platform bordered from the east by a wall, 462 meters long, which constitutes one of the mosque's walls and part of the wall of the Old City of Jerusalem. This also applies to the southern wall that stretches for about 281 meters. As for the northern wall, 310 meters long, and the western wall, 491 meters long, they are formed from a group of buildings and schools that were built in the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras and were a foundation for architectural layers that came in later eras, particularly the Ottoman. This area is nearly 144 dunums<sup>10</sup>, constituting around one seventh of the Old City of Jerusalem.

### The Names of al-Aqsa Mosque

This area has been known by a variety of names, the most significant of which is al-Aqsa Mosque, a name that appeared in the Holy Quran (al-Isra, Verse 1). Although many prefer this naming, the more famous name was al-Haram al-Sharif (The Noble Sanctuary). This was probably to avoid any confusion between the covered al-Jami' (mosque) al-Aqsa, where the imam delivered the Friday sermons and which is located in the center of the southern part of the area, and al-Aqsa Mosque, which refers to the entire walled area that included the Dome of the Rock, the aforementioned mosque, and several other structures. This confusion is also found in historical sources and is currently present among the public and even among some contemporary scholars.

### Early Attention to al-Aqsa Mosque

Since the early days of the Arab Islamic conquest, efforts were exerted to build the area of al-Aqsa Mosque, first as a holy site for Muslims that is blessed in the Holy Quran, and second because the city of Jerusalem was conquered peacefully with a pledge to protect the homes and property of Christians in the city. Most of the city was inhabited, but this area and its surroundings were neglected, making them prime locations for the attention of developers throughout the many Islamic eras. Consequently, the development and rebuilding of the area of al-Aqsa Mosque has been, throughout the historical eras from the Islamic conquest of Jerusalem to this day, the responsibility of Arab and Islamic states that ruled in Palestine over the past 14 centuries. Nowadays, Jordan, its government and people, sponsors the holy sites in the area of al-Aqsa Mosque and in the city of Jerusalem.

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<sup>10</sup> - One dunum = 1000 square meters.

## Sanctity of al-Aqsa Mosque

Although al-Aqsa Mosque, with its current components, is considered an architectural museum and a historical site, it remains an original holy site for Muslims, above all other considerations. The visitor must keep in mind that it is not a public area, as seen by the Israeli authorities, who believe that only places of worship, namely the structure of the Dome of the Rock and inside I-Jami' Mosque) al-Aqsa (, are the holy places, ignoring the rest of the area's components in terms of arenas, small mosques, schools, and fountains. From the Israeli perspective, these are areas designated as public parks and gardens.

Scholars and researchers agree that no original remains of clarity and value of the al-Aqsa Mosque area have been passed down to us, since the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus in 70 AD and until the arrival of the Arabs and Muslims. This is also because of the severe destruction and overlapping of civilizations that the city saw over the ages. Indeed, the majority of what has been written remains as theoretical proclamations that lack factual evidence. Meanwhile, the Arabs and Muslims, when they arrived in Jerusalem (638 AD / 15 H) and took it peacefully, in line with the Umari Pledge that Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab reached with Patriarch Sophronius, did not remove or demolish any structure that was standing in the al-Aqsa Mosque area.

## Levels of al-Aqsa Mosque

As it stands today, the area of al-Aqsa Mosque comprises three levels. The first level, which is the ground level, hosts Bab al-Rahmah (Mercy Gate) and Bab al-Tawba (both known as the Golden Gate), as well as al-Marwani Prayer Hall, the Old al-Aqsa Mosque, and al-Buraq Mosque.

The second, middle level hosts al-Jami' al-Aqsa, the Islamic Museum, and the porticoes in the western and northern parts of the wall, along with various gates and structures, such as fountains, platforms, minarets, and domes.

The third level, the highest, hosts the Dome of the Rock. This is reached through a group of colonnades topped by a beautiful set of domes and retreats, in addition to the Burhan al-Din marble pulpit, al-Karak platform, and a group of wells. The trail begins from the third level and moves throughout the other sites.

# 1.Qubbat al-Sakhra (Dome of the Rock) (691 AD / 72 H)



## Location

The Dome of the Rock is located in the middle of al-Aqsa Mosque compound, centered in an open space that rises from the ground level of al-Jami' al-Aqsa by around four meters. This space is currently known to the people of Jerusalem as the Rock Level. It is nearly square in shape and is accessed by eight colonnades.

## Nature of the Dome of the Rock

The Rock is made up of natural, irregularly shaped stone measuring 18 x 13 meters and 1.5 meters high. It is surrounded by a decorated, wooden fence that dates back to the Ayyubid era. Below the Rock, there is a square shaped cave (4.5m) that has one hollow mihrab (niche) and another flat one. Many Muslims pray inside this cave, because they believe that their prayers are answered in following the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad, who lead a prayer there with most of the revered prophets.

## Importance and Stature of the Dome of the Rock Building

The Dome of the Rock is the icon of Jerusalem and Palestine and is a destination for students, believers, tourists, scientists, and artists. Historically, it is the oldest Islamic architectural site still standing to this day. Religiously, it is the site of the miracle of the Isra and Mi'raj, one of the most spiritual and magnificent manifestations in Islam. Artistically, it is a landmark of the beginning of Islamic art, encompassing mosaic formations of nearly 1,000 square meters and considered one of the most fascinating mosaic designs, in very good condition and concentrated colors. Architecturally, it is a unique artifact, the like of which was never built in Islamic architecture, in terms of design or usage. What is seen today is the Dome of the Rock as it was constructed by Abdul Malek Ibn Marwan without any major changes or alterations, especially in terms of the scheme, the area, and most of the decorations. This preservation is very rare in Islamic architecture. Usually, mosques and token buildings are built on and amended, making it difficult to trace their early stages or origins. This is one of the most beautiful man-made structures, admired by all visitors, regardless of their affiliations or religions.

## Founder and Curators

Historical resources agree that Umayyad Caliph Ibn'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan (685-705AD/ 65-86 H) was the one who ordered the construction of the Dome of the Rock, which started in 688-689 AD (69 H) and was completed in 691 - 692 AD (72 H). The construction took four years to complete, during which 'Abd al-Malik used Egypt's revenue for seven years. He appointed Raja' ibn Haywah, a prominent man in Palestine and one of the advisors in the Umayyad era, and Yazid Ibnibn Salam to undertake all that was necessary to complete the construction.

## Exterior of the Dome of the Rock

The Dome of the Rock is set up on a circular arcade, in which 16 windows were opened and adorned with stocco decorations covered in colored glass. The decorations display a variety of plant and geometrical designs and inscriptions. The drum is covered by tiles decorated with text from the Quranic sura (verse), al-Isra. The dome is spherical in shape and covered with gold plated copper panels, it culminates with a golden crescent.

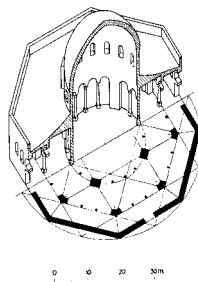
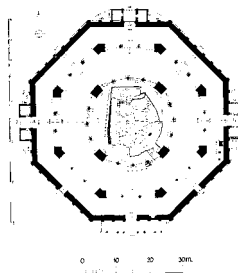
The four cardinal sides have doors leading inside the structure, while each of the eight sides extends around 20.6 meters and is 9.5 meters high. The lower part is covered with decorated marble; the upper part is adorned with decorative tiles of multi colors and geometrical and plant motifs. In the upper part of each of the eight sides are seven windows, five of which are open and two, on each side, are closed. The doors were designed in a way as to give

anyone entering the shrine from any of the doors a full view of the columns and pillars without any obstruction. This was accomplished by slightly slanting the circle of the structure's pillars, which measures 2.5 degrees according to the scientist Richmond and 3 degrees according to Creswell. Without this slant, the pillars on the opposite side of the point of entrance would have been blocked by those nearest, because they would be in a straight line.

## Plan of the Dome of the Rock

The scheme of the Dome of the Rock is composed of two octagonal structures, one interior and the other exterior, surrounding the domed structure that encompasses the Rock. The exterior octagonal structure is based on eight piers and on 16 columns, with two columns between every two pillars. The interior octagonal structure is confined between the exterior octagonal structure and the piers and pillars that support the drum of the dome. There are four pillars and 12 columns here, supporting semi-circular arches, the arches are connected together by decorated wooden beams. The façades and extrados of the arches are decorated with mosaics and golden Kufi script on a colored background.

From the inside, the dome sits on a circular drumsupported by semi-circular arches carried on four pillars and 12 columns. The drum is divided into two parts. The lower part displays mosaics with flower and geometric motifs, as well as inscriptions in green and gold. Most of these decorations date back to the Umayyad era and are similar to those found in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. The decorations have attracted a variety of scientists and specialists in an attempt to explain them and decipher their symbolism. Motifs of vases, crowns, plant elements, palm leaves, pine cones, grape leaves, and other elements make up most of these mosaic decorations.



## Dome of the Rock in the Times of the Franks (Crusaders)

The Franks turned the Dome of the Rock into a church, calling it Templum Domini and adding icons, crosses, and an iron fence that surrounded the Rock and is now preserved in the Islamic Museum. The construction of this fence was mentioned by Ibn al-Athir, saying that the pilgrims were paying gold and silver to get a piece of the Rock, which led the authorities at that time to build the iron fence in order to protect it.

## 2.Qubbat al-Silsilah (The Dome of the Chain) (691 - 692 AD / 72 H)



The Dome of the Chain is located directly to the east of the Dome of the Rock. A visitor leaving the Dome of the Rock from the eastern gate will directly see the Dome of the Chain; otherwise, a walk around the structure of the Dome of the Rock will be necessary to access it.

### Historical Background

The Dome of the Chain is one of the monumental buildings. According to several historical sources, it was founded by Caliph 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan and its construction was most likely completed in 691 - 692 AD (72 H). The structure has a curious history. It is not clear why it was called the Dome of the Chain or what the purpose of its construction was. The name was linked to an old story that was attributed once to Prophet David and another time to Prophet Solomon. As for the reason for its construction, there were two opinions. The first argued that it was a money house, while the second believed that it was a prototype for the Dome of the Rock. Both arguments are lacking. If it were a money house, it would have required security around the clock, and if it were a prototype, then there are major differences between the two domes. Moreover, the Dome of the Chain is an open dome, while the Dome of the Rock is a closed-wall dome. Regardless, the Dome of the Chain has coincided with the Dome of the Rock and it is also considered one of the oldest Islamic buildings that are still standing to this day. Naturally, the Dome



of the Chain underwent renovations over the Islamic periods. Sultan al-Zahir Baibars had renovated its niche, while the dome was renovated in 1561 AD (969 H) by Suleiman I-Qanuni (Suleiman the Magnificent), who ordered the adornment of the interior and exterior spandrels of the arches , as well as the niche, with colored tiles.

### **Plan of the Dome of the Chain**

The Dome of the Chain has a polygon plan made up of eleven sides supported by marble columns with square and circular bases, and marble capitales displaying various flower motifs. The columns support semi-circular arches, finishing at the top with straight walls that form the polygon building . The exterior polygon contain an interior polygon in its center, made up of six marble columns, alternating the color of red and green. The columns display capitales with various vegtal motifs and are topped with six semi-circular archea, covered in tiles of geometric and flower forms. The dome drum, is hexagonal in shape in exterior and circular in interior, sits on top of these arches, and on top of this drum set a semi-spherical dome that is covered with lead sheets. A stone concave mihrab is found in the southern side of the Dome of the Chain, it is constructed of stone and has a semicircular arch. The arch is supported by twomarble columns, with flower motifs capitales. The interior of the mihrab is covered by long slabs of red, black and grey marble.

## 3.The Eastern Colonnade

To approach the eastern colonnade, one must leave the Dome of the Chain and walk several meters east, where a series of arches are found in the center of the eastern wall of the Dome of the Rock.

### Nature of the Colonnade

There are eight colonnades around the of the Dome of the Rock platform: one on the eastern side, two in the southern wall, three in the western wall and two in the northern wall. These colonnades are monumental structures, but they also serve as transient areas between the level of the Dome of the Rock and the level of the al-Jami' al-Aqsa. These colonnades were called 'Bawa'ik' (plural of 'Ba'ika') and 'Maraqi' (plural of 'Mirqa') and 'Mawazin' (plural of 'Mizan'). The latter name, means balance, was attributed to simple and common people who believe that Jerusalem is the site of Judgment Day and that these arcades appeared like the two halves of the scale, as if judging people's actions on Judgment Day.

The Eastern Colonnade is not dated, but it is most likely from the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD (4<sup>th</sup> century H). Architecturally, the Eastern Colonnade comprises a series of five arches supported by four columns in the middle and one pier on each side.





## 4. Al-Marwani Mosque

To reach al-Marwani Mosque, the visitor must carefully walk down the steps of the Eastern Colonnade and move right (south) on the paved road that ends at the entrance of the northwest corner of al-Marwani Mosque. This entrance is one of three passageways that make up the closed triple gate, which is located in the southern part of the al-Aqsa Mosque's wall, between



the double gate and the single gate. That gate is the one used by visitors and worshipers at al-Marwani Mosque. The visit to al-Marwani Mosque by non-Muslims and non-locals requires prior coordination with the Islamic Awqaf (Religious Endowments) Department/Directorate of Archaeological Tourism.

## What is al-Marwani Mosque?

Al-Marwani Mosque is a huge architectural structure. Its eastern and southern walls constitute the lower parts of the wall of al-Aqsa Mosque and the wall of the Old City of Jerusalem. It is, in fact, the boundary of al-Aqsa Mosque. The structure comprises porticoes that extend north to south. These include a set of semicircular arches, based on a large group of pillars constructed from huge stones. At the bottom of these pillars are hollow stone rings, which are said to have been used to tie up the horses used by the Franks when they resided in parts of al-Aqsa Mosque.

## Original Purpose of the Mosque

In its current structure, al-Marwani Mosque is in reality a large, leveling area aimed at bridging the natural slope in the area of al-Aqsa Mosque. This was necessary in order to facilitate the construction of al-Jami' al-Aqsa by 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ibn Marwan. The area of al-Jami' al-Aqsa, when it was established in 691 AD (72 H) was twice its current one, and it had 15 aisles instead of the present seven. Many of the stones that were available on site were re-used, particularly in the foundations and lower courses, while the upper courses, arches, and vaults were built with small stones. This concurs with the statements of the famous geographer, al-Muqaddisi, who said that the foundations of al-Jami' al-Aqsa are old and that 'Abd al-Malik built on it using smaller stones and created serrated outlooks, an architectural, decorative approach used for the tops of walls.

## Origin and Meaning of the Name

Al-Marwani Mosque is a recent name given to the area that used to be called the Stable, or more specifically, Solomon's Stables. Al-Marwani name refers to the Umayyad Caliph Marwan Ibn al-Hakam, the father of the caliphs 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan, Al-Walid, Suleiman and Hisham, who have all made noble contributions to the development of the area of al-Haram al-Sharif, architecturally and artistically. It was so named as a show of reverence to the father of those caliphs who contributed to the development of al-Aqsa Mosque. This name, which is historically evidenced, was launched in reaction to the wrongful name that had been prevalent, namely, the Stable or Solomon's Stables. The name of al-Marwani Mosque became more widely accepted and familiar after the area was renovated by the Islamic Awqaf Department and al-Aqsa Mosque Restoration Committee, with the much appreciated support of many Arabs and Muslims who volunteered from all parts of Palestine, especially the town of Um al-Nour, in 1992 and later.

## Reason for the Old Name

There is no accurate knowledge of the reason for giving the structure the name of Solomon's Stables, which appeared in the footnotes of Islamic resources and references. This is particularly true since the architecture fabric of al-Marwani Mosque does not relate in any way to Prophet Solomon. The structure dates back to the Umayyad period, and more specifically to the ruling era of Caliph 'Abed al-Malik Ibnibn Marwan. Calling al-Marwani Mosque by the name of Solomon's Stables could be attributed to two reasons: the first stems from popular heritage and Islam, while the second could be related to the Franks.

As for the first, it is known that Prophet Solomon ibn Daoud has great stature and reverence in Islam and in the Holy Quran, which reflected on popular heritage and folklore. Prophet Solomon was mentioned 17 times in the Holy Quran, with significant content and stature. The Holy Quran says that Allah (God) Almighty gave Solomon wisdom, taught him the logic of the bird, and dedicated to him both man and demon . As such, it is very likely that when Muslim travelers and visitors saw important religious sites characterized by impressive architecture, large stones, huge lintels and massive pillars, they might have been so impressed and overstated their admiration by saying that such a site was not built by man, but by demon(jinn), and since the only person who has control over the jinn was Prophet Solomon, such sites were attributed to him. Indeed, it has become a familiar saying to refer to any structure that has large stones by saying that it is a Solomon construction. Since al-Marwani Mosque showed noteworthy architectural characteristics and large stones, it was attributed to Solomon without any historical or architectural verification, something that was not done in the Middle Ages. The traveler Nasir Khusrau, for example, said in his description of the old al-Aqsa: 'In its construction, stones were used that no brain could comprehend how human beings could have moved or transported, and we were told that Suleiman ibn Daoud was the one who built it.'

What helped strengthen this name was what was circulated during the Franks occupation of the al-Aqsa Mosque. They had turned the middle and eastern parts of al-Jami' al-Aqsa into a church and called it Temple Solomons. Moreover, a group of warrior Franks had taken up residence in the western part of al-Jami' al-Aqsa , and they were known by the name of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Since these were warrior knights, they had to have their horses nearby and therefore used the area of al-Marwani Mosque as a place to keep the horses, particularly after they opened a doorway in the eastern part of the southern wall of al-Aqsa Mosque, known as the single gate to allow for the easy movement of horses. Additionally, this opinion was supported further by the presence of a large number of hollowed, carved

rings in the stone pillars that carry the arches of al-Marwani Mosque. Consequently, the use of the area as stables determined its purpose, and since the Franks called the level above al-Marwani Mosque ‘Temple Solomons,’ it would be expected that the lower level would be called after Solomon, namely Solomon’s Stables. What may support this analysis is the fact that this name was not common until the Franks arrived in the area.

### Position of Al-Marwani Mosque

Al-Marwani Mosque is an integral part of al-Aqsa Mosque. It is as holy as all the other parts and components of al-Aqsa Mosque. It was also an important element of the project of ‘Abd al-Malik Ibnibn Marwan to renovate and develop al-Aqsa Mosque. The area of al-Marwani Mosque received major attention during the Fatimid era. The renovation of al-Marwani Mosque was accompanied by a vicious campaign by a group of right-wing Israelis, who attacked the Islamic Awqaf and claimed that they were destroying artifacts pre-dating Islam, which has no foundation in any facts or archaeological findings.

## 5.Old Al-Aqsa (Bab al-Nabi)



The structure known as the Old al-Aqsa is accessed by leaving al-Marwani Mosque and walking towards al-Jami’ al-Aqsa. Before reaching the middle of the space leading up to al-Jami’ al-Aqsa , a stone staircase leads to a door and into the Old al-Aqsa. The requirements that apply to visiting al-Marwani Mosque are also applicable here.

## Nature of the Old al-Aqsa

The Old al-Aqsa refers to the area that extends from north to south beneath the middle *riwaq* (aisle) of al-Jami' al-Aqsa, 18 steps lower than its floor and entrance. This slope continues inside the Old al-Aqsa as the visitor moves southward. As such, the Old al-Aqsa slopes twice: once immediately after passing through the entrance and another at the end of the eastern portico of the Old al-Aqsa. The visitor must move towards the west a little and go down eight large steps. This decrease is characteristic of the nature of the location. The scheme and architectural elements clarify this, with a door comprising two long passageways leading into al-Jami' al-Aqsa. This door was known as Bab al-Nabi (the Gate of the Prophet) in Arabic writings and the Double Gate in western ones.

## Plan of the Area

The ceiling of the two passageways, which meet in a semi-barrel shallow vault, is founded on three lines of semicircular arches extending from north to south. The stones of these arches are large and dressed. The openings of the arches were closed off for support purposes. At the opening of the door, there are huge lintels and great pillars. The area to the inside of the door is a square space decorated by four shallow domes. In this area, one can see a set of huge granite pillars, as well as a modern concrete pair to support the ceiling.

## Founder

According to Nasir Khusra, Suleiman Ibn ibn Daoud was the founder and builder of this door, the Old al-Aqsa, because Khusrau could not believe how men could move and use its stones, as this is beyond man's capabilities. As those above men are the jinn, and Suleiman was the one to whom Allah (God) Almighty dedicated the power of the jinn, so Khusrau believed that Suleiman built this door.

However, it appears that this door is Roman, which was held as probable by Mujir al-Din when he spoke about al-Zawiyya al-Khataniyya, saying that it was built by the Romans. Some experts date it back to Herod (37 - 4 BC). It also appears that this door was destroyed in Titus' campaign of 70 AD and was neglected until 'Abd al-Malik Ibn ibn Marwan ordered the renovation and reconstruction of the area of al-Aqsa Mosque, rebuilding it from already available materials and introducing architectural and decorative elements, so long as they did not contradict with the traditions of Islam.





## 6. Al-Jami' al-Aqsa

Al-Jami' al-Aqsa refers to the rectangular building with a ceiling and seven porticoes, located nearly in the middle of the southern wall of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The current plan shows the latest development of al-Jami' al-Aqsa, the result of architectural accumulations and changes stemming from different construction stages, whose numbers and dates historians and researchers have failed to agree on. This is due to several factors, including the fact that al-Jami' al-Aqsa was not built on natural bed rock but rather on a structural base of columns and pillars, due to the area's slope towards the south which required making up for the height difference. This is in addition to the many destructive earthquakes that hit the area, resulting in changes in the elements and area of al-Jami' al-Aqsa.

### Efforts of Caliph Umar ibn Al-Khattab

The first stage of building al-Jami' al-Aqsa is attributed to Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, who is referenced by Mujir al-Din as building a mihrab and simple mosque, and adding that Caliph Umar, after clearing the area of al-Aqsa Mosque of debris and dirt and uncovering the holy Rock, consulted with his companions on the issue of the *mihrab*. He was told that he should place the *mihrab* in front of the Rock, but Umar refused and said that 'We shall make the Qibla on the front, as the Prophet of Allah (God) made the Qibla in the front of our mosques.' Traveler Arculf in 670 AD (49 - 50 H) provided a description for a simple mosque located in the southern arena of al-Aqsa

Mosque, founded on great ‘wooden’ beams made from reused materials that were available in the area. He indicated that the mosque fits 3,000 worshippers. Nothing tangible of this al-Umari mosque, the first al-Jami’ al-Aqsa, remains now.

## Founder

Old and contemporary historians have disagreed on dating the second stage or the second al-Jami’ al-Aqsa. The majority attributed it to ‘Abed al-Malik ibn Marwan (705 - 785 AD / 65 - 86 H), while others attributed it to al-Walid (705 - 715 AD / 86 - 96 H) on the basis of papyrus documents sent to the Umayyad governor of Egypt Qurra ibn Shurrik (709 - 714 AD / 90 - 96 H) in the era of al-Walid asking him to send materials and workers to Al-Aqsa. Others adopted a reconciliatory approach, saying that ‘Abed al-Malik started the project and al-Walid finished it.

## Development of al-Aqsa Mosque

Regardless of who established the second al-Jami’ al-Aqsa, nothing remains of this Umayyad mosque except the southern wall, due to more than one earthquake that affected the area in the years 747 AD (130 H), 774 AD (158 H), and 1033 AD (425 H)), destroying major parts of the mosque and requiring reconstruction. Hamilton’s excavations in the area showed the presence of remains from the Umayyad, Abbasid and Fatimid eras, congruent with the constructions and renovations that were done on this mosque after the earthquakes.

## Sponsorship of Al-Aqsa

As with the Dome of the Rock, al-Jami’ al-Aqsa was sponsored throughout its long history by caliphs, princes and kings. After a series of earthquakes, al-Jami’ al-Aqsa was maintained and renovated several times during the Abbasid era. The first time was in the era of Caliph Abu Ja’far al-Mansour, who rebuilt it after the mosque’s eastern and western parts fell. Moreover, Mujir al-Din had said: ‘Then there was the second tremor and the building of Abu Ja’far al-Mansour fell. Al-Mahdi came after, and al-Jami’ al-Aqsa was devastated. This was conveyed to him and he ordered its construction, saying: ‘This mosque is too high and too narrow and is void of men. Shorten its height and increase its width.’ The construction was done under his caliphate.’ In the era of Caliph al-Ma’moun (813- 833 AD / 198 - 218 H), the central middle portico was renovated, and under the rule of ‘Abed Allah ibn Tahir (820 - 822 AD / 205 - 207 H), renovations were made to the marble columns.

## Efforts of the Fatimids in the Construction of al-Jami' al-Aqsa

It seems that the planning of the current al-Jami' al-Aqsa, which is the third one, namely the seven porticoes, was the result of multiple architectural developments that were done over various historical periods, whose starting date researchers also disagreed on. Nevertheless, they date back to the Fatimid period, particularly after the renovations undertaken by al-Zahar (1036 - 1094 AD / 411 - 427 H), which included the renovation of the large arch at the end of the middle porticoe and before al-Aqsa's dome, namely the northern arch that carries the dome, and the renovations done by al-Mustanser (1094 - 1101 AD / 427-487 H), who renovated the northern façade of the middle porch in 1065 AD (458 H). A description of al-Aqsa was given by al-Muqaddisi in his time in 985 AD (375 H), indicating that it was made up of 15 porticoes. Another description was provided by Nasir Khusra dating back to 1048 AD (440 H), in which he spoke of 15 porticoes, the middle being the most expansive and covered by a pediment roof and a great dome, and with the seven porticoes on each side being of less height than the middle one. Based on al-Muqaddisi's description, Hamilton's studies, the works of architect Kamal al-Din, and the efforts of Ahmad Fakhri, it is possible to produce more than one design for al-Jami' al-Aqsa in the Umayyad and Abbasid eras.

## Efforts of Salah al-Din (Saladin)

In the era of the Franks, several works were done to al-Jami' al-Aqsa that changed its features, including the set of capitales and carved columns that could be attributed to them. Nevertheless, Salah al-Din restored the mosque to its original state, renovated its I and brought over the Nour al-Din Zinki pulpit. Construction, renovation and additions continued on al-Jami' al-Aqsa throughout the Islamic ages until it reached its current design and shape.

## 7.The Islamic Museum

The Islamic Museum makes up the southwest corner of al-Aqsa Mosque and is located a few meters west of al-Jami' al-Aqsa. Reaching it is as easy as reaching the other sites on this trail. The museum is undergoing a process of renovation and reorganization of its exhibits; therefore, the visit might be limited, but the project is expected to be finished soon. The hours of visiting the museum those of visiting al-Aqsa Mosque. There is a fee that is usually included in the fee of visiting the Dome of the Rock and al-Jami' al-Aqsa. Local student groups are generally exempt from paying this fee.



## Specificity and Rarity of the Museum's Collection

The Islamic Museum was established in 1922 AD by a decision of the Higher Islamic Council. As such, it is one of the first museums that were established in Jerusalem. The Islamic Museum is characterized by its artistic treasures that were offered as gifts to the museum or transferred from al-Aqsa Mosque and its buildings after the renovations. The majority of the museum's contents are directly related to the heritage of al-Aqsa Mosque, Jerusalem, and Palestine, and, as such, they are rare. The valuable Qurans, for instance, until recently, placed in the hands of readers and scholars of the Mosque; the wooden fillings adorned the ceiling of the Mosque, and the mosaic tiles covered the walls of the Dome of the Rock.

## The Museum Building

The historical museum building is composed of two main halls: the first was a Mamluk mosque for followers of the Malki doctrine, longitudinal and stretching from north to south at 54 x 9 meters. This hall was established by Sheikh Umar ilbn 'Abd al-Nabi al-Maghribi al-Masmoudi in 1303 AD / 707 H, and its entrance was renovated in the late Ottoman era in 1871 AD / 1288 H. The second hall stretches from east to west at an area of 17 x 35 meters, and is part of a hall extending about 70 meters that was used as a mosque for women. It was built in the Fatimid era and renovated in the Franks era to serve their military purposes.

## The Museum's Collections

The Islamic Museum holds rare types of Islamic art covering a period of nearly 10 centuries. There are artifacts from various parts of the Islamic world, including North Africa, Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Iran, and East Asia. There is also a set of Umayyad woods and the remnants of the Nour al-Din pulpit that was burned in 1969 AD, in addition to a treasure of rare Mamluk documents unparalleled in other museums. This is in addition to metal pieces, marble and tiles, as well as foundations inscription panels in various Arabic calligraphy such as *kufi*, *naskhi* and *thulth* scrib.

## The Qurans

The Museum is home to a rare set of Holy Qurans that were glamorously inscribed and bonded, dating back to various Islamic periods. They were written using the different kufi, maghribi, naskhi, thulth, and persian calligraphy. Most of them were outstanding works of art given as gifts to al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, and placed as religious endowments for the use of specialized readers, most prominent of which are the ones from the Moroccan King, Sultan Suleiman al-qanuni, Ottoman Sultan Bayazid, the huge and ornate Quran from the Mamluk Sultan Barsbay, and the kufi Quran attributed to al-Hassan ibn al-Hussein ibn Ali ibn Abi Taleb which dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century of Hijra (9<sup>th</sup> century AD).

## Wooden Panels

The Museum is home to nearly 300 wooden artifacts dating back to various Islamic periods, the most prominent of which are the wooden panels that used to cover the ceiling of the middle porch of al-Jami' al-Aqsa and were removed during renovations in 1040. These panels were decorated with deeply carved geometric and plant motifs. There are also Fatimid wooden pieces with *kufi* calligraphy, in addition to a set of links and columns that were supporting the Dome of the Rock and the porticoes of al-Jami' al-Aqsa, as well as the Ottoman decorations that decorated the wooden ceiling of the Dome of the Rock. There are some pieces from the pulpit of Nour al-Din Mahmoud ibn 'Imad al-Din Zinki, which is known as a rare and valuable piece made of cedar wood and adorned with ivory and mother of pearl, and void of any use of glue or nails. It was manufactured by order of Nour al-Din in Aleppo 20 years before the liberation of Jerusalem. It was also burned when al-Jami' al-Aqsa suffered from arson by Michael Denis Rohan on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1969.

## The Treasure of Mamluk Documents

The Islamic Museum's collections include a set of documents dating back to

the early 14<sup>th</sup> century in the Mamluk period. There are nearly 1,000 documents in good condition. The majority of them were written in Arabic and about 30 documents were written in Persian. The documents present the social history of the residents of Jerusalem in terms of marriage, divorce, inheritance, trading, stories, and petitions, as well as official orders by the sultan. These documents are particularly important because the information they contain is not stated in any books on history. They are mirrors that reflect the daily conditions of people in the Mamluk era.

### The Museum's Marble Pieces

The Islamic Museum hosts a set of marble and stone panels dating back to various time periods and written in different styles of calligraphy as tombstones and plaques for buildings. Most of them come from Jerusalem, but some were brought from other Palestinian cities. There is also a large collection of capitales that were carved with plant motifs. These decorations followed the general approach of Islamic art that tended to avoid images of human beings and animals in religious places. The capitales were used for the columns that carried the lintels and porticoes inside the buildings of the area of Al-Aqsa Mosque, particularly the mosque itself, and they are the remains of renovations of the eastern hallway that were done in the 1940s.

### Tankiz' Glass Lantern

The Islamic Museum's collection includes a modest set of glass artifacts dating back to the Byzantine and Islamic periods. These are mainly various types of jars, including tear-holding jars, lanterns, kohl jars, and plates. The museum has a colored glass lantern that is considered one of its most important glass artifacts. It was painted by Amir Tankiz, curator of the Kingdoms of Bilad al-Sham in 1328 AD (729 H). There is also Quranic writing in blue in the Mamluk *thulth* calligraphy on a golden background, decorated with a plant motif with white veins and green and red leaves. The text reads: 'Allah's mosques are built by those who believe in Allah and Judgment Day.' The writing includes three circles, inside of each is a cup painted in gold on a red base. The cup was the blazon of Tankiz and is proof that he undertook the position of the Sultan's drink taster.

### The Tiles Collection

One of the richest and most important collections in the Islamic Museum is the ceramic tiles, most of which are in storage and only a few samples of which are on display in the museum, including the tiles that show the Yassin Surah (verse) of the Holy Quran. The majority of the tiles were taken from the exterior walls of the Dome of the Rock during the 1964 renovations.

Interestingly, the names of some of the most proficient manufacturers were written on these tiles, including the work of al-Haj Ni'mat Allah Khuqandi (1233 H) and there is no God but Allah, it is edited by the weak slave Muhmmad Darwish in 1233 H . There is also a collection of large pottery pieces that were used to store liquids, like water and oil, as well as a collection of oil lamps and some pottery plates and cups.

## Metal Artifacts

There is also a valuable collection of metal artifacts in the Islamic Museum. Some were made from steel, others from copper adorned with silver and gold. This includes the iron fence that surrounded the Rock during the Franks era, which was placed to prevent intruders and pilgrims from chopping small pieces of the Rock as souvenirs. The fence shows proficient handiwork, most likely done in one of the cities in the south of France. Additionally, there is a set of candlesticks and incense burners, the most prominent of which is the candlestick of Nasir al-Din *qutb* al Islam wal Muslimin Urtuq Arslan ibn Ayl Ghazi, and an incense burner that was a gift from Sultan Abu Sa'id Barqouq to al-Haram al-Ibrahimi (The Ibrahimi Sanctuary) in Hebron. There is also a set of large cooking pots that were in the Takiyya (soup kitchen) of Khasuki Sultan, measuring 135 cm in diameter and 84 cm high. The cooking pots have a set of utensils that are each one meter long. Additionally, there are various other textile pieces, some from the cover of the Ka'bah, as well as pieces of weapons and Islamic coins.



## 8. Al-Ashrafiyya Madrasa (1414 - 1415 AD / 817 H)

To see Al-Ashrafiyya Madrasa, the next station on this trail, requires a walk of a few dozen meters north towards Bab al-Silsilah, one of the gates of al-Aqsa Mosque. Al-Ashrafiyya Madrasa is located on the western boundary of al-Aqsa Mosque between Bab al-Silsilah and Bab al-Mathara (Purification Gate), and it is the only school that has its campus on the grounds of al-Aqsa Mosque.

## The Mosque's Third Jewel

Al-Ashrafiyya was known as al-Sultaniyya. The school is attributed to Sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Sayf al-Din abu al-Nasr Qaytbay who ruled for nearly 29 years. Al-Ashrafiyya Madrasa is known as the most luxurious school in Jerusalem from an architectural and artistic viewpoint. Historian Mujir al-Din described it as the 'Third Jewel' after the Dome of the Rock and al-Jami' al-Aqsa. Travelers and historians who visited it in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries AD wrote about its architecture with admiration. In 1669 - 1670 AD (1080 H), Turkish tourist Eviliya Celebi described it: 'al-Sultaniyya Madrasa is the best of the schools of Jerusalem.' Sufi traveler 'Abed al-Ghani al-Nabulsi visited Jerusalem in 1691 AD (1102 H), stayed in the school and described it as a great school of great importance.

## Artistic Characteristics of the School

Al-Ashrafiyya madrasa is composed of two levels. Its main entrance opens up to the courtyard of al-Aqsa Mosque and is characterized by the richness of its decorations and architectural elements that epitomize the best of Mamluk architectural art. The entrance porch is a fan-vaulted roof open on the eastern and southern sides and carried on two pointed arches. The opening of the entrance is located in a deep vaulted porch filled with carvings and decorations adorned with glass ceramic tiles. The door leads into vestibule to the north of which lies a large assembly hall that is used today as a technical center for the preservation and maintenance of manuscripts. In the eastern wall of the assembly hall, there is a door and two windows overlooking the courtyard of al-Aqsa Mosque. In its northern wall, there is a door and a window, while the southern wall includes one window and a *mihrab* decorated with colored marble.

To the south of the vestibule, there is a stone staircase leading upstairs and to the minaret of Bab al-Silsila. The southern part of the upper floor is in a deteriorated state, but its features are clear and congruent with the Mamluk style of construction. In the center, there used to be a central courtyard flagged by two *iwans* on the north and south and two smaller *iwans* to the east and west. None of these remain today, except for the southern hallway which has a niche.

## The School's Cadre

Mujir al-Din said that the Sultan placed 60 Sufis in the school and paid each one a monthly allowance of 45 *dirhams*. He also appointed workers and ordered the payment of 500 *dirhams* as a monthly salary to the sheikh. According to a deed document saved in the Ministry of Awqaf in Cairo, Qaytbay endowed plenty of lands and property to his school, including the lands of 28 villages spread throughout Gaza, Ramleh, Jerusalem, and Hebron.



## 9. Al-Buraq Wall (the Western Wall)

It is sometimes difficult for many locals to visit the courtyard of al-Buraq Wall (the Western Wall or Wailing Wall) due to the extensive security measures. This could be avoided by heading towards the lookout of al-Buraq Wall. This is accessed by exiting al-Aqsa



Mosque through Bab al-Silsila and walking westwards on the Bab al-Silsila street until the second intersection is reached, on the southern side of the Bab al-Silsila road, known as Harat al-Sharaf Road (Habad Road), where there is an open area that leads through a staircase at its southeastern end to the lookout, which offers the opportunity to see al-Buraq Wall and a general view of al-Aqsa Mosque with all its buildings and structures. It also shows the southwestern angle of the mosque and provides an opportunity to see the excavations that surround the western and southern parts of al-Aqsa Mosque wall, in addition to a view of the Mount of Olives.

### Historical Background

The viewer must keep in mind that the open area in front of al-Buraq Wall used to be packed with residents and Arab Islamic buildings that belong to the Waqf (religious endowment) of abi Madian al-Ghawth, which was established in the Ayyubid era. These buildings and structures were demolished by the Israeli authorities after 1967.

## **Al-Buraq Wall**

Al-Buraq Wall is part of the western wall of al-Aqsa Mosque in the Old City of Jerusalem. This part of the wall acquired its name from the steed, the winged horse, that carried Prophet Muhammad on the miracle al-Isra and al-Mi'raj journey from Mecca to Jerusalem. The stories on the life of the Prophet indicate that he tied the steed near this part of the wall when he visited the area of al-Aqsa Mosque and ascended to heaven.

## **The Negative Aspect of Expanding al-Buraq Wall**

The expansion of the area in front of al-Buraq Wall by destroying the Harat al-Maghariba, which dates back to the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras, has done extensive damage and harm to the rights of the Arabs and Muslims and the city's architectural heritage. It has left a negative impact on the visitors of the site of al-Buraq Wall. While the visitor to the wall in 1967 used to pass through alleyways and passageways leading to the sight of a great, high wall made up of exceptional courses, the visitor nowadays faces a courtyard that has more than one wall and is not able to determine which one is al-Buraq Wall. An international committee formed after the 1929 events concluded that al-Buraq Wall is of purely Arab Islamic ownership and the occupation of this part and changes made to it do not nullify the right to this ownership.

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#### THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

- MOSQUE 
- CHURCH 
- CONVENT 
- SYNAGOGUE 
- HOTEL 
- OLD CITY ROAD 
- STARS 
- BUS STATION 

# 5. Water Fountains and Troughs

## Trail's Nature and Stations

The objective of this trail is to identify the importance of water in general in public life, and the water problem in the city of Jerusalem, in addition to identifying a group of water structures from various eras and of numerous designs. The full trail is inside the Old City; it is fairly easy and has no specific requirements, except decency and quietness while visiting al-Aqsa Mosque water fountains and other sites. Like other trails, the visitor can start according to the proposed arrangement or incorporate this trail with other Old City trails, which cross it at certain sites. Sites in this trail may be reversed, whereby the visitor can start at station 1 or at station 11. If the intention is to finish in the middle of the Old City, near al-Dabbagha (Tanners' Market) and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, then the proposed direction should be followed. If the visitor prefers to stay within al-Aqsa Mosque vicinity, it is preferable that the direction is reversed. In fact, the Old City does not form an obstacle to changing proposed trail stations, since it is small in area and provides visitors with an unlimited variety of choices.

This trail on water wells, fountains and drinking sources is composed of the following sites:

Sabil al-Shurbaji

Sisters of Zion Monastery Pool (Struthion)

Sabil Ibrahim al-Roumi Sabil Mustafa Agha

Sabil Qaytbay

Sabil Qasim Pasha

Sabil Bab I-Silsila

Sabil al-Khalidi Basin of Barka Khan Mausoleum (Al-Khalidiyya Library)

Suq Aftimos Fountain

Helena's Well

## Introduction

### Status of Water in Islamic Religious Tradition

Water was mentioned in the Quran over 63 times as a basic element of existence, a blessing from Allah (God) to people, and the basis of every living organism. The Prophet's teachings encouraged the preservation of water, even if *'man is filling from a running river.'* Furthermore, the Prophet's sayings and actions connected saving water and benevolence, and hence, charity is related to the construction of fountains, canals, troughs, drinking fountains and other water structures. Due to the use of water to fulfill purity requirements (ablution) and its use in many rituals among most religions, including pagan beliefs, water has gained a religious importance, in addition to its absolute necessity for the continuation of life and daily use.

### Importance and Sources of Water in Jerusalem

The importance of water in Jerusalem increased for two reasons: the first is water scarcity in the Old City and its nucleus, which has no rivers or springs with the exception of the Silwan spring, whose water is distastful. The second is that due to the holiness of the City and the arrival of many pilgrims and visitors throughout the year, pure water had to be brought in for drinking and cleanliness purposes to the City's residents and religious institutions, including churches, mosques and synagogues. The result of these factors was reliance on rainwater and the construction of various water structures, including fountains, canals, pools, cisterns, and wells. Although rainfall levels in Jerusalem are equivalent to those in London, they are insufficient for the city's needs, which required a search for alternative, nearby sources. Water is currently being piped from areas like Ertas and 'Arrub through a number of canals, the most prominent of which is known as Qanat al-Sabil.

### Providing Water for al-Aqsa Mosque

Being a prominent Islamic religious site and the venue for al-Isra and al-Mi'raj (The Prophet Mohammad's ascension to heaven), al-Aqsa Mosque has attracted and continues to attract a large number of visitors from all over the Muslim world in general and Palestine in particular, especially during the Holy

month of Ramadan and other religious occasions. The Islamic authority hence had to provide water for people to perform their religious rituals. Attention to water wells and the provision of water to al-Aqsa Mosque area has demanded attention since the Umayyad era and until today.

Water structures have been distributed according to a well-studied methodology, reflecting the entry and exit movement of the City's residents and site visitors. The water system is meant to provide clean, drinkable water to pedestrians, as part of the religious connotation of water. Drinking fountains were wisely located in main Jerusalem streets as well as al-Aqsa Mosque, such as Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate) fountain, Bab al-Asbat (St. Stephan Gate) fountain, and numerous other fountains in neighborhoods and streets, such as Bab al-Nazir, Bab al-Silsila, al-Wad, and other balanced locations in al-Aqsa Mosque vicinity.

## Jerusalem Pools

Jerusalem used to have a number of pools inside the Old City or along its periphery, including al-Sultan (Barquq), Jorat al-'Innab, Sisters of Zion Monastery (Struthion), Mamilla (Ma'man Allah), al-Khanqa al-Salahiyya (the Patriarch's Bath), Sittna Maryam (St. Mary), Salahiyya School (Bait Hasda), Helena's Pool near the Coptic Monastery, as well as Sultan Suleiman's Pool near the village of Ertas, near Bethlehem. It is noteworthy that each house in the Holy City used to have one or more rainwater collection wells.

## Drinking and Other Fountains

Before embarking on examining the Sabils (Fountains) and Troughs Trail stations, it must be mentioned that a drinking fountain is a small trough attached to an architectural unit, such as a cemetery, a *madrassa* (school), or a *zawiya*, in order to provide drinking water for pedestrians and gain recompense. The fountain is normally either separate or part of another structure such as a mosque or school. If the fountain is in close proximity to a religious site or is part of it, then it was also used for ablution and purification.



## 1.Sabil (Fountain) al-Shurbaji (1686 AD /1097 H)



Sabil and Mosque al-Shurbaji is the first station of this trail. It is accessed by entering the Old City to the junction of Khan al-Zait, al-Jabsheh, Harat al-Sa'diya, and al-Wad streets. The fountain is on the western side at the beginning of the northern al-Wad Street.

Sabil al-Shurbaji was declared a religious endowment (Waqf) in 1686 AD (1097 H), during the Ottoman era, as the records of the Jerusalem Shari'a Court indicate,

and from reading and analyzing a commemorative plaque on the northern side of the sabil. It is not easy to read the inscription on the plaque, which has faded away with time, and because kiosks of peddlers obscure its location. The plaque reads:

*'Abed al-Karim al-Shurbaji built the sabil so that thirsty people might drink, hoping through this deed for reward, blessing and charity from Allah the Glorious. Beloved respectful one, set out to date it, and say (it is) a drink from Paradise or a spring.'*

### Sabil's Founder and brief description

The Sabil's founder is 'Abed al-Karim al-Shurbaji, who seems to have been wealthy and to have lived in Jerusalem towards the end of the 17th century AD (11th century H) and loved charity work. The Sabil is composed of a single room with a double window on the northern side, covered by a shallow pointed dome. It is simple, reflecting 17th century architecture on the one hand, and the humble capabilities of a generous person who wished to give freely for the benefit of others on the other hand. This Sabil is not a Sultanate or a Royal establishment to be ornately decorated, but what draws attention is that the stores adjacent to the Sabil are held as religious endowments (Waqf) for its renovation and upkeep. Al-Shurbaji organized a regular supply of water for the Sabil and installed a cistern in an adjacent

store to supply it with water during droughts.

### Humanistic Perception of the Donor

It is noteworthy that ‘Abed al-Karim al-Shurbaji presented the Sabil to all residents and visitors of the city without exception or discrimination, mentioning in the inscription that the Sabil is for *‘all thirsty people passing by.’* The Waqf document stated that *‘any person, coming or going, present or absent, old and young, strong or weak, male or female, from all Allah’s (God) creations, among people without distinction, may drink from it.’* This was also emphasized in another part of the Waqf notification: *‘Every person, coming or going, male or female, old or young, may drink from it and approach its blessed trough.’* This is a humanistic, all-inclusive outlook to charity.

It is not known for sure when the Sabil stopped providing water for people, but the writer assumes that this happened towards the end of the 19th century or the beginning of the 20th century, and this action was preceded by changes regarding the specifications and functions of the Sabil.

## 2.Sisters of Zion Monastery Pool (Struthion11)



To arrive at the next station, the Struthion Pool in the Sisters of Zion Monastery, one must walk down al-Wad Street towards the south, turn east (left) at the Hospice (Austrian Hostel) near the 3<sup>rd</sup> station of Via Dolorosa, and walk down Via Dolorosa until a central arch (Ecce Homo) appears at al-Zawiya al-Naqshabandiyya. Enter from the ‘Aqabat al-Rahibat (Nuns Alley) corner. Visits are permitted on all days except Sundays from 8:30 to 12:30 and 2:30 to 4:00 pm. A small fee is charged per person.

## Historical Background

This site, which includes a large, modern convent, a church, a small museum and the pool, has a busy history since the establishment of Antonin's Fortress (Umariyya Madrasa) by Herod the Great, where a pool was carved in rock, with its roof forming a ramp to the fortress. The site witnessed various stages of building and demolition, and most of what can be seen now goes back to the



times of Emperor Hadrian in the year 135, particularly the triple arch which resembles the Roman Bab al-'Amud (Damascus Gate).

## Description of the Pool

The pool can be accessed after passing the administration area and reception and descending a few steps. The visible part is about half its size, because the arches in the northern part divide the pool into two parts. The other half can be seen at the end of the tunnel excavations, where there is a water canal extending to al-Aqsa Mosque area. This pool is fairly large and gives an

idea of the water collection method in Jerusalem. Water supplying the pool comes from rainfall collected from the convent's roof and from a canal extending from Bab al-'Amud area, which can be seen when passing near the rooms allocated for a small museum. The canal is covered with wooden planks.

## 3.Sabil Ibrahim al-Rumi (1435-36 AD / 839 H)



After visiting the Sisters of Zion Monastery pool, walk towards the street leading to Bab al-Ghawanima (across the street from the Monastery entrance), one of

al-Aqsa Mosque's gates, where you can access Sabil Ibrahim al-Rumi, after entering Bab al-Ghawanima and walking 25 meters. The Sabil is located next to Bab al-Nazir, one of al-Aqsa Mosque's gates.

### **Names of the Sabil and Description of its Architecture**

The Sabil was known as Sabil al-Basiri and Sabil Bab al-Nazir, but according to the foundation inscription, the one who renovated it was Ibrahim al-Rumi in the Mamluk era, during the reign of Sultan al-Ashraf Sayf al-Din Barsbai, Egypt's 9<sup>th</sup> Mamluk sultan. The Sabil is built over a dome covering a large well carved in rock. The sabil is a free standing structure not attached to any adjacent building. The Sabil caters for people arriving from Bab al-Nazir and Bab al-Ghawanima. Its architecture is simple, comprising a single square chamber with a shallow dome above it. The east wall has a door leading inside the chamber and the other three walls have a window each, with water troughs for drinking. The drinking troughs were fed from the water well underneath, from where water was lifted and poured directly into them. Visitors to the Mosque drank from these troughs using tin cups.

### **Sabil's Importance**

The importance of this Sabil stems from the fact that it is one of the few Sabils which belong to three-window style. The building is simple but well-constructed, using dressed stone.

There is a resemblance in planning and form between this Sabil and Sabil Bab al-Maghariba.

### **Conditions for Use of the Sabil**

It is noteworthy that the Sabil founder restricted its use to the poor and destitute and prevented use by water providers, or transporting water from it in leather containers, indicating that he refused trading in water. This is an unusual condition in water sources like religiously endowed Sabils. Normally, water use is unrestricted in most cases.

## **4.Sabil Mustafa Agha (1740-41 AD / 1153 H)**



A short walk of about 20 meters southwest of Bab al-Nazir leads to this Sabil, located in the northwestern part of al-Aqsa Mosque courtyard.

### Sabil's Names and Location

Sabil Mustafa Agha is actually the smallest and most beautiful of al-Aqsa Mosque's Sabils. It was known as Sabil al-Shaikh Budair and Sabil 'Uthman al-Fiqari. It was built at the northwestern corner of a stone *mastaba* (bench), the south of which is a mihrab (a prayer niche). The Sabil is independently structured with the exception of its eastern side, which is adjacent to the *mastaba* mentioned above.

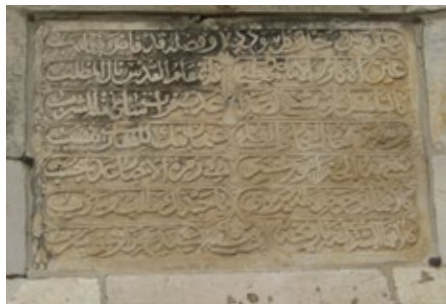
### Water Source

Water used to be brought for the Sabil from nearby sources by special water men, appointed by the founder of the Waqf, and unloaded into the only stone trough under the Sabil's dome. Its water was described as 'fresh and quenching thirst.'

### Sabil's Aesthetics

Despite its small size of 1.5 square meters, the Sabil enjoys a unique, balanced design and profound artistic taste. It is a piece of art waiting for someone to give it a deep and appreciative look, and to understand it in order to appreciate it. The beauty of this Sabil is not restricted to its architectural plan but includes its detailed expressive ornaments,

representing the ideas of the basic pattern.



The inscription on the Sabil's eastern façade reads as follows:

*The sabil was built by him who has the utmost sovereignty, who has excelled by means of his donations, the most generous Mustafa, Governor of Jerusalem. Its water is similar to that of Paradise, it is sweet, it is a cure, it deserves to be drunk. His Highness 'Uthman Beg al-Fiqari ordered the building of this sabil, opting for reward on the Day of Judgment, and hoping to be considered among those who are blessed. Both Mustafa and 'Uthman hope to drink from the basin of Taha (i.e. the prophet Muhammad). How lucky they are to fulfil such a wish! Both are lucky; for both shall drink from a cup of nectar. In the year 1153.*

### Founder

The Sabil was built by Mustafa, governor of Jerusalem in 1740 - 41 AD (1153 H). His full name is Mustafa Agha Parwana Zade; he ruled Jerusalem

for 20 years (1731 - 1751 AD / 1144 - 1165 H). He took a pledge from the residents of al-Bira, Bait Hanina, and Bait Ikhsa not to attack travelers to the city of Jerusalem.

## Description of the Sabil

The Sabil is built on a square base carrying four ornamented small columns, resting in turn on three arches opening to the north, west and south. The fourth, eastern side is a solid wall. The horseshoe arches support a small dome that has recently been covered with stone tiles.

Hence, the Sabil is composed of three parts: a square base, a four-facades, and a small dome. The upper part of the base contained a stone basin, 0.85 meters long and 0.40 meters deep, which used to contain water, probably brought by water suppliers from al-Aqsa Mosque wells. In 1988, however, the basin was filled and paved to prevent the accumulation of waste.

## Sabil's Ornaments

The four columns have common characteristics, including size, shape, round bases, and stalactite (*muqarnas*) capitals. The theme and elements of the decoration around the column bodies are evidently different in theme and number of ornamented sides. While the northeastern and northwestern columns carry rigid architectural motifs with recurring triangles, the columns in the southwestern and

southeastern sides carry expressive plant motifs in two forms. The first is a cup, serving as a vase, from which a branch shoots along the full length of the column, from which leaves and small, multi-petal flowers and fruits in the shape of pears and pomegranates branch off. This type of ornament is present in three sides of the column in the southwestern corner. The second ornamental form is a band of plant ornaments, covered with various types of small plants.

## Ornaments' Message

The Arabesque ornaments project a symbolic message in addition to their artistic one, signaling heaven and the reward awaiting those who are charitable. It seems that the talent of the poet teamed with the artist's hand to depict the thoughts of the founder in terms of material images of drinking pure and refreshing water from his Sabil, in tin cups, compared, on the spiritual side, with hope to drink from the Prophet's trough in heaven. The ornaments express this very well. It is noteworthy that some of these ornaments are connected to the description of heaven in the Holy Quran. Reference to heaven and its beauty are clear in the inscription. Note that the columns which include the ornaments face Mecca (al-Qibla).

## 5.Sabil Qaytbay (1482 AD / 887 H)



After visiting the smallest Sabil in al-Aqsa Mosque and identifying its ornaments, we move to the grandest and largest of al-Aqsa Sabils, namely, the Sabil of the Mamluk Sultan al-Ashraf abu al-Nasr Qaytbay. This requires walking south a few dozen meters towards l-jami' al-Aqsa , passing Bab al-Hadid, and reaching the Sabil between Westren Colonnade stairs and the entrance to Suq al-Qattanin (Cotton Traders' Market), across from Bab al-Mathara (Purification Gate).

### Style and Grandness of the Sabil

In style and design, Qaytbay Sabil resembles Sabil Ibrahim Al-Rumi.

However, it is grander and far more ornamented, as well as larger. Sabil Qaytbay is Jerusalem's most famous Sabil and by far its most spectacular. It is among the most beautiful domed structures in al-Aqsa area, with its dome representing typical late Mamluk architecture in general, and Cairene architecture in particular.

### Sabil Caretakers

This Sabil was initially built at the order of the Mamluk Sultan Saif al-Din Inal, and was rebuilt by the Sultan al-Ashraf Qaytbay in 1482 AD (887 H) as an annex to al-Madrassa al-Ashrafiyya across from it. The only part of the Sabil Inal remaining is the well on which Qaytbay built his Sabil. Later on, the Sabil was renovated upon the orders of the Ottoman Sultan 'Abed al-Hamid II in 1882 - 3 AD / 1300 H, as the inscription shows. al-Aqsa Mosque Renovation Committee has recently renovated it.

### Sabil Description

The Sabil entrance faces east, and the Sabil is entered through a round staircase resting on a stone *mastaba*. The structure stone courses were built with alternating red and yellow stones, known as *ablaq* in Arabic. A band of calligraphic inscriptions adorns the top of the structure, comprising Quranic verses inscribed in the Mamluk Naskhi calligraphy style. The top of the Sabil is distinguished by its high stone dome, covered with outstanding Arabesque ornaments. This dome is the only example of Mamluk Egyptian

art outside Cairo. However, there is no similar Sabil of this style in Cairo, though there are mausoleums with similar style domes. Sabils in Cairo were normally a room in a complex, without a dome. In addition, Sabil Qaytbay dome is built from stone and is covered with Arabesque carvings and ornaments.

### **Egyptian Mamluk Influence**

The architectural and ornamental building elements are basically influenced by the Egyptian building traditions. This is understandable because builders and artisans were Egyptians, who brought with them dome building and ornamenting styles which adorned Cairene domes, particularly in mausoleums and tombs. It is possible that those builders who built the Sabil are the same ones who built al-Madrassa al-Ashrafiyah before embarking on building the Sabil.

It is noteworthy that in 1982, a failed attempt was made to penetrate al-Aqsa Mosque grounds as part of the Tunnel excavations led by Yehuda Me'ir Gates, the Westren Wall rabbi, from under the Sabil Qaytbay's well, where an Umayyad Bab (gate) used to connect to al-Aqsa Mosque. The gate was named after Charles Warren, the British explorer of Jerusalem who discovered it.

## **6.Sabil Qasim Pasha (1527 AD / 933 H)**



Next is Sabil Qasim Pasha, along the same axis as Sabil Qaytbay, separated from it by a distinguished fountain in al-Aqsa Mosque known as the Naranj Pool. In other words, this Sabil is a bare 10 meters away from Sabil Qaytbay.

Sabil Qasim Pasha is unique in its design and different from other Jerusalem and al-Aqsa Mosque Sabils. It is the first monument built during the Ottoman era in al-Aqsa Mosque. Hence, it came before Sultan Suleiman al-qanuni's (Suleiman I) famous projects, which included restoration project of al-Aqsa Mosque, the Sabils (drinking water fountains), Qanat (canal) Sabil , and the Jerusalem Wall.

### **Sabil Description and Water Source**

The Sabil was known by many names, including Sabil Bab al-Mahkama



(court) and the Naranj Pool. The Sabil has an eight-sided elevation, including an eight-sided closed trough covered by a hemispherical pointed dome. The building was erected over an eight-sided stone base one meter below the ground level of al Aqsa Mosque. This depression is related to supplying water to the Sabil and the way the system works. Until the end of the fourth decade of the last century, the Sabil was supplied with water from Qanat(canal) Sabil, and water seeped through openings in the marble slabs to the hands of those drinking or performing ablution. The Sabil is still operational until today, but its water is connected to al-Aqsa Mosque water supply through modern pipes, from which water flows without having to preserve it in the Sabil cistern.

## Sabil's Plan

The importance of this Sabil stems from a unique design which cannot be found in water structures in Jerusalem. It resembles, to a certain extent, ablution facilities built in the courtyards of the open mosques during the Ottoman period. With a certain level of specificity, the ablution facility in al-Jazzar Mosque in Akko (Acre) resembles the design of this Sabil, in terms of the sides and the water reservoir. Al-Nabulsi, who visited al-Aqsa Mosque in 1690 - 1693 AD (1101 - 1105 H) described the Sabil as follows: *'Close to the Naranj pool is a small dome surrounded by water pipes in which water flows for anyone seeking purity, who can twist its taps and the water will flow.'*

## Founder and Date Built

The date the Sabil t and the name of its builder were documented in a foundation inscription, which gains great importance because it dates not only the first Ottoman structure in al-Aqsa Mosque, but also the first one established in the city of Jerusalem. Ottoman works and projects carried out before building this Sabil were restricted to renovating the Citadel, preparing it for the Ottoman Janissary garrison, and changing the Last Supper Hall into a mosque, in what is now known as the Prophet David's Tomb.

## The inscription reads:

1. *This blessed Sabil has been constructed for the benefit and countenance of the Extolled Allah (God) in the days of ourmaster the the greaestt Sultan.*
2. *the Second Sulaiman to rule the world the Sultan Sulaimen, son of Sultan Selim Khan, the prince of the Arab and non-Arab princes, by our master our patron Qasim Pasha, may Allah facilitate what he (qasim) intended.*
3. *By the hands of the slave who is in need of Allah (God) 'Abed Rabbihi Mustafa in the lastten days of the extolledSha'aban the year 933.*

## 7.Sabil Bab al-Silsila (Chain Gate) 1536 - 37 AD (943 H)

To reach Sabil Bab al-Silsila, one should leave al-Aqsa Mosque from Bab al-Silsila, which is very close to Sabil Qasim Pasha. Sabil Bab al-Silsila is located directly across from the gate with a new excavation site in front of it, showing the former level of Bab al-Silsila Street.

### Date and Type of Structure

Sabil Bab al-Silsila dates back to the Ottoman era and was built in 1536 - 37 AD (943 H) as part of the water system project ordered by Sultan Suleiman al-Qanuni (Suleiman I), which included building nine Sabils (drinking water fountains), only six of which are remaining, and constructing the water canal from the Suleiman Pools. It is a Sultanate Sabil which follows a new style of Sabils built in Jerusalem, one not used in the past. The style is simple, composed of a recessed niche wall. There is no water supply room, windows, or water well, like Ayyubid or Mamluk Sabils. The sabil's niche has three parts: the upper is a pointed chevron arch with the knight's rank. In the middle is an ornament which was originally a large window with an upper arch, with the inscription plaque below it. The inscription dates the Sabil's construction, mentioning Sultan Sulieman's names, titles and the



date on which the structure was completed. The inscription wording is:

*Has ordered the construction of this blessed sabil our master the sultan, the greatest King, and the honourable Khaqan, who rules the necks of the nations, Sultan of the (lands) of Rum the Arab and the non-Arabs,, the glory of Islam and Muslims, the shadow of God on earth, the protector of the two sacred sanctuaries Sultan Suleiman, son of Sultan Selim Khan, may God perpetuate his reign and his sultnate and make his justice and beneficence endure on the date of the twenty-second of the month Rajab al-Murajjib(the blessed), of the months of the year nine hundred and forty-three.*

The third and lower part comprises a long, marble water trough, with a front marble panel in which special openings allow the flow of water from a small cistern behind the Sabil's vault.

This Sabil was fed by the Sabil Canal line before the water entered al-Aqsa Mosque through pottery pipes.

## 8.Sabil Al-Khalidi



This Sabil is located on the northern side of Bab al-Silsila immediately at the beginning of al-'Ain (spring) steps connecting al-Wad Street and Bab al-Silsila Street. Access to it is easy, requiring a short walk along Bab al-Silsila Street until the first crossing to the right, namely, al-'Ain steps crossing.

### Al-Sabil Founder and the Khalidi Family

The founder who assigned this Sabil as a Waqf (religious endowment) is the pride of scholars and teachers, Muhammad San'allah al-Khalidi, son of Khalil al-Khalidi. The family name (al-Khalidi), the titles of the founder and those of his father as mentioned in the Waqf document indicate clearly that Muhammad

San'allah al-Khalidi was a prominent dignitary of Jerusalem during that era. The roots of al-Khalidi family, as registered in the Waqf document, have a deep history into the early years of Islam and Khaled ibn al-Walid, the Prophet's companion. The Khalidi family and its members had a pioneering role in the history of Jerusalem and Palestine. Many of its members assumed important, influential positions during and towards the end of the Ottoman period. Regarding the motives behind building the Sabil and who drinks from it, it was mentioned in the Waqf document that: *'This Sabil was registered as a Waqf and its water was made available to gentlemen and all people, whether or residence or non-residence, e coming or going, and all people, purely for the countenance of Almighty Allah in wish for the great reward.'*

### Sabil's Names and Plan

The Sabil is also known as Sabil Daraj al-'Ain, or Sabil Daoud Road. Its plan is simple, composed of one room topped by a barrel vault. It was originally a store but was altered to serve as a Sabil. The interior is accessed through a door that is opened in its western wall, facing the eastern side of al-Jalqiyya mausoleum (1307 AD / 707H). On the southern side of the room is a wall with a double-window and a water trough from which passers-by took water. The Sabil stopped operating a long and unknown time ago, and the room has become a store used by al-Khalidi family.

## The Sabil's Servers and Simplicity

The founder was keen to appoint water supplier to provide water daily against a specific wage, and hence water was poured into the trough as needed and scooped in tin cans by people to quench their thirst. This water structure reflects the simplicity, or rather monotony and stagnation which characterized the architecture of Ottoman Jerusalem since the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, persisting until 1831. After the reign of Muhammad Ali Pasha in Jerusalem and Palestine and the return of the Ottoman reign, construction using traditional methods stopped, and modern European styles were adopted, which were markedly different from what was common in the Mamluk and Ottoman schools of architecture.

## Similarity with Sabil Al-Shurbaji

Since this Sabil was established by a wealthy citizen of Jerusalem, as was the case with Sabil al-Shurbaji, there were common architectural and design characteristics connecting the two Sabils, in addition to the fact that both of them were originally commercial stores turned into Sabils. This Sabil belongs to the type of Sabils composed of one room with a double window.

## 9.Barka Khan Mausoleum Drinking Fountain (al-Khalidiyyah Library)



Walking further down Bab al-Silsila Street takes the visitor to the next station of Barka Khan Drinking Fountain, where the fountain is located along the northern side of Hussam a-Din Baraka Khan mausoleum, to the west of Sabil al-Khalidi at the crossing leading to 'Aqabat abi Midyan and al-Buraq Noble Wall(Western Wall).

## Name and Location

Barka Khan Mausoleum is currently known as al-Khalidiyya Library, located across from al-Takiziyya Madrasa and al-Kilaniyya Mausoleum. It is a Mamluk building erected in Jerusalem by Amir Hussam al-Din Barka Khan, who was a prominent leader of al-Khawarizmiyya and who remained after the fall of the last Khawarizmiyya leader, Jala al-Din Mankoberti, at the hands of the Moguls between 1265 and 1280 AD (663 - 679 H).

## Date of Building the Fountain and its Components

Based on the commemorative inscription, this drinking basin is built at a later stage by Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Taimour al-'Ala'i at the beginning of Zul -Qi'da 792 (October 1390). The drinking basin is simple, comprising a hollow stone trough, topped by an arched niche adorned with a ribbed conch ornaments. The basin is not operating at present, but in the past, water was poured into the trough and scooped, either by the water provider or pedestrians coming to al-Aqsa Mosque, using special copper cans. It was customary to mention the founder in supplication while having the free drink.

## 10.Suq Aftimos Fountain



This unique fountain is located in the middle of Suq Aftimos, the newest Suq in Jerusalem. To arrive at the fountain, continue down Bab al-Silsilah Street to its end then turn right (north) where the three Suqs start (al-Khawajat, al-'Attarin, and al-Lahhamin). Continue towards Bab al-Khalil, turning right again at the beginning of the Bimaristan Street where the fountain is located, a few meters west of the street.

## Founder, Date, and Classical Nature of the Fountain

Suq Aftimos was named after the Greek Archimandrite Aftimos, who built this market at the beginning

of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in 1902. The Suq lies to the west of the German Savior Church and to the east of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This Suq is characterized by its western architectural style, with its northern entrance comprising a triumph arch composed of three large arches, built with alternating red and white colors of stone known as *ablaq*, a clear influence of Jerusalem's Islamic architecture. A large, beautiful water fountain adorns the middle of the Suq, reminiscent of classical fountains in the presence of human and animal figures ornamenting its water exits. The Suq stores are located alongside and around the fountain.

reaching a large water cistern in the shape of a half-barrel vault. According to traditions and Coptic narratives, when St. Helena built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, she used water from this well.

## 11. Helena's Well

To see the last station of the Fountains Trail, the visitor should go to the Coptic Monastery, or the 9<sup>th</sup> station of Via Dolorosa. This is done either through the Church of the Holy Sepulcher courtyard, where the Four Knights and Small Angel entrance is, or by walking through Khan al- Zait Street and turning at the Zalatimo shop, until reaching the Coptic Convent.

The well is accessed through the Coptic Church. Visitors are required to take permission from the resident priest to turn the lights on, taking special care not to slip on the damp, smooth stone floor. This location is not suitable for elderly people or children without observation. The well is accessed through some steps

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# **6. Women's Architecture**

## Trail's Nature and Stations

This trail is located in the heart of the Old City. It is divided into two parts. The first part includes 'Aqabat al-Takiyya and the Bab al-Silsila Street, and the second extends to the inside of al-Aqsa Mosque at its western wall. This trail is relatively short and easy, and like the other trails, it could be visited with all its stations or divided into parts. This trail is limited, because it presents in its majority the façades of buildings, since it is difficult to enter most of the buildings included in it. Some of the trail's stations cannot accommodate a high number of visitors. The trail needs between 1.5 and 2.5 hours to complete.

The trail's stations are:

Qasr al-Sitt Tunshuq I-Muzaffariyya

Turbat al-Sitt Tunshuq

Al-'Amira al-'Imara (Khassaki Sultan)

Turbat Turkan Khatun

Al-Madrasa al-'Uthmaniyya

Al-Madrasa al-Khatuniyya

Al-Madrasah al-Ghadiriyya

Al-Ribat al-Mardini

## Introduction

### Women's Contribution to Charity

Islam equated between men and women in the area of religious and basic duties related to charity and doing good. Although Arab Islamic society was primarily patriarchal, some women had a clear role in many facets of life, particularly those who were close to the ruling authority, such as princesses, sultan's wives, or mothers or wives of rulers or influential people. These positions paved the way for them to undertake acts of welfare and charity, especially when financial, administrative and social resources and capabilities were available. Given Jerusalem's position and importance in Arab history in general and Islam in particular, several charitable and wealthy women were attracted to it and constructed buildings and structures there.

### Jerusalem as the Incubator of Women's Heritage

In following the architectural and social activities in the city of Jerusalem over the Islamic eras, one realizes that feministic heritage found its way into the city and among its residents early on. Though it does not parallel or competes with the heritage of men in the Old City, it is nevertheless noticeable and indicative of major diversity and giving. This is because the majority of architectural activity

was done by men in power, whilst that of women was done by those who belonged to ruling or wealthy families.

The heritage of women, or al-Khawatin as some like to call them, started early in Jerusalem. The beginnings date back to the Abbasid era, when the mother of al-Muqtadir Billah renovated the doors of the Dome of the Rock. The Mamluk era, with its characterized stability and calm, saw clear activity by women, represented by the establishment of public and private buildings and structures. The largest house or palace representing civil architecture in Jerusalem is attributed to a woman, al-Sitt Tunshuqal-Muzaffariyya. Also, the largest and greatest social charity organization from the Ottoman era, known as the al- 'Amira 'Imara , is attributed to the wife of Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I-Qanuni (Suleiman I or Suleiman the Magnificent). She was famously known as Khassaki Sultan and her building structure is considered one of the greatest organizations, not only in Jerusalem, but also in Palestine and the Levant.

### The Diversity of Women's Heritage

Women's heritage in Jerusalem is diverse, ranging from the small copper bowl to grand architectural projects involving 50 employees with allocated funds from nearly 50 towns and villages. The activities included acts of compassion towards Sufis and the poor, providing HolyQurans to the faithful, and constructing buildings for charitable purposes.

# 1.Qasr al-Sitt Tunshuqal- Muzaffariyya

Qasr al-Sitt Tunshuq is the first building on this trail. It can be accessed through al-Wad Street by turning west at the crossroads of the Bab al-Nazir Road that leads to al-Aqsa Mosque. It can also be accessed through Khan al- Zait Road by turning east at the crossroads of 'Aqabat al-Takkiyya street. After making the turn, one must walk some distance to reach the façade of the palace, which cannot be missed because of its three, large, beautiful entrances.

## The Site and its Names

The palace is in the middle of the southern part of the 'Aqabat al-Takkiyya street. The location of the palace is important, because it overlooks al-Aqsa Mosque and the most prominent structures, such as the Dome of the Rock. The palace was known by several names, including Dar al-Sitt, 'Amarat al-Sitt, al-Dar al-Kubra, and al- 'Imara al-'Azima. Today, it is named, along with the Khaasaki Sultan building, the House of the Islamic Orphanage.

## Palace's Components

The palace is composed of two floors, a ground floor and a first floor, with a mezzanine floor between them. The

first floor comprises a large reception hall made up of a *durqa'a* (central hall) and two *iwans* (), and is surrounded from the south, east and west by a set of rooms. The palace comprises more than 25 rooms, three great entrances and several staircases. In the Ottoman era, the palace was joined to al- 'Imara al-'Amira (Khaasaki Sultan). When the Higher Islamic Legislative Council established the orphanage, the ground floor of the palace was dedicated to the carpentry workshop, and it still holds this workshop to this day, while the first floor was used as a sleeping area for the orphans.

## West Entrance



The palace has the most beautiful and largest facade of the buildings in the Old City. It has three imposing entrances: west, middle, and east. The west entrance is adorned with colored stones known as al-Ablaq (red and grey). A written text revolves around the frame of the door, surrounding the decorative frame of the window. The text, carved with an embossed Mamluk script, contains a Quranic verse from Surat al-Hajar. It reads:

*“(It will be said to them): ‘Enter therein (Paradise), in peace and security.’ And We shall remove from their breasts any deep feeling of bitterness (that they may have), (So they will be like) brothers facing each other on thrones. No sense of fatigue shall touch them, nor shall they (ever) be asked to leave it. Declare (O Muhammad SAW) unto My slaves, that truly, I am the Oft-Forgiving, the Most-Merciful. And that My Torment is indeed the most painful torment. And tell them about the guests (the angels) of Ibrâhim (Abraham). When they entered unto him, and said: Salâm (peace)! [Ibrâhim (Abraham)] said: “Indeed! We are afraid of you. They (the angels) said: Do not be afraid! We give you glad tidings of a boy (son) possessing much knowledge and wisdom. [Ibrâhim (Abraham)] said: “Do you give me glad tidings (of a son) when old age has overtaken me? Of what then is your news? They (the angels) said: “We give you glad tidings in truth. So be not of the despairing.”*

## Middle Entrance



The middle entrance is the smallest and the simplest of the three, although it is the widest at 2.22 meters. It is crowned by a cingfoil arch. The design of the door allows easy entry, particularly since it was the door leading to the main hall (the stable). That is why the two sides of the door were chamfered. The middle entrance of the Sitt Tunshuq palace leads to a main hall that is today used for carpentry, although it appears that its original purpose was a stable.

## East Entrance

The east entrance is the most elaborate and beautiful of the three

entrances in the northern façade of the Sitt Tunshuq palace. The entrance was constructed in Ablaq style from red and white stone, which has turned slightly yellow. Above the door and lintel there is a stone course made up of interlocking joggled stones. This was originally done in white limestone covered with black stones that turned to grey due to climatic conditions.

### Founder

Al-Sayida Tunshuq bint ‘Aabd Allah al–Muzaffariyya built this palace. Tunshuq in Turkish means ‘precious’ or ‘wonderful.’ She was a generous, compassionate and wealthy woman who loved Jerusalem, lived in it and provided it with rare architectural masterpiece. Tunshuq appears to have been a wife of one of the princes called al-Muzafar, as she acquired his title. This means that she belonged to the family of al-Muzafarin who ruled Persia, Kirman and Kurdistan (1313-1393 AD). She appears to have sought refuge in Jerusalem following a disaster that befell the ruling family at the hands of Tamerlane in 1387 AD. Tunshuq’s wealth is evident from the expansive nature of her palace and its many decorations, as well as the financial allocation that was approximately 100,000 dirhams, spent to buy one third of the village of Beit Safafa in Jerusalem.

## 2.Turbat al-Sitt Tunshuq (Mausoleum of I-Sitt Tunshuq)



Seeing the many aspects of al-Sitt Tunshuq’s life, as well as the beauty of the architectural façade, and contemplating the content and message included in the Quranic verse found on the façade, which calls for optimism and not despairing, regardless of difficulties, it would be worthwhile to pay special attention to this lady’s mausoleum and pray for mercy for her soul.

### A Miniature of the Palace’s Façade

Turbat al-Sitt Tunshuq is opposite the third east entrance of the al-Sitt Tunshuq Palace and the entrance of al- ‘Imara al-‘Amira on the north

side of ‘Aqabat al-Takkiyya Road. The façade of this mausoleum is wonderfully designed and it is a miniature of the façade of the palace. The mausoleum is significant, because it indicates that al-Sitt Tunshuq loved Jerusalem not only during her life, but also in her death, as she asked to be buried in it. She died in 1398 AD and she was buried in this mausoleum. As such, she presented to Jerusalem a second architectural masterpiece that still stands today opposite her palace, a testimony to this good lady’s wealth and high taste.

### 3. Al-‘Imara al-‘Amira (1552-1553 AD)

Moving on to the first part of this station of the trail is effortless. It only involves remaining in the same place and contemplating a fourth entrance that is simpler in shape and less decorated than the entrances of al-Sitt Tunshuq Palace. This is the north entrance of the Al- ‘Imara al-‘Amira architectural complex, where one has the opportunity to visit the kitchen during the distribution of soup and food by going through this north entrance and down the stairs to the kitchen. The second entrance, which is the south entrance that forms the second part of this station of the trail, requires going downhill on the al-Wad Road, turning south and walking down the road until reaching the west entrance of Suq al-Qattanin, then going up several

meters on ‘Aqabat al-Khalidiyya Road and turning right until reaching the middle of the ‘Aqabatal-Saraya, where the entrance to the orphanage school is. Some of the facilities of al-Sitt Tunshuq Palace or the buildings of al-‘Imara al-‘Amira can be visited by asking permission from the Islamic Orphanage, given that their offices are directly at the south entrance of the al-‘Imaraal-‘Amira .

#### Meaning of al-‘Imara al-‘Amira

The term al-‘Imara’ al-‘Amira is a Turkish word meaning a building that provides food for the poor and strangers, particularly soup. In Jerusalem, it was known as Khassaki Sultan or Takiya Khassaki Sultan. The word ‘Takiyya is originally the Turkish word of ‘Tekke’ referring to a Sufi establishment.

#### North Entrance



Al-‘Imara al-‘Amira complex is very large. It has two entrances, the north of which is next to the east entrance of the al-Sitt Tunshuq Palace and comprises a trefoil arch , framed by ogee moulding . Above the entrance

is a straight lintel, with the key stone (middle stone) decorated by a multi-layered flower similar to the one at the entrance of the Khaasaki Sultan Takiyya in Aksaray, Istanbul.

The difference in the style of construction between al-Sitt Tunshuq Palace and al-'Imara al-'Amira is evident here. The palace belonged to the Mamluk school of architecture, while al-'Imara al-'Amira belonged to the Ottoman one. The north entrance gives access to a hall that leads into an open courtyard, divided into two parts on the basis of the floor's elevation. This part of al-'Imara al-'Amira contains the kitchen, storage, a water fountain, and a building of two floors, with the bakery in one of the rooms of the lower floor.

## South Entrance



The south entrance (see access above) comprises a large arch similar in shape and decorations to Bab al-'Amud. It leads to a transitional area known as Dirkah, richly decorated with circular stonework and leading to an open courtyard surrounded by arcades that form the Khan or caravansary of the al-'Imara al-'Amira. To the east of the Khan and its open courtyard is a building known as al-'Adliyya, which was established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, al-'Imara al-'Amira is a huge architectural project that comprises four open courtyards, several staircases, several composite buildings, some with two floors, and a set of rooms and halls of various sizes and construction styles.

## Founder

The wife of Sultan Suleiman al-Kanuni (Suleiman I) initiated the construction of the al-'Imara al-'Amira. The original name of Khaasaki Sultan is Roxalana, because Khaasaki is a nickname given to the beloved woman of the sultan, giving her a higher rank than all the sultan's concubines and slaves. She was also known by the name of Khurm, which has several meanings, including the joyful one, the laughing one, and the happy one. It appears that she had such qualities, beauty, intelligence and personality that she managed to convince the sultan not only to release her from her slavery but also to marry her. It is said that the sultan remained faithful to her from the day they met and until her death.



## Architectural Units of al-'Imara al-'Amira



The structure's units, as indicated by the Waqf document, include a large Khan for travelers and merchants, a mosque with domes and arches, a Ribat comprising 55 rooms for Sufis and the poor, a large kitchen with an bakery and a mill, several storage areas, and a water fountain with fresh water for the residents and for cooking. Most of these units, with the exception of the Ribat and the mosque, remain standing and can be seen today.

## Food Conditions and Quantities

Khassaki Sultan was keen on the

food menu and the conditions of distributing it. She dictated that two types of soup must be cooked every day. The first was a rice soup for lunch, including the following ingredients: rice (16.380 kg), clarified butter (2.457 kg), chickpeas (1.228 kg), onions (1.638 kg), salt (2.047 kg), yoghurt (20.475 kg); and parsley equal to four dirhams, while 49.14 kg of firewood was used to cook the soup. The second soup was a wheat soup (Freekeh) for dinner (except on Friday nights) and it included the following ingredients: wheat (14.212 kg), clarified butter (2.457 kg), salt (2.047 kg), onions (1.638 kg), cumin (0.614 kg), and chickpeas (1.228 kg), while 57.33 kg of firewood was used to cook the soup. Each day, 2,000 loaves of bread were made, each weighing 281.25 grams, meaning that around 562.5 kg of wheat, 2.457 kg of salt, and 45.045 kg of firewood were used daily. This is a simple example of what used to be cooked in this charity establishment. It is fortunate that the Takiyya is still operating and serves soup, rice and meat to residents of the Old City, particularly during the Holy Month of Ramadan.



## 4. Turbat Turkan Khatun (1352-1553AD)

Turbat Turkan Khatun is the next station in this trail. To get to it, one must return to the al-Wad Street at the Suq al-Qattanin doorway, walk southwards where the entrance of al-Buraq Wall is, then walk up the Daraj al-'Ayn Road towards Bab al-Silsila Road and eastwards. Turbat Turkan Khatun is located in the Bab al-Silsila Road between Daraj al-'Ayn and Bab al-Silsila of al-Aqsa Mosque.



### Founder of the Mausoleum

Turbat al-Sayida Turkan Khatun is located on the north side of Bab al-Silsila Road. According to the foundation inscription, it belonged to a woman, or khatun in Turkish, a daughter of one of the Uzbek princes. She was a descendent of one of the Islamic families that ruled the east Islamic world. It appears that Turkan Khatun wished to reside in the Old City, and when she died, she was buried in Jerusalem in this mausoleum which was built especially for her. There is also the possibility that Turkan Khatun passed through Jerusalem on her

way to pilgrimage and decided to settle in it.

### North Façade

This mausoleum, compared to others, is very rich with decorative panels, which appear inside and on the main external southern façade that overlooks Bab al-Silsila Road. This façade is built with white stones that have turned to grey due to weathering elements. The façade is divided into two similar sections. The lower part of each section hosts a rectangular window covered with iron grille for protection. There is a stone lintel above each window, and above that is a rectangular stone panel carved and embossed with geometric and plant motifs. Above the panel, there is a square stone plaque showing similar motifs and decorations.

### The Mausoleum from the Inside

The mausoleum is divided into two parts. The southern part is a square room topped with a dome sitting on arches, stone panels with plant and geometric carvings and motifs that artistically match those seen on the façade fill the walls. The richness of these decorations reflects the princely origins of the owner of the mausoleum. It is difficult to enter into the mausoleum to see a small, shallow niche with decorations.

## 5. Al-Madrasa Al-'Uthmaniyya (1440-1441 AD)



To continue on this trail, one must head towards al-Aqsa Mosque through Bab al-Silsila, turn north (left of the entrance) and reach al-Mathara (purification) Gate. Directly to the left of the entrance is the façade of al-Madrasa al-'Uthmaniyya.

### Location and Founder

The 'Uthmaniyya School is located on the western wall of al-Aqsa Mosque to the south of Bab al-Mutawada', between the door of Suq al-Qattanin and al-Madrasa al-Ashrafiyya. The 'Uthmaniyya was funded and built by Asfahan Khatun, the daughter of Prince Muhammad who was known as Khanum. Lady Asfahan generously spent on her madrasa, given that this school's Waqf included the lands of the village of Kafr Qar' and others in the lands of the Rum. The Waqf had a teacher, a Quran reader, nine students and some Sufis.

### School's Façade

The school's architecture comprises two levels. The top level overlooks the Dome of the Rock through a colored façade, comprising a pointed arch surrounding two rectangular windows that were built with joggled red and black stones.

### School's Components

The madrasa is accessed through a door located on Bab al-Mathara Road, carved in its beautifully decorated northern façade. The entrance leads to the transitional area of Dirka (vestibule after entrance)), leading to a courtyard and a burial room. There is a prayer niche in a lower level room, known as the Lower Mosque, while the large hall that overlooks al-Aqsa Mosque is known as the Upper Mosque. The school is currently the residence of the al-Fityani family. It is therefore difficult to see inside. The school also sits atop the famous Israeli tunnel an excavation, causing major damage to the building and many complains were submitted to international institutions such as UNESCO.

## 6. Al-Madrasah Al-Khatuniyya (1354 AD)



After enjoying the structure and decorations of the 'Uthmaniyya School, one reaches al-Madrasa al-Khatuniyya by passing through the eastern entrance of Suq al-Qattanin that overlooks al-Aqsa Mosque. One must notice the difference between this entrance and the west entrance, which was seen while going through the south entrance of the al-'Imara al-'Amira .

### Location and Founder

Al-Madrasa al-Khatuniyya is a famous school attributed to al-Sitt Ogul Khatun, the daughter of Shams al-Din al-Qazaniyya al-Baghdadiyya. The school is in a sensitive location. It constitutes part of the riwaq located between Bab Suq al-Qattanin and Bab al-Hadid. The school is accessed through an alleyway on the Bab al-Hadid Road, located to the southern side of the road between al-Madrasa al-Muzhiriyya and al-Madrasa al-Arguniyya.

### School is a Mausoleum for Prominent People

The school's facilities are composed of an open courtyard surrounded by sanctums from the south, west and north, and two large *iwans* facing each other, as well as a large hall overlooking the western porticoe of al-Aqsa Mosque, housing the tombs of prominent Arabs and Muslims. Part of the school is a residence for the Khatib and other families. The hall overlooking the western porticoe of al-Aqsa Mosque houses the tombs of Muhammad Ali al-Hindi, Musa Kazem al-Husseini, the Martyr 'Abd al-Qader al-Husseini, Ahmad Hilmi 'Abd al-Baqi, 'Abd al-Hamid Shuman, al-Sharif 'Abd al-Hamid ibn 'Oun, and finally Faisal al-Husseini, may they all rest in peace.

### Waqf al-Khatuniyya

The Khatuniyya has two religious endowments (Waqf). The first is Waqf Aughl Khatun, comprising Zahr al-Jamal farm near the Dair Jarir village of Ramallah, and the second is from Isfahan Shah, the daughter of Prince Qazan, sister of the Khatun who placed these sites as religious endowments. It comprises five plots of land in Damascus, a house near Bab al-Hadid, a house in the Zion neighborhood and a shop in Suq al-Qattanin. Among the school's employees were a shaikh, headmaster, doorman and caretaker, clerk and Quran reader, and a Bukhari<sup>12</sup> reader.

12 - Bukhari is one of the most six important books about the prophet Muhammad sayings.



## 7.AI- al-Ghadiriyya (1432 AD / 836 H)

### Location and Founder

Al-Madrasa (School) al-Ghadiriyya is located in the northern part of al-Aqsa Mosque, between Bab al-Asbat and Bab Hittah. This school is attributed to Misr Khatun, wife of Nasri al-Din Muhammad ibn Dilghar, the Turkuma Prince of the Dilghar province. The Ghdiriyya had a large and generous religious endowment. A large part of the school's roof has collapsed and remains in that state until today.



## 8. Al-Ribat al-Mardini (Before 1361 AD / 763 H)

Leaving al-Aqsa Mosque through Bab Hittah towards the north, the last station of this trail can be seen. Al-Ribat al-Mardini is located on the western side of Bab Hittah Street, to the north of al-'Awhadiyya Turba.

### Al-Ribat's Units and Founders

Al-Ribat is composed of an entrance above which is a pointed arch, leading to a distributor vestibule to two large halls, each covered by a dome. To the west of the halls are two rooms presently used as shops. The founders of the Ribat are two ladies from the city of Mardin, who were released from slavery by Saleh ibn Ghazi, the Urtukied ruler (1321 - 1363 AD / 712 - 765 H). Mujir al-Din, the Jerusalem historian, examined the document declaring the Ribat a religious endowment (Waqf), dedicated as a hostel to serve visitors arriving from the city of Mardin.

The Ribat building is simple, dominated by the local architectural style. It is currently a dwelling. Documents indicate that it hosted many women from Mardin in 1392 AD (795 H).

### Conclusion

It is finally noteworthy to mention that the greatest Christian building in Jerusalem, namely, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, is a feministic structure, since the Empress Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, was the main dynamic force behind building this and other basic churches, such as the Manger church and Al-Zaytunah church on the Mount of Olives.

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# 7.Sufi Institutions and Religious Schools

## Trail's Nature and Stations

The subject of this trail is the Sufi institutions in Jerusalem. Although Sufism has disappeared in the city, its institutions have remained testament to the role that Sufism played in Jerusalemite society.

The trail starts outside the Old City walls at Bab al-'Amud (Damascus Gate) Bus Station, and ends in the Christian Quarter in the heart of the Old City. It takes between two and a half and three hours to complete, and has very few special requirements. A flashlight to illuminate some relatively dark corners would prove helpful. The trail includes three Sufi types of institutions, namely, al-Zawiya, al-Khanqa, and al-Ribat.

## Trail Stations

Al-Zawiya al-Adhamiyya

Al-Khanqa al-Dawadariyya

Al-Zawiya al-Qadiriyya

Al-Ribat al-Mansuri

Al-Zawiya al-Qirarmiyya

Al-Khanqa al-Salahiyya

## Introduction

Linguistically, *al-zawiya* is a corner. In practice, it is a location which brings people together. The term *al-Zawiya* was used to indicate areas or corners where Sufis congregated or found shelter. Institutions of knowledge and learning started in large mosques but moved out, gaining independence.

*Al-Khanqa* is a Persian word which means home and was initially used to indicate places where Sufis sought seclusion to worship and recite the Quran. In Mamluk literature and documents, *al-Khanqa* mean a mosque and a Sufi home, which may have had a school or dormitory attached to them

In addition to *al-Khanqa* and *al-Zawiya*, some Sufi buildings were known as *ribat*, an Arabic word indicating standing steadfast along borders and strongholds. Some historians are confused among *al-Khanqa*, *al-Zawiya*, and *al-Ribat*. *al-Maqrizi*, an Egyptian Mamluk-era historian and a Sunni, refers to them all as Sufi homes. But if *al-Ribat* is inside a city and not along the border strongholds, then it is a building allocated for the poor, and sometimes for widows or divorced women. With time, there became a certain level of similarity among residents of these three Sufi types of homes.

## Differences among Sufi Institutions

Regardless of the names given to Sufi buildings, there is no large variation in the architectural plan or the administrative and financial system of these buildings. *Al-Ribat*, however, is distinguished in that it is a shelter for the poor, referred to as ‘*Mujawirin*’ (neighbors). *Khanqas* are normally larger in size than *Zawiyas*, with larger property and higher revenues. Hence, the responsibilities of those managing them, in terms of studies, worshipping, and reciting are more detailed. *Al-Khanqa*, *al-Zawiya*, and *al-Ribat* are architectural units whose residents dedicate their time to worshipping and reciting the Quran, according to specific conditions set by the donor and overseen by a inspector who runs their daily life and worshipping affairs.

Naturally, each institution, era, or establishment had its own circumstances, reflected in the Sufi institution’s details, in terms of material capacities and architectural plan, with all its ornamental and artistic details. Although such differences may occur, the Sufi establishment, whether a *Khanqa*, *Zawiya*, or *Ribat*, should include, architecturally, the following facilities:

- A group of small rooms providing an atmosphere of seclusion and individuality for the Sufi. These are normally referred to as hermitages or cells.
- A large hall for plenary meetings to recite the Quran, listen to *dhikr* (supplication) and *sma'*(chanting) , and share Sufi sessions.
- There is normally a small mosque for praying, supplication, studying, and preaching, as well as a small kitchen and amenities.

- In most cases, a minaret is attached to the building, due to its Islamic implications and importance in communicating the Zawiya's activity to the neighborhood. It is the media tool of the Sufi methods.
- An open courtyard, part of which may be a small garden, and a water-gathering well.

## Nature of Sufism

Sufism indicates dedication to worshipping Allah (God) the Almighty, shunning the material aspects of life. In this respect, Sufism started with the early stages of Islam, since this is, in fact, how the Prophet Mohammad and his followers conducted their lives. Due to Jerusalem's religious position in Islam, large groups of worshipers and dedicated Muslims made it their destination. Mujir al-Din, Jerusalem's prominent historian, compiled a large list of such dedicated worshippers who lived in Jerusalem after the Islamic conquest.

## Stages of Sufism in Islam

Sufism in Islam passed through a number of stages and roles. At the beginning, mosques and private homes were centers for Sufism and its patrons. Later, a common Sufism developed, requiring a mother institution with specific regulations. The features of this development in Jerusalem started to appear in the Ayyubid era, expanding and developing into varied forms of institutions in the Mamluk and Ottoman era.

## Sufi Traditions

Sufism in Islam followed numerous traditions and rituals, reflecting on the daily lives and activities of Sufis in Jerusalem. Sufism flourished particularly in the Mamluk and Ottoman eras. Among its traditions are the Rifa'iyya order, developed by Shaikh Ahmad ibn Ali al-Rifa'i, the qadiriyya order, developed by 'Abedal-Qader al-Jilani, the Maulawiyya order, developed by Mauwlana Jalal al-Din Al-Rumi, the Bastamiyya order, after Abi Yazid Tayfour al-Bastami, the Naqshabandiyya order, established by Baha' al-Din al-Bukhari, and the Shaziliyya Yashrutiyya order established by 'Ali Nour al-Din al-Yashruti. Other methods include al-"Alawiyya, al-Tijaniyya, al-Wafa'iyya, al-Kalandriyya, and al-Yunisiyya.

## Importance of the Waqf System

The Islamic Waqf system, with all its conditions and costs which must be stipulated in the Waqf contract, guarantees a list of reference items which represent a nucleus for the revenues, expenses, salaries, duties, and authorities of those affiliated with this establishment, identifying their relations with the judicial and executive authorities.

# 1. Al-Zawiya al-Adhamiyya (1358 AD / 760 H)



Activities of the Sufi institutions were not restricted to the Old City of Jerusalem and the vicinity of al-Aqsa Mosque, but extended outside the city walls and the surrounding region. A number of Zawiya were established in the Ayyubid era, including the Jarrahiyya Zawiya in Shaikh Jarrah neighborhood, and al-Mansuriyya and al-As'adiyyh Zawiya on the Mount of Olives during the Ottoman era. Al-Zawiya al-Adhamiyya, established in the Mamluk era, is selected to be the first station of this trail. The grotto may be visited after taking permission from the Zawiya occupants. Small numbers of visitors are permitted to visit other premises in al-Zawiya after taking permission from their curators.

## Remains of the Original Zawiya

This Zawiya is located outside the Old City walls, between Bab al-'Amud (Damascus Gate) and Bab al-Sahira (Herod's Gate), near the bus station, alongside the southern Bab al-Sahira cemetery. The site can be identified by the two minarets of the present mosque. It is paradoxical that most facilities of the original Zawiya were razed and most of what is there at present are modern buildings, although the remnants of a Mamluk structure can be seen in the room above the grotto entrance.

## Founder

The Zawiya was established and registered as an Islamic Waqf by the Mamluk Amir Manjak al-Saifi, founder of the Manjakiyya madrasa, presently the General Awqaf Department. Manjak was the Deputy for Greater Syria around 1358 (760H). The Zawiya enjoyed a large and generous Waqf (religious endowment), and its sheikhdom was managed by a number of dignitaries, including Daoud ibn Badr al-Adhami, who died in 1404 AD (807 H).

## Al-Adhamiyya Grotto

Adjacent to al-Zawiya is a large grotto, worth visiting. It was mentioned by historian Mujir al-Din in his famous book, *'al-Uns al-Jalil bi-tarikh al-Quds wal-Khalil'* ('The glorious history of Jerusalem and Hebron') (c. 1495), who jokingly described the grotto as 'the living under the dead,' referring to those in the cave under the al-Sahira cemetery. It was also mentioned by the traveler al-



Nabulsi during his visit to Jerusalem in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Al-Zawiya is still active and bustling with visitors, particularly its mosque, to which a number of facilities were added, including a large ablution facility and kindergarten. Its area was recently expanded, its old minaret was renovated and a new minaret was added.

## 2. Al-Khanqa Al-Dawadariyy (1295 / 695H)



To reach al-Dawadariyya, one should walk towards Bab al 'Atm street, one of the north al-Aqsa Mosque gates, by entering Bab al-Sahira (Herod's Gate) and walking down al-Qadisiyya street until its southern end, then turning east at the Mujahidin street. A few meters on, turn right to Bab al-'Atm. It is not possible to enter the Dawadariyya because it is presently a school for children with special needs. Examining the details of its façade ornaments requires a flashlight.

### Location, Name, and Founder

The Dawadariyya is located directly south of the Salamiyya School on Bab al-'Atm Street, branching from I-Mujahidin Street and adjacent to al-Aqsa Mosque from the north. This seminary, known according to its founding

documents as Dar al-Salihin (home of the pious), obtained its original name (Dawadariyya) from its founder, Amir ‘Alam al-Din Abu Musa al-Dawadar. Dawadar was one of the important positions during the Mamluk era, occupied by important princes. ‘Alam al-Ddin also occupied a number of important positions and missions during his active administrative, military and scientific life. He was known for his compassion towards Sufis and sponsorship of science and scientists. His home was believed to resemble a mosque.

### **Details of and Incentives for the Waqf**

The inscription above the entrance provides important details about the reasons behind establishing the seminary and its financial resources. It indicates that the Khanqa was established in an effort to please Allah (God), and to provide shelter to 30 members of Arab and non-Arab members of the Sufi order, twenty of whom were bachelors and ten were married. Any Sufi arriving at the seminary would be hosted for a period of ten days. Among the conditions were teaching Hadith (Prophet Mohammad’s sayings and actions), the Holy Quran, and the Shafe’i school of jurisprudence. To guarantee that the khanqa would continue to play its role, and to provide its running expenses, the founder provided it with generous religious endowments (Awqaf), including the village of Bir Nabala, north of Jerusalem, the village of Hijlah near Jericho, and a number of properties interspersed around Jerusalem, Nablus and Bisan.

### **Architectural Characteristics of al-Khanqa**

Al-Dawadariyya is characterized by its original design and beauty of its architectural details. Its only entrance, opening to the west, is a unique architectural marvel in the Jerusalem architecture. It does have similar examples in the architecture of Damascus, however. It was built from interlocking red and grey stones until the beginning of the vault covering the recessed entrance. Above the entrance opening is a stone lentil, followed directly by a relieving arch composed of connected stones. Above that is the string of inscribed text mentioned above. Three rows of beautifully formed stalactite stone elements are then seen. Ahead of the entrance cover, towards the street, are two triple arches with pointed openings, preceded by a pointed arch formed from connected colorful stones. The entrance leads directly to an open, rectangular courtyard, paved with large stone tiles. The courtyard is surrounded from the north and south by small sanctums where the Sufis used to live. On the south side is a large rectangular hall composed of three sectors, which was used for teaching the Quran and Hadith, and as a meeting place for Sufis residing in al-Khanqa.

### 3. Al-Zawiya al-Qadiriyya (Al-Afghaniyya)



To visit al-Qadiriyya, one should backtrack to Mujahidin Street and walk towards al-Wad Street, turn left at Barquq Street, and walk a few dozen meters to the southern corner of al-Zawiya al-Qadiriyya. This Zawiya maintained its original architectural character and continues to perform its mission. Its followers insist on appearing at the Zawiya and meeting with their esteemed Shaikh 'Abed al- Karim al-Afaghani at least twice a week, in addition to Fridays. Permission is needed to visit the Zawiya interior. Visitors should observe quiet, respect and modesty.

#### Name

Al-Qadiriyya is named after the dignified scholar Sheikh 'Abed al Qader al-Jilani, the founder and pioneer of the Qadiri Sufi order in the Islamic world. This Zawiya is currently known as the Afghaniyya, due to a number of Jerusalem Afghanis residing in it over the past few decades, and because it has recently been managed by these groups.

#### Founder

This Zawiya was built by Muhammad Pasha, governor of Jerusalem (1632 - 33 AD / 1043 H), who was known for sponsoring Sufi institutions in Jerusalem and attending to the city's architecture and architectural development. He loved Jerusalem and resided in it after he retired, and was a wealthy trader of livestock. Muhammad Pasha allocated a large sum of money for his Zawiya's





running expenses in the form of an endowment, whereby the allocated amount is invested in trade and the necessary expenses are provided for from the annual profit.

### Entrance

The Zawiya's only entrance has a pointed arch projecting a humble image to the visitor, particularly if compared to the Dawadariyya entrance. It is elevated by three steps above street level and flanked by a stone benches on both sides. Above the entrance is an inscription showing the Zawiya's name, order, founder, and the date on which it was built.

### Facilities

The entrance leads through a short passage to a rectangular, though irregular, courtyard, most of which is landscaped with plants and trees, coinciding with the description of the Waqf four centuries ago. The courtyard is surrounded from the south and west by eleven small cells for Sufis. The northern side houses service facilities, including the Sufi meeting hall, which comprises two levels, a lower, original one and an upper one which was added later on. The latter is used as a residence for the Zawiya's sheikh. The Zawiya has a elevated mosque to the east of the entrance, which can be accessed by a staircase.



## 4. Al-Ribat Al-Mansuri (1282 - 1283 /681H)



Visiting this station requires leaving al-Qadiriyya through -Barqouq Street to al-Wad Street, walking until Al-Nzahir Gate crossing and 'Aqabat al-Takiyya, then turning left and walking until just before Bab-al-Nazhir Gate leading to al-Aqsa Mosque. The Ribat is located at the southern side of Bab al-Nazir, across from 'Ala' al-Din Al-Basir Ribat. It is possible to visit al-Ribat's facilities, including the main hall and the entrance. Residents of al-Ribat are particularly friendly and welcoming.

### Founder

This Ribat is a Sultanate institution established by Sultan al-Mansur Qalawun to shelter pilgrims to Jerusalem and its poor. Qalawun is a famous Mamluk sultan who established the pillars of the Mamluk state in Egypt and Greater Syria. He ascended to the throne (1279 - 1290 AD / 678 - 689 H) after his colleague Sultan Baybars. Qalawun was very active in the architectural and construction fields in Cairo, and cities with religious importance, such as Jerusalem and Hebron, also had their share of this activity. He established a Ribat and a Bimaristan (hospital) among other facilities in Hebron.

### Generous Waqf

Established by the highest authority in the Mamluk state, this building was endowed with a long series of properties throughout the Mamluk state in Palestine, which enabled it to pursue its mission during the Mamluk era, until



just before the Ottoman Empire. Towards the end of the Ottoman Empire, a Muslim sect who arrived from Sudan and other African countries stayed in this Ribat after coming to live in Jerusalem. Later on, the Ribat was used as a prison, which explains the reason behind calling it Habs al-Ribat (al-Ribat prison).

### **Al-Ribat's Façade**

Al-Ribat has an architectural gate overlooking I-Nazir Street, composed of two parts. The upper part dates back to the Ottoman era; the lower, original part dates back to the Mamluk era. It is still possible to witness some of the

beautiful aspects of this structure, represented in the style of windows, the alternating color of the building stones (known in Arabic as Ablaq), the large, big pointed arch at the entrance, the ornamental frame dividing the two parts of the façade, and the accurate, delicate and ornate connected stones.

### **Plan of Al-Ribat**

The internal floor plan of al-Ribat reflects its original mission. It contains three basic architectural units:

1. An elongated entrance with a large stone tiles, at a slightly lower elevation than street level. On both eastern and western sides, there are large stone benches. It is covered by a cross vault, and on its southern wall is the inscription plaque mentioned above.
2. A large rectangular hall located to the east of the entrance and accessed through a passageway leading from it. This hall is divided into two parts by a row of four columns with pointed arches, resting on the columns on one side, and on the side walls of this hall on the other. Doubtlessly, this hall has hosted large numbers of pilgrims who arrived in Jerusalem from various areas in the Muslim world. It is now being renovated to be used for social activities as a multi-purpose hall.
3. A large open space to the west of the Ribat entrance, surrounded by a number of rooms and cells of various areas, with a tomb in one of them. Over the past centuries, large numbers of pilgrims and poor people, from Jerusalem and various parts of the Muslim world, resided in these rooms. It is noteworthy that these rooms continue to form homes for members of some communities which chose to reside in the Holy City, as a result of the social and economic conditions prevailing among the city's residents. The courtyard has been overwhelmed with modern structures, spoiling its beauty and splendor.

## 5. Al-Zawiya Al-Qiramiyya (before 1386 AD / 788 H)

Al-Zawiya al-Qiramiyya is located in the heart of the Old City, on the eastern side of Qirami Street, which branches out from 'Aqabat al-Khalidiyya Street. To get there, the visitor should backtrack to al-Wad Street and walk until the western entrance of Suq al-Qattanin (Cotton Traders' Market), then turn right and ascend 'Aqabat al-Khalidiyya Street to its end, heading to al-Qirami Street.

### Sheikh Al-Zawiya

Al-Zawiya al-Qiramiyya is an architecturally humble Zawiya, related to Sheikh Shams al-Din abu 'Abedallah Muhammad al-Turkumani I-Qirami, a prominent Sufi sheikh.

Al-Qirami was born in 1321 AD (720 H) and grew up in Damascus, but left to Jerusalem and lived there, due to its religious status in Islam.

### Founder

It was common among wealthy princes and rulers to be compassionate towards Sufis and to sponsor their institutions. Al-Zawiya al-Qiramiyya enjoyed the sponsorship of Amir Nasir al-Din Mohammad al-Jili, who volunteered to build this Zawiya and endowed one third of his wealth to it, among other property allocated for the Qirami sheikh and his offspring. Prince Nasir Eddin was from Gaza but chose to live in Jerusalem, joining Sheikh Al-Qurmi's Sufi order and becoming one of his followers. Shaikh al-Qirami died in Jerusalem in 1386 AD (788 H) and was buried in his Zawiya. His son, Shaikh Zain al-Din 'Abed al-Qader, took over the Zawiya after him. He was a prominent Sufi, like his father, and when he died in 1439-1440 AD (843 H), he was also buried in aAl-Zawiya next to him.



## The Architectural Fabric of Al-Zawiya Al-Qiramiyya

Al-Zawiya al-Qiramiyya is characterized by its simplicity and lack of ornamentation, in line with true Sufi beliefs. The eastern façade is the only exposed side of al-Zawiya and is two floors high. The lower part comprises al-Zawiya's entrance, which is flanked on both sides by a narrow stone bench. The entrance jambs are built using red and grey stones, topped by a lentil. Above is a row of simple but slightly ornamented stones, the most ornate and impressive of which is the key stone. Above this row of stones is a small square window. The entrance is covered by a pointed arch surrounded by an ornamented moulding extending on both sides of the entrance. To the north of the entrance, two long windows open to the tomb room. They are both protected with iron grille designed in Mamluk style.

### Al-Zawiya Al-Qiramiyya Floor Plan

Al-Zawiya floor plan is composed of two architectural units: the first is a long rectangular hall composed of three bays roofed by three cross vaults springing from the walls on both sides of the hall. The south wall of this hall, which is al-Zawiya's prayer area, houses a simple Mihrab (prayer niche). The north wall of the western bay has a door which leads to a square burial room with a cross vaulted roof, representing the second of Al-Zawiya's two units. Below this room are the remains of Shaikh al-Qirami and his offspring who were buried alongside him.

## 6. Al-Khanqa Al-Salahiyya

The last station of this trail is the first Sufi institution established and still existing in Jerusalem. Leaving al-Zawiya al-Qiramiyya, head to 'Aqabat Al-Saraya Street and turn left, until the crossing between Khan al-Zait and Soq al-Attarin, and head towards the Holy Sepulcher Church until you reach the Christian Quarter. Follow the street to its northern end, where al-Khanqa I-Salahiyya is located.



### Founder and Location

Sultan Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi (Saladin) is considered the first ruler to take the initiative to establish religious *madrassas* (Khanqas) in the city of Jerusalem in particular and throughout Palestine in general, when he declared al-Khanqa

al-Salahiyya a religious property (Waqf) in 1187 AD (583 H). It is still operating actively in the Christian Quarter until today, at the end of the street named after it: al-Khanqa al-Salahiyya Street, or al-Khanqi for short.

### Al-Khanqa's Religious Endowments

The instrument declaring al-Khanqa a Waqf (religious endowment) is dated in 1189 AD (585 H) and available for researchers. Al-Khanqa had a large real estate endowment, including a public bath, a bakery, stores, a pool, and agricultural land. The sheikhdom of al-Khanqa was a sensitive and important position in the city of Jerusalem.

### Al-Khanqa Components

Architecturally, al-Khanqa is composed of a large entrance built with alternating stone colors (Ablaq), leading to a distributor dirka and to a number of architectural units and an open courtyard. This leads through a staircase to a number of halls, rooms, and a large retreat, where it is said that Saladin sought seclusion and meditation. Sufi activity stopped some time ago in this Khanqa, and it is now a residential complex with a bustling mosque and a kindergarten.



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**THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM**

- MOSQUE 
- CHURCH 
- CONVENT 
- SYNAGOGUE 
- HOTEL 
- OLD CITY ROAD 
- STAIRS 
- BUS STATION 





# 8.The Mosaic Architecture

## Trail's Nature and Stations

The subject of this trail is related to Jerusalem's architecture which prevailed since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, after traditional building styles which prevailed during and before the Ottoman era came to a stop. New, imported and modern European styles and elements were introduced in ornaments and design. Though western European in their overall nature, these styles presented, in their details, the architectural character and identity of each country that implemented building projects in Jerusalem.

This trail is of medium difficulty and needs a few hours. Like most trails, it stresses the façades and external features of buildings. Entering some of the buildings requires permission from the institutions occupying them.

The trail starts from the Palestinian Rockefeller Museum, moving to Salah al-Din Street, Nablus Street, Bab al-Jadid Street and ending at Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate). The trail comprises the following stations:

- The Palestinian Museum (Rockefeller)
- Al-Madrasa al-Rashidiyyh (Rashidiyya School)
- The Awqaf building
- American School of Archaeology
- St. George's Cathedral
- Hindiyya Building
- Bab al-Jadid
- New Imperial Hotel

## Introduction

### Leaving the Confines of the Wall in Search of Residence

The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a dramatic change in the conditions prevailing in the Old City and its expansion (see the book introduction) starting in the years between 1831 and 1840 AD, during the reign of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha and his son Ibrahim in Palestine. This process of change continued and deepened after Ottoman rule returned to the city, with help from European countries to the Ottoman Empire. The main element of these changes was the population crowding in the Old City and the tough living conditions, albeit at different levels among its neighborhoods and alleys. These conditions resulted in people breaking the psychological and historical barriers and leaving the Old City to live in its vicinities. Hence, the city gates were not closed anymore from dusk to dawn. Living outside the Old City gained momentum around the year 1860.

### New Architectural Styles Adopted

More important in this social move was the adoption of new styles in the Old City's architectural fabric, with the traditional building styles which prospered during the Ottoman era coming to a gradual stop. The domes, cross-vaults and barrel vaults styles tapered off or totally disappeared, and were replaced by straight, horizontal roofs resting on steel I-beams like those used in railway lines. Often, an attic wooden frame was erected and covered with roof brick-tiles. On the inside, many roofs were covered with wood formations and carvings, with engravings and ornaments reflecting European styles more than Islamic ones. As for the floors, instead of using large, old, and sometimes colorful stone tiles as was customary, a new type of pavement was introduced in the form of carpets. These were covered with motifs common in Persian carpets, dominated by the colors purple, green, and black, made by casting a cement mixture and coloring agents in frames of various shapes and sizes.

### Continued Influence of the Arab Islamic Style

Despite the spread of the new, European style construction, reflecting the characteristics of each country which was keen on developing and deepening its interest in the Old City, especially regarding public institutions such as convents, schools, churches, hospitals, printing presses, and modern hotels, and while Arab buildings constructed during this period were influenced by the newcomer, local building traditions resulted in Arab Islamic buildings constructed during this period and influenced by a rich oriental style, whose

elements were deep-rooted in the Arab Islamic school of architecture, especially the Mamluke and Ottoman ones. This influence is evident in the increasing use of arches, especially horseshoe and semi-circular arches in entrances, façades and windows, the use of alternating colors in building stone courses, known as Ablaq, and stressing suspended entrances. Façades were covered with ceramic tiles, a clear influence of the Dome of the Rock. In many buildings, façades were adorned with elements derived from the Ottoman school of architecture, such as corner triangles and embossed ornaments. In planning, attention was given to open-air spaces, providing some of them with fountains and surrounding Riwaqs (porticoes), as well as high ceilings and a fair amount of natural lighting and ventilation.

This influence can be attributed to the fact that the local Arab building movement was not supported by any foreign bodies, unlike the Jewish and Christian European construction styles. The Arab construction industry relied on local efforts and initiatives, but was connected to members of wealthy influential families in the Ottoman state and during the British mandate in and around Jerusalem. Hence, the development of luxurious Arab buildings was reflected in a group of private mansions and houses which prospered along family names, clans or extended families. Groupings and neighborhoods hence spread around family names like the Husseinis, Nammaris, Dajanis and others.

## **Introducing European Traditions in Local Architecture**

European buildings dating to this period were characterized by styles and elements that are different from those of Arab buildings adjacent to them, because most west European communities sought to build according to styles typical of their original countries, representing their heritage. Every community added a brick to the architectural fabric of Jerusalem, although this did not agree with the spirit and traditions of Arab architecture. However, this era represents an important stage in the architectural development of the city, and is still far better than the concrete blocks currently spreading without control.

## **Stone is the Master**

It is noteworthy that despite the change in the details and plans of the architectural fabric, most building designers in Jerusalem during this period agreed on using stone as the main building material, expanding its shapes, masonry and engraving, and adding touches of their heritage of sculpture on their façades.

# 1.The Palestinian Museum (Rockefeller) Building (Inaugurated in 1938)



The first station of this trail is the Palestinian Museum building, located at the end of the Sultan Suleiman al-Qanuni Street (No. 27), east of al-Madrasa al-Rashidiyya (al-Rashidiyya School), across the northeast corner of the Jerusalem Wall, where Burj (Tower) al-Laqlaq is located. The Museum is open Sunday through Thursday, from 10 am to 3 pm. It is also open on Saturdays from 10 am to 2 pm (telephone number 02-6708074).

The museum building is one of Jerusalem's outstanding features. Its six-sided stone tower is a main landmark of Jerusalem's skyline, especially since the museum was built on a hill. The land on which it was built was known as Shaikh Muhammad al-Khalili's Orchard, and the remains of the owner's two-storey mansion can still be seen. The mansion's style is a true depiction of local traditional Ottoman architecture, which prevailed in Jerusalem and Palestine from the beginnings of the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and continued until modern construction influences and currents took hold.

## Founder and Objectives

The museum is known as the Palestine Archaeological Museum, and in western literature as the Rockefeller Museum, after John Rockefeller, the American magnate who donated \$2 million in the late 1920's to build the museum. The museum was established to house archaeological artifacts discovered in Palestine.

## The Museum Holdings

Although the museum holdings are not a direct interest of this book, the author encourages visitors to spend some time to admire its collection of artifacts and to see the inside of the structure, because a full picture of the building can only be appreciated by examining both its inside and outside. In addition, the museum holdings are rich and important and used to include the famous Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in Qumran, which were later removed, after the 1967 occupation of East Jerusalem, to the Israeli Museum. The Dead Sea Scrolls are considered among the most important discoveries of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The museum also exhibits a large number of wooden panels from al-Aqsa Mosque, on a temporary loan basis. These panels used to cover the ceiling of al-Aqsa Mosque. In addition, the museum exhibits engraved stone threshold pieces from the entrance of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, as well as important artifacts discovered in Majiddo, Askalan (Ashkelon), Jerusalem, Lakhish, and other locations.

## Designer

The museum building was designed by British engineer Austen St. Barbe Harrison (1891-1976) who studied Islamic and Byzantine architecture. He greatly admired Islamic architecture and was appointed Senior Architect at the Public Works Department of the British Mandate Government. Harrison lived in Jerusalem in an Arab house in al-Thuri neighborhood.

Harrison's style in designing the museum building, as in most of his buildings, including the British High Commissioner's palace (now the headquarters of the United Nations), was to merge western architectural styles with the spirit of the east and local traditional architecture. This is evident in the museum building, where he borrowed from the west the general plan prevailing in European public buildings, composed of a number of architectural units. The museum halls were designed like church halls, with high windows that utilize natural light. He was also influenced by buildings in the Old City of Jerusalem, as can be seen from the different levels of the building units. From Andalusian Islamic architecture, he adopted the museum's internal pool and fountain. Local Jerusalem

influences were clear in Harrison's design, especially where using building stone, as well as its masonry and the group of arches and domes. Armenian ceramic tiles had a special place in his design and decorative elements, signed by the artist David Ohanissian (1884-1952). The museum building is, in fact, an architectural museum in itself, exhibiting the trends passing through Jerusalem as well as depicting the influence of local architecture.

## **A Lump in the Throat**

To a Palestinian, the museum evokes conflicting memories. It is a place where his heritage and great civilization are exhibited, but at the same time, it promotes sad and painful memories. Clashes took place in the museum in 1967 and the Israeli authorities added it to the Israeli Archaeological Authority immediately afterwards, considering it a property of the Jordanian government. The presentation of some of the museum's content as part of the Israeli museum exhibits in the United States stirred opposition from some of the largest and most famous museums in America.

## 2. Al-Madrasa Al-Rashidiyyah (Al-Rashidiyya School)



Al-Madrasa al-Rashidiyya is located a few meters from the Palestine Museum building. In most cases, entry to the premises is permitted, especially during school days (with the exception of Friday and Sunday) during the morning hours.

The school is one of the main educational features of the city, with many generations studying and graduating from it over the years, including this writer. The school was established by Muhammad Rashid, the Ottoman governor of Jerusalem, in 1906. It was known in the past as the Arab College and had students from neighboring countries, as well as many Palestinian cities.

### Building Characteristics

Al-Rashidiyya building is typical of the Arab building style at the beginning of the twentieth century. The building's fabric resonates with construction modernism and local traditions, including many large windows and stressing internal space, with the end of the building receding into a pediment, while the window and door lintels protrude from the wall level. The arch keys also protrude in line with these lintels. A suspended entrance is accessed by a wide staircase ending in an open space, serving as a distributor leading to a wide internal double staircase, giving the feeling that one is entering an imperial palace. Among the local architectural features is the use of arches and stone and adding an inscription of a memorial text, as can be seen at the top of the main southern façade of the school building.



### 3. Entrance of the Awqaf (Religious Endowments) Building, currently Al-Hayat Medical Center)

After examining al-Rashidiyya School building, one can move to the corner of Suleiman al-Qanuni and Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi streets, across from Bab al-Sahira, and a few meters down along Sultan Suleiman street.

#### Modern Buildings Adorned with Heritage Motifs



This refers to curious entrance, which has old features and is merged into a modern building (al-Awqaf building, #53 in Sultan Suleiman street). This reflects the method used by the Islamic Awqaf Department in its modern buildings, being keen to merge the modern fabric with ornaments from Islamic architectural heritage. Although the building dates back to the 1960s, it exhibits basic

traditional features, mainly the use of alternative colors of building courses (Ablaq) in the façade and entrance, the use of special arch designs such as the horseshoe, the ornamenting of the arch pillars on both sides with triangular motifs, a reflection of Sultan Suleiman al-Qanuni Sabils (drinking fountains), and the presence of protruding circular ornaments (discs), reflecting those on the Jerusalem Wall in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Among the modern features are the semicircular arches, but with long pillars. This method of adoption from and merging with traditional and modern styles was used, as we shall see, in some special buildings in this trail, namely, the Hindiyya building.

## 4.American School for Archaeological Research (Albright Institution) 1925



To access this next station of the trail, one has to walk down Salah al-Din street until it crosses with al-Zahra street, a fairly short walk which presents the opportunity to witness commercial life outside the Old

City. At the north corner of the crossing, one can see a building surrounded by an iron fence, with a garden full of high trees, pink shrubs and green grass. This is the Albright building.

### Building's Components and History

The building comprises two floors, has a rectangular elevation, and has a suspended, though small entrance, wide windows, high balconies and red brick roof. The original building was built in 1925 and a second part was added in 1931. One of its most prominent features is the stone masonry, in addition to its landscaped grounds which insulate it from the noisy surroundings.

### Old Books

The building has a valuable library specialized in antiquity and biblical studies. The Institute is also carrying out a series of archaeological digs in a number of areas in Palestine and hosts a group of graduate students and researchers every year, preparing a special, field scientific program through a series of meetings and visits.

## 5. St. George's Cathedral (St. George's School), 1898



A large stone tower can be seen from the entrance of the American School for Archaeological Research, a few dozen meters north. It is the tower of St. George's Cathedral, our next station in the Mosaic Trail. To arrive there, one should walk until the end of Salah al-Din Street and the beginning of Nablus Street. After admiring the tower from among the trees, with its high buildings and four conical corners topped by crosses, one should turn left (south) on Nablus Street. A few meters on, on the right side, an entrance with a pointed arch can be seen. This is the entrance to the St. George's Cathedral, or what is known in Palestinian circles as the Bishop's school and cathedral. This is

actually a large compound which includes a hostel, a church, a tower, sports facilities, a large school, and other services. The main archaeological features are in the entrance and the church.

### First Impression

Going through the entrance, the visitor will immediately recognize the modern, Gothic architectural style of 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe, typical of Oxford and British Anglican buildings. The design of the tower, the courtyard and the surroundings give the impression that they were transplanted from a church in the British countryside.

### Architectural Features

After passing through a triple-arch entrance, visitors find themselves in an open square courtyard surrounded by three corridors with ornamented windows. In the middle of the square is a cylindrical column sitting on a base, topped by a Corinthian-style crown holding a stone globe with a cross on top. The bulkiness of the building and its concentrated mass can be seen from the pillars supporting the walls, the levels of multi-arches and the double-pillars supporting these arches, as well as the balconies in the upper part of the building and the bell tower of the church.



## 6.Hindiyya Building

To arrive at the Hindiyya building, the next station of this trail, it is preferable to walk south 500 meters down Nablus Street towards Bab al-'Amud. On the south, one can see a group of buildings which include the YMCA hotel, the American Consulate building, Sa'd and Sa'id Mosque, the bus station, and the Columbia building, arriving at Hindiyya building at the crossing between the end of Nablus street and al-Sultan street, adjacent to Columbia building.

### Name and Location

The building was named after a Jerusalem family which owns it. It enjoys a prime location, with the German Schmidt School to the east, and Bab al-'Amud, the most important entrance to the Old City, a few steps to the south.

### Architectural Fabric

The building architecture is a true example of Arab architecture outside the City Wall, typical of British mandate period construction around the end of the



1930s. The building has three floors, with the first designed to hold commercial stores, and the second and third for offices. The main feature of the building is that it merges old, local architectural traditions with some modern, imported elements, including large windows, internal open spaces, multi-levels, floor pavements, open balconies surrounded by iron railings, and hanging balconies carried by cables, which are features of architectural modernization. The local traditions can be seen in the alternating colors of stone course (Ablaq), window arches, and round, protruding ornaments of Arabesque design, reflecting those that adorn the city wall in Bab al-'Amud area and other 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman architectural styles.

### Approach

In order to feel the differences depicted in the architecture of this trail, it is suggested that the visitor takes a closer look at the building opposite to the Hindiyya building, namely, the Schmidt School building, where architectural units resembling European towers during the middle ages are concentrated, and where the building stone fabric is free from any colors or Arabesque ornaments, keeping in mind that the building was constructed in 1898.

## 7. Bab al-Jadid (1899)



After observing the architectural fabric and the current chaos of signs covering the Hindiyya building façade, the visitor is advised to cross the street towards Bab al-'Amud, walking alongside the City Wall northwards and reaching an opening in the wall, then ascending slightly towards 'Aqabat al-Manzel.

This simple opening is known as Bab al-Jadid, located across the street from the St. Joseph Hospital and the Notre Dame Hotel. Both buildings belong to the architectural era of the end of the 19<sup>th</sup>

century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, named by this author as the Mosaic architecture, the subject of this trail.

### Who Opened this Gate and Why?

As mentioned earlier in the Wall and Gates trail, Bab al-Jadid was opened in 1899 and is known as Bab Sultan 'Abed al-Hamid. It is significantly different in its architecture and design elements from the other 'original' Jerusalem gates which belong to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The motive behind opening it was facilitating movement for residents of the Christian Quarter to maintain contact with buildings constructed outside the city wall; instead of circling around towards Bab al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate), or going back to Bab al-'Amud (Damascus Gate), distance and time were saved by using this opening in the city wall.



## 8. Imperial Hotel

In order to reach Imperial Hotel, enter through Bab al-Jadid and walk south until the street crosses Casanova Street. Here, the author will not direct visitors, but prefers to leave them to find their own way, walking through the maze of alleys, following their natural instincts and finding the directions which lead to the Imperial Hotel. Whatever the choice of direction, the alleys lead to Bab al-Khalil square, where the Hotel is located, and the trip will only take a few minutes.

Imperial (or New Imperial) Hotel, a strange name in the Holy City, is the last station of this trail. The hotel was known during the 1940's and for a short period of time as the Marcos Hotel, after inscriptions were discovered in the building carrying this name.

Imperial Hotel is located a few meters from Bab al-Khalil, with the building occupying a sensitive, central location in Umar ibn al-Khattab Square. It has three façades, most prominent of which is the southern one where the entrance is.

Imperial Hotel is one of the oldest hotels in Jerusalem, in the modern context of the hotel business. The building was completed in 1889, and it is believed that Emperor Wilhelm II and his wife Victoria stayed there during their visit to Jerusalem in 1889, keeping in mind that the hotel was built between 1894 and 1898, according to the inscription at its entrance. History has it that the Emperor's entourage built a large camp outside the walls of the Old City.

In addition to its splendor and grandeur, the hotel played an important role in the Old City's history and social life. Most likely, Lord Allenby stood in one of its balconies towards the end of 1917, admiring the Holy City and its citadel, after vanquishing the Ottomans and occupying the city. In the 1950s, a cinema theatre occupied one of the hotel's halls, and in the 1960s, it was a preferred location for holding local marriage and other celebrations.

During the hotel's construction work, archaeological remains were discovered on the site, including the body of a column with inscriptions related to fulfilling a promise in the name of Liggat and Marcos Julius Maximus. The column currently adorns a lighting fixture in the hotel.

## **Imported Architectural Influences**

The Imperial Hotel's architectural fabric is influenced by a number of Greek elements, though slightly altered. The building is composed of three floors and the façade is characterized by double-columns, and wide and long balconies overlooking the citadel and the city wall, as well as long windows ending with semi-circular arches. The end of the building is ornamented with a group of Greek, clay crocks. The building stone has a pinkish color.

The hotel building is owned by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. In 2005, there were strong rumors about shady deals amounting to \$130 million to sell property in the area of Bab al-Khalil, including the hotel building. This controversial issue spread rapidly within the Palestinian community and local and international media, and stormed through the Patriarchy annals.

## **Conclusion**

A visitor who wishes to admire the internal design of the building, its open areas and its architectural heritage can end his or her trip with a cup of Arabic coffee or mint tea, and will also be received with a smile from Mr. Dajani, manager of this historic hotel and lessee of this valuable piece of real estate.



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# 9. The Mount of Olives



## Trail's Nature and Stations

The Mount of Olives Trail is one of the most enjoyable ones and is considered a basic trail, since one can see the Old City as one complete, yet varied unit. This trail can provide a number of sub-trails where the visitor sees a wide range of buildings, archaeological sites and interesting locations.

The Mount of Olives is between 2 and 3 kilometers from the Old City, and hence, it is for young and active site seers and can be considered a hiking trip. For those who wish to reduce the time and effort, a vehicle can be used, with parking space available for cars and buses at the various stations. It can also be accessed by public transportation, using Bus Line 75 from Bab al-'Amud (Damascus Gate) station on Sultan Suleiman Street, or using the shared taxi service across from Bab al-Sahira (Herod's Gate). 'Egged' bus system can also be used (Lines 9, 23, 26, 28) to the Hebrew University campus, then walking to the Jerusalem viewpoint and on to al-Muttala' Hospital (Augusta Victoria), the first station of this trail. The trail head is located at the top of the mountain at al-Muttala' complex, and the trail commences south through Rabi'a al-'Adawiyyah street towards the Gethsemane Church, the burial site of Mujir al-Din al-Hanbali, the historian of Jerusalem and Hebron, and St. Mary's Church.

### The trail's stations are:

- Al-Muttala' Hospital (Augusta Victoria)
- Salman al-Farisi Mosque
- Ascension Dome Mosque
- Al-Zawiya al-Asa'diyya
- Elona Church / al-Zaituna
- The Seven Arches Hotel Panorama Point
- Church of Dominus Fleuit (The Lord Wept)
- Gethsemane Church (Basilica of Agony)
- St. Mary's Church (Mary's Tomb)
- Mujir al-Din in al-Hanbali Tomb



## **Introduction**

### **Mountain Peaks and Religious Events**

Mountains have always attracted individuals and groups, and many mountain tops were connected to events that rendered them holy sites for religions and beliefs, due to the fact that they were venues for critical events in the history and soul of some societies and civilizations. It seems that the height of mountains, their geological formations, the fact that they are closer to the clouds and the sky, and being associated with the belief that God is there, rendered these high places ideal for religious connection.

The Holy Land is full of mountains connected to important events, including Mount Tabor near Nazareth, Mount Carmel near Haifa, Mount Jirzim near Nablus, and Mount Nibo near Madaba. The three Abrahamic monotheistic faiths connect the Holy Land mountains either to prophets receiving instructions and the holy scripture from God, or to prophets ascending to the heavens from high places. Moses received the commandments on Mount Sinai, Jesus Christ ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives, and Prophet Mohammad passed over to Jerusalem to ascend from the Rock of al-Aqsa Mosque.

### **Mount of Olives Peaks (Sections)**

The Mount of Olives is located east of the Old City of Jerusalem and extends from north to south of the city, comprising a number of peaks over 3.5 kilometers, namely, Jabal al-Masharef (Mount Scopus, 826 meters) where al-'Isawiyya village and the Hebrew University are located, Jabal al-Tur (816 meters), which hosts a large number of churches, mosques, monuments, and hospitals like al-Maqased and al-Muttala', and Batn al-Hawa Mount (746 meters), where Ras al-'Amud and the eastern part of Silwan are. Many people do not realize that this is part of the Mount of Olives.



## **Names and their Origin**

The Mount of Olives is the most commonly used name for this mountain, due to the large number of olive trees growing on it. This name was mentioned in the Books of the Old and New Testaments and Roman sources. In Islamic heritage books, it was known as Tur Zita, or al-Tur, a word which means the high mountain, while Zita is an Aramaic word meaning 'olives.' Sometimes, parts of the mountain have other names, like al-Masharef for the northern part, al-Tur for the middle part, and al-Muttala', al-Suwaneh, and al-Hardoub for other parts.

## **Status of the Mount of Olives**

The Mount of Olives is considered an important mountain in Jerusalem, not only due to its holy status for the three Abrahamic monotheistic religions, but due to its importance in transportation routes and the fact that its history is connected to the history and events of Jerusalem. It is separated from the city by a relatively narrow ravine and it overlooks al-Aqsa Mosque. It has been part of the Holy City's daily life, and that of its religious and civil leaders and beliefs, especially as far as concepts like the day of judgment are concerned. Parts of the mountain are connected to areas around it, forming, as a whole, a group of cemeteries for various religious groups (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). The Mount of Olives is considered the eastern boundary of the city, meeting visitors arriving from the eastern Jerusalem wilderness, as was the case with most travelers arriving from the east or south. Since the Mount of Olives is only 100 meters higher than the Old City, this gave it a number of interesting and irresistible viewpoints. It also enjoyed deep interest from Arab and foreign pilgrims, travelers and historians, who concentrated on its monuments as related to their religions. Among these are Schick, Beiruti, and Vincent.

# 1. Al-Muttala' Hospital Compound (Augusta Victoria)

## Nature and Names of the Compound



Al-Muttala' Hospital compound is a public park with a beautiful group of buildings, most prominent of which is the hospital building, the German Church of Ascension, the German Archaeological Institute (Hostel), a kindergarten, and technical workshops. The site was named after Augusta Victoria, wife of German Emperor Wilhelm II, both of whom visited Jerusalem in 1898. The land, which was a religious endowment (Waqf), was assigned to them against a specific amount of money. The assignment was in the form of a long-term lease which permitted the assignee to build and own property on it with the assigner's approval.



## Location Use

The hospital cornerstone was laid in 1907. The Hostel and the Church of Ascension were built in 1910 and 1914, respectively, and the German and Turkish field leadership was stationed in the compound. With the British victory in World War I, the site became the headquarters of the British High Commissioner between 1917 and 1927. The British used the site as a military hospital

in 1939, but with the 1948 Palestinian Nakba (catastrophe), responsibility for the site was transferred to the World Lutheran Federation. This cooperated with the United Nations Works and Relief Agency (UNRWA), in 1950, to make it a hospital, which it still is. In 1996, a cancer center and an ENT (Ear, Nose, Throat) clinic were added. It is currently one of Jerusalem's prominent hospitals, providing medical services at the hands of Palestinian doctors and support teams.

## A German European Style Church

The hospital, church, and tower building are the best example of 19<sup>th</sup> century European architecture common in Jerusalem. The church was built according to the Byzantine Wilhelmanian Style after Emperor Wilhelm II. It has spectacular mosaic images representing the life and miracles of Jesus Christ. The church is 850 meters above sea level, 1300 meters above Dead Sea level, and is the highest point in Jerusalem. It has a huge tower, 45 meters high, offering a spectacular view over the city and its surroundings.

## The Hospital Building

The hospital building is characterized by its perpendicular design around a middle courtyard, surrounded by two-floor high corridors on all four sides. Among the prominent architectural features are the column capitales, sculpted by local Palestinian masons, with each crown different from the other, and a variety of human, animal and plant motifs.





## 2.Salman al-Farisi Mausoleum and Mosque



The southern part of the Rabi'a al-'Adawiyya street leads to the Salman al-Farisi Mausoleum (*maqam*) and Mosque, located in the eastern part of the cemetery of al-Tur village, close to the Russian Ascension Church tower. To arrive at the monument, one must cross the Rabi'a al-'Adawiyya street passing through al-Tur and al-

Maqased Hospital crossing, turning left (east).

### Companion Salman al-Farisi

Salman al-Farisi is an honorable Companion of Prophet Mohammad and the Companion who advised the prophet to dig a ditch during the siege around the Madina by Muhammad enemies, later the seige known as the ditch battle.. A number of historians, travelers and documents confirmed the historical importance of this site, including Nasir al-Din Muhammad ibn Khader al-Rumi, who prepared a guide for the most important Islamic sites to visit in Jerusalem in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Some historians and travelers referred to this site as the Carob Tree Mausoleum. Although there is no proof that Salman al-Farisi entered Jerusalem after converting to Islam, there are indications that he did so before converting, with four sites being related to him in Palestine, in Ashdod, the village of Burene, the village of 'Urief, and the city of al-Ramleh, in addition to this site.

The site was originally an underground cave, and the present site was built in 1910. In 1926, Mohammad 'Issa Abu al-Hawa built a mosque and a minaret, and the mosque was expanded in 1991. Al-Arba'in (40) dome is located inside al-Tur village cemetery, in close proximity to Salman al-Farisi's mausoleum. It is interesting that this dome is one of 44 mausoleums carrying this number (40), which seems to have been popular among various religions. Some people referred to it as the 'Carob of 'Ashrah,' and it most probably contained the tomb of Zahra, the Ottoman Amir Tughan's wife.



### 3. Al-Suwud (Ascension) Dome Mosque

To arrive at this station, one should return to the main road and walk a few meters to the curve, where a small, humble minaret can be seen, preceded by a few ascending steps.

Al-Su'wud referred to the ascension of Jesus Christ to heaven, which was mentioned in three books of the New Testament, without specifying a spot where the act took place. The Ascension was also mentioned in the Holy Qur'an: 'Nay, Allah raised him up unto Himself, and Allah is exalted in power and wisdom.' (al-Nisa' 158).

Christian sects celebrate this event on a Thursday in May, referred to as "(Ascension Thursday).



The Ascension Dome is a monumental site in Jerusalem, commemorating Christ's ascension to heaven after rising from the dead, according to Christian belief. During the days of persecution prior to the spread of Christianity, Christians celebrated the ascension secretly inside a cave on the Mount of Olives. The first church commemorating the Ascension was built during the Byzantine era, in 374 AD. However, nothing remains of this church at present. During the Franks era, the old round plan was replaced with an octagonal plan, surrounded by a fortified convent. During this period, religious celebrations of this occasion deepened.



#### Converting the Dome into a Mosque

After Salah al-Din (Saladin) liberated Jerusalem in 1187 AD (583 H), what remained of this dome was converted to a mosque, and remained an Islamic endowment (Waqf) until this day. The site is currently managed by the Islamic Awqaf Department and is treated like any other holy site, facilitating visits for Christian sects during religious holidays and normal days. The Department has recently restored the dome and the surrounding courtyard, and continues to maintain it.

Many Crusader architectural and ornamental elements were preserved by the restorations carried out during the Salah al-Din era, including column capitals and marble columns. A mihrab (prayer niche) was added in the southern side of the octagon. Walls that were open between columns were closed, and the pavements seem to have been maintained as well.

### **Dome's Plan**

The current dome plan is octagonal. Marble columns with capitals ornamented with flora and fauna motifs are located in each corner of the octagon. The dome is semi spherical, resting on a circular drum which rests directly on the octagon's sides. The interior is accessed through a door facing west. The interior floor is covered with small stone tiles. The location known as 'Christ's Foot' is surrounded by a long stone frame.

## 4. Al-Zawiya Al-Asa'adiyya



### Location and Founder

The Zawiyya is located on the Mount of Olives, next to the Ascension Mosque and Dome. It was established by Shaikh al-Islam, As'ad Afandi ibn Hassan al-Tabrizi, the Chief Judge of Istanbul, Military Judge and Mufti of the Ottoman Caliphate (1570 - 1625 AD / 978 - 1034 H). As'ad Afandi endowed the Zawiyya in favor of the famous Sufi, Shaikh Muhammad ibn Umar ibn Muhammad al-'Alami, who died in 1628 AD (1038 H). He had left to Damascus, then returned to Jerusalem where he stayed until his death. Many charities and work of saints (*karamat*) were attributed to him, and he was buried in Jerusalem. He was a poet, and he compiled many writings.

### Components of Al-Zawiyya

Al-Zawiyya al-As'adiyya is an architectural compound which includes an Ottoman style mosque comprising inscriptions tracing the development of



the site, and the reason and story behind building it, a mausoleum for Shaikh al-'Alami and his offspring, service facilities, and a minaret. Al-Zawiyya had endowed plots of land and old copies

of the Quran. It was a destination for travelers and visitors, and continues to be a venue for prayer five times a day. Among the conditions of the endowment are:

'Each year, the supervisor shall receive fifteen piasters, the *imam* shall receive twenty four piasters exactly, and the *mu'azzen* (caller for prayer) shall receive twelve every year. Another twelve piasters shall be paid annually to a man who will serve as a gatekeeper and servant, who undertakes to open and close the gates and provide necessary services, including sweeping the mosque and its grounds and furniture. Twelve piasters shall be paid to a man who would collect the Waqf funds, and a similar amount shall be used to purchase mats for the mosque, and for oil to light the lanterns, in good practice.'

## 5.Church of the Pater Noster

### Location and Origin

Located a few meters south of al-Zawiyya al-As'adiyah on the street to Shayyah, the Church of Pater Noster is among the prominent churches of the Mount of Olives, where Jesus Christ taught his disciples how to pray. It is also among the oldest churches of the Holy Land, like the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and the Nativity Church in Bethlehem. It was built by Emperor Constantine and Empress Helena, who concentrated on three caves: the Nativity, the Burial, and the cave where Christ taught his disciples how to pray. This church was built as a basilica, with orthogonal arcades. The remains of the church are still visible, with an adjacent monastery and the cave where Christ taught his disciples how to pray.



### Components of the Current Church

The church entrance leads to descending stairs and an open courtyard, exhibiting a basilica plan of three wings. To the east is a cave entered from the north and exited from the south, leading to a gallery and a convent ornamented with ceramic tiles, carrying prayers from the Holy Scripture in 62 languages. Walking down the portico, the visitor arrives at a modern church (1868 AD) and the tomb of Princess de la Tour d'Auvergne (1857 AD).

## 6.The Seven Arches Hotel Overlook



Leaving the Church of the Pater Noster and turning right takes the visitor to al-Shayyah and al-'Izariyya. Turning north takes the visitor to the Seven Arches Hotel (formerly the Intercontinental) where the spectacular view provides an artistic image of Jerusalem, with the Qadron Valley and Silwan in the foreground, al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock in the middle, and the domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the background.

### A Panorama of Heaven and Earth

From this viewpoint, a must for the visitor of Jerusalem, one can see the eastern wall of the mosque and the southern corner of the Jerusalem Wall, as well as parts of the village of Silwan and most of the Old City, especially Qadron Valley and the surrounding cemeteries. The holy books of various religions connect this area with the day of judgment and related events, which explains the presence of so many cemeteries in this part of Jerusalem, between the Old City and the Mount of Olives. There are narratives about Safiyya, Prophet Muhammad's wife, visiting the Mount and praying on it, quoted to have said: "Here, people are separated, on their way to heaven or hell".

## 7.The Church of Dominus Flevit (The Lord Wept)

From the overlook, walk carefully down the Mount of Olives to the Church of Dominus Flevit on the northern side, adjacent to the Jewish cemetery.



This is one of the famous churches, commemorating Christ's vision of the destruction of Jerusalem, despite its development and prosperity, and where He cried, lamenting this fate of the city. This is a small, modern church, designed by Italian architect Parluchi in 1955, in the shape of a teardrop. The visitor should be careful exiting the church, where there are new archeological excavations. Walking down the Mount of Olives leads to the Russian Church of Mary Magdalene, with its classical, onion-shaped domes. Before connecting with the old Jerusalem-Jericho road to the left, one sees the Church of Gethsemane (Church of All Nations), the next station of this trail.







## 8. Church of Gethsemane (Church of All Nations)



Complete quiet and respect should be observed inside this church, which symbolizes the tragic event of betrayal and apprehension, which Christ knew of beforehand. The church interior is intentionally darkened to accentuate the event and its significance.

### Names of the Church

The Church of Gethsemane (Church of All Nations) carries special significance because a large number of European countries participated in building it during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The word Gethsemane, which means 'an olive press,' comes from the Aramaic language. The Church represents the last few hours of Christ's life, when he sat down reflecting, realizing that He would be apprehended by the Romans.

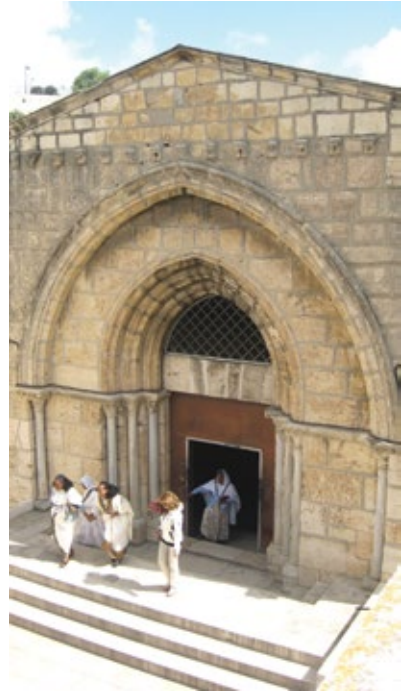
### Architectural Style

The Church is originally Byzantine, but was renovated during the times of the Franks. It was built as a basilica with mosaics covering its floors and ceiling, and was composed of shallow domes, with images depicting the European nations which participated in building it. Visitors should observe the rock at the end of the middle arcade, and the painting depicting Christ's last moments before being apprehended by the Romans.

## 9. Tomb of the Virgin Mary Church

The Tomb of the Virgin Mary Church, our next station in this trail, is located a few meters from the Gethsemane Church. A few steps descend towards an open courtyard in front of the church entrance.

The Tomb of the Virgin Mary Church is one of the old, famous churches of Jerusalem. It is believed that the tomb of Virgin Mary, the Mother of Christ, is located in the church. The origin of the church dates back to the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, but it seems to have been demolished during the Persian conquest and rebuilt later on.



### Church Plan and Tombs

The present building is attributed to the year 1130 AD, during the Franks era. It is characterized by a unique plan which reflects the limitations of the location and its topography, with the building located on the slope of the Qadron valley, which resulted in bridging the elevation with a group of wide steps leading to the church's long hall, with each side ending with an arch. The church includes the tomb of Queen Melisande, the daughter and husband of the Frankish kings of Jerusalem, located to the left after descending a few steps. Facing it is the tomb of Baldwin, the Crusader king of Jerusalem.

### Virgin Mary's Status in the Eastern Church Traditions

This church immortalizes the status of the Virgin Mary in Eastern church traditions, which exalted her, and believe that she was buried in this location after being enshrouded in the Church of Dormition on the Prophet David Mount. The Eastern tradition connects Christ's ascension with Mary's ascension after her death. The church is co-owned by the Greek Orthodox and Armenian churches, and Mary's tomb is located on the eastern side: a hollow, rocky mass, denoting Mary's ascension to heaven. One can also see an Islamic mihrab (prayer niche) close by.

## Virgin Mary's Status in Islam

Virgin Mary, mother of Christ, holds a prominent and highly respectable status in Islam. The Holy Quran includes a Surah in her name: the only one with a female's name. She is a symbol of purity. It is noteworthy that the church has a large mihrab (prayer niche) facing south, which indicates that a group of Muslims visited Virgin Mary's tomb, prayed in the church and recited supplications in her memory. Mujir al-Din, Jerusalem's historian, says that the tomb enjoys the attention of Muslim and Christian visitors alike. Nasir al-Din al-Rumi states that Virgin Mary's tomb is a popular location among Muslims.



The prominent Sufi, 'Abed alGhani al-Nabulsi, author of the famous book, '*al-hadra al-unsyiyya fi al rihla al qudsiyya*' (The entertaining presentation in the travels to Jerusalem), prayed in this mihrab in 1690 AD.

## 10. Tomb and Dome of Mujir al-Din, Jerusalem and Hebron Historian



Ascending back from the Tomb of the Virgin Mary's Church, reaching the old Jerusalem-Jericho road level, one can see a small but impressive dome, housing the tomb of Mujir al-Din, Jerusalem and Hebron historian. This is the last station of this trail.

### Who was Mujir Eddin?

Mujir al-Din 'Abed al-Rahman abu al-Yaman al-Umari al-'Alaimi was a scholar, a judge, and a historian, and the author of *al-uns al-jalili fi tahrikh al-quds wa al-khalil*, the most well-known book on the history of the city of Jerusalem and Hebron and Palestine. Born in 860 H (927 AD), he was one of the prominent dignitaries of Jerusalem towards the end of the Mamluk period and the beginning of the Ottoman era.

### The Dome Date

The dome was built in 1927 by the Supreme Islamic Council. The tomb is a long structure with a small dome open from all four sides, resting on four marble columns supporting the arches holding the dome. Some scholars believe that the tomb was built east of Bab al-Rahma cemetery. During excavation works to widen the road to Ras al-'Amud, the tomb was discovered and moved to its present location. Other scholars believe that Mujir al-Din was buried in Mamillah (Ma'man Allah) cemetery.

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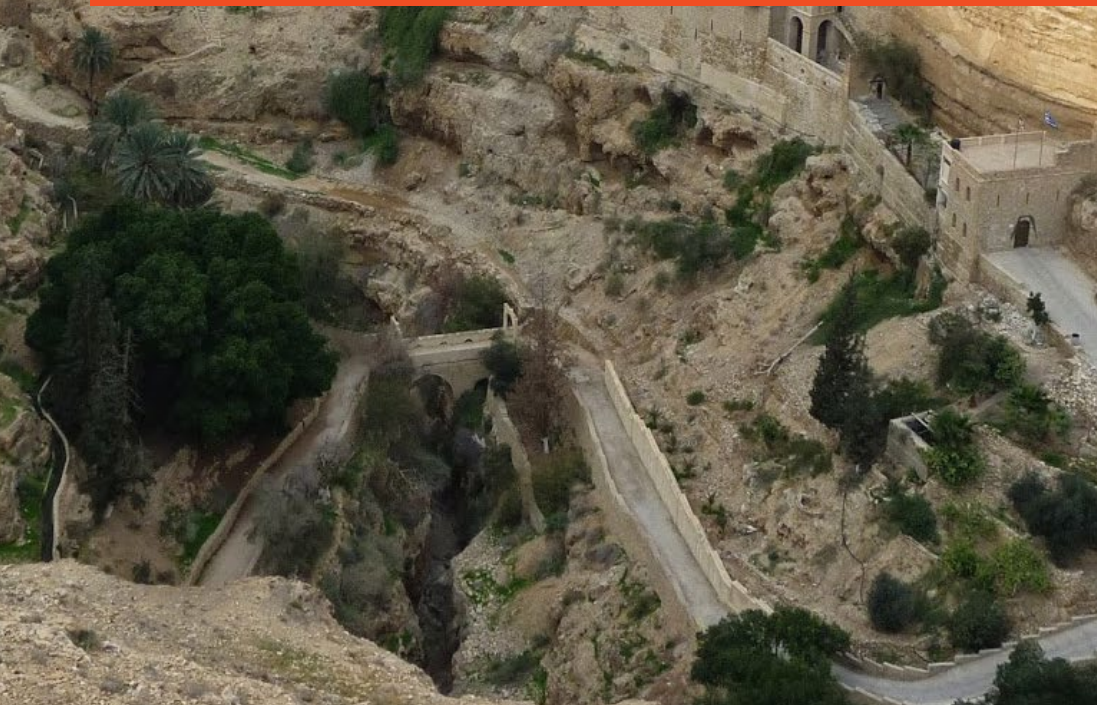
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# 10. Jerusalem Wilderness



## Trail's Nature and Stations

This trail extends eastward outside the boundaries of the Old City of Jerusalem and requires private transport, although some of its stations can be accessed by public transport. Relying on public transport, however, is not a practical choice, because it takes longer and would still require some long walks.

Depending on the visitor's wish, this trail could take hours or even a whole day, especially if a visit to the city of Jericho and sites in its vicinity is included in the itinerary, such as the Qruntul Monastery (Mount of the Temptation), Deir Hijla Monastery, and Qumran archaeological site. The stations of this trail are in Jerusalem's wilderness (desert) and its natural and religious sites.

### The trail's stations include:

Jerusalem Wilderness Viewpoint  
(Overlook)

Al-'Uzair (Lazarus) Mosque

Wadi al-Qilt

Desert Monasticism - Wadi Al-Qilt

Prophet Moses Mausoleum (*maqam*)



## Introduction

### Climatic Regions of Palestine

Despite its small area (27,000 square kilometers), Palestine has a wealth of geographical and geological variety, comprising a sea, coastal plateaus, mountains, rift valley, and desert. It is noteworthy that this variety can be felt within a relatively short distance, with a large differential in temperature, flora, and fauna. Travelling from mountain tops to the coast or the desert, for example, takes a short period of time, and the best example is traveling from the Mount of Olives to Jericho or the Jerusalem wilderness, a trip of barely a few minutes by car but with dramatic differences in topography and temperature.

The Jerusalem wilderness extends over 80 kilometers in length and 20 kilometers in width. This trail will cover a small portion of this area, starting with a general view of the Jerusalem wilderness and ending in the Prophet Moses mausoleum (*maqam*).

### The Desert in the Scriptures

Monotheistic religions have a strong affiliation with the desert, whose serenity, vastness and purity help in solitude and meditation. In addition to the meager resources of the desert, these qualities attracted monastics and worshippers and deepened their values of Sufism, striving (*mujahada*), and complete dedication to worship. As a result, retreats, hermitages, mausoleums, monasteries, and churches were established throughout the land, starting at the time of the Byzantine conquest and continuing until modern times.

# 1.The Mount of Olives Jerusalem Wilderness Viewpoint



Bus 75 from Bab al-'Amud Bus Terminal in Sultan Suleiman Street makes a stop at the viewpoint. If driving, head east to the Mount of Olives through the al-Tour ascent to al-Muttal'h Hospital (Augusta Victoria), where the viewpoint is located a few meters north. Alternatively, take the Wadi al-Joz Street towards the Hebrew University Tunnel. Exit right before the tunnel and drive up to the viewpoint.

## Mount of Olives Viewpoints

The Mount of Olives has a number of breathtaking viewpoints extending along it, most of which

overlook the Old City and parts of Jerusalem outside the Wall to the west. These viewpoints have become major tourism spots for visitors and residents alike, who wish to observe the details of the Old City or take a general look at the region's topography and the connections among its various geographical components. Among the viewpoints which deserve a stop is the Jerusalem Wilderness and Rift Valley viewpoint, to the east of Rabi'a al-'Adawiyya Street, 50 meters north of al-Muttal' Hospital entrance, just before the southeastern entrance to the Hebrew University, and close to the Egged Bus line stop.

## Magic and Melancholy of the Scene

This viewpoint overlooks the Jordan Rift Valley, part of the Asian African Rift Valley. It is actually a link between two mountain peaks: al-Tur and Mount Scopus. It affords the opportunity to view the Jerusalem wilderness as well as the eastern municipalities of Jerusalem, such as al-'Issawiyya, al-Zi'ayim, and al-'Azariyya. It also provides a clear view of the Separation Wall, snaking around and boxing-in Arab villages in East Jerusalem, and reveals the extensive areas of settlements like Ma'aleh Adomim, Mishor Adomim and others.

## Flora of the Mount of Olives

The change in the vegetation and flora of the Mount of Olives between its eastern and western slopes, due to the different rainfall levels, is noteworthy. The western slopes receive between 300 and 480 millimeters of rain annually, while the eastern slopes, seen from this Viewpoint, receive between 250 and 300 millimeters. Hence, olive trees grow extensively on the western slopes, giving the mountain its name, while desert plants abound on the eastern slopes. On a clear day, one can see some of the features of Amman and the city of Salt mountains. The viewpoint also provides spectacular sunrise scenes, while the Seven Arches viewpoint provides spectacular sunset views over the Old City.

## 2. Al-'Uzair (Lazarus) Mosque



The next station in this trail is a-'Uzair Mosque and al-'Azariyya (Bethany) Church. For those using public transport, return to the Bab al-'Amud Bus Station and take the bus to al-'Azariyya. For those using private transport, drive to the Jerusalem - Jericho road, through the Wadi al-Joz tunnel, and follow the Route 417 signs to Ma'ale Adomim and on to the center of al-'Azariyya. The Mosque can be visited during the day outside noon and afternoon prayers. A small fee of one dollar is paid to the curator to visit the cave.

Al-'Uzair Mosque is located in the center of al-'Azariyya town, which extends over the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives on the road from

Jerusalem to Jericho. This road was built during the Roman era and used until the Separation Wall was built. Al-'Azariyya was the last stop before entering the city of Jerusalem during the Roman and Medieval eras.

## **Al-'Azariyya (Bethany) and the Gospels**

The town played the same role during Christ's era, when he used to visit Jerusalem arriving from the Galilee. He used to be welcomed in al-'Azariyya, in the home of Maria and Martha and their brother Lazarus. According to the Gospels, He performed the miracle of resurrecting the dead Lazarus from his grave after his death. Historical anecdotes and architectural evidence indicate that two churches were built in this location; the first was demolished by an earthquake in 390 AD and the second was built in the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, as well as a monastery for Benedictine nuns during the Byzantine era. It is likely that parts of these buildings were renovated and used during the Franks era.

## **Al-'Uzair (Lazarus) Mosque**

After the Franks were driven out by Salad al-Din in the battle of Hittin in 1187 AD (583H), these buildings suffered from neglect and dilapidation. However, since Muslims believe in Jesus Christ as a messenger of God, as well as the miracle of resurrecting Lazarus from the dead, as it is narrated in the Holy Quran, Muslims gave special attention to the site and built a

mosque after al-'Uzair (Lazarus), naturally using some architectural remains from the site. Hence, the site comprises a mosque, a church, and a grotto.

## **Mosque Components**

The external, humble mosque gate opens to a number of steps leading to the mosque's open courtyard, whose level is much lower than the street. The courtyard is rectangular, surrounded by stone walls going back to different eras, as is evident from the masonry work, sizes and shapes. Its southern wall houses a simple stone prayer niche. The prayer area is accessed by a rectangular door with Ottoman engraving inscription above it. The prayer area is also rectangular and its floor is covered with rugs. Its ceiling is a barrel vault supported by a large stone pier immediately after the entrance. On the eastern part of the praying area is a rectangular tomb in Ottoman style, said to be the tomb of Lazarus. On the southern wall is a niche covered with Ottoman-style ceramic tiles, bearing various decorations. At the southern end of the praying area is an elongated niche, currently closed, but that used to lead to Lazarus' tomb in the past. The tomb is currently accessed directly from the main road to the west of the mosque entrance.

## The Church and the Grotto



The church location can be visited and architectural remains from the Byzantine and Franks era can be seen, included a traditional olive oil press showing how oil was pressed in the past, with ornamental and architectural elements in the church and its facilities. If one wishes to visit the grotto, utmost care must be



taken because the steps are slippery and smooth and the route is dark and narrow, often lit by candles.

## 3.Wadi al-Qilt, Jericho Valley



The next station of this trail is Wadi al-Qilt, accessed from the Jerusalem - Jericho road (Route No. 1). Follow the signs, and after driving about 6 kilometers after Mishor Adumim, turn left at the Mitzpe Jericho sign. The valley can also be approached from Jericho. In the past, the road was open in both directions, but at present, the road is open until the entrance of St. George Monastery (Dair Wadi al-Qilt.)

Wadi al-Qilt has numerous viewpoints with spectacular views of purity and simplicity, representing the desert environment, although the Wadi, located in the heart of the Jerusalem eastern mountains, is a mere few kilometers from civilization. The first viewpoint is located directly after exiting Route 1. After driving for one kilometer passing Mishor Adumim Junction (Abu George Road), an old caravanserai building (The Good Samaritan) can be seen. keep going on the road no 1, and turn left Mitzpe Jericho sign, the

visitor comes to a T-junction, where one can ascend the hill and see the valley and its surroundings, or head right (east) and continue down the narrow, steep-elevated, paved road to its end at the entrance to Wadi al-Qilt Monastery and a circular parking area. The vehicle must be left here, after making sure that no personal belongings are visible inside it and that it is securely locked. Walk down the footpath to visit the Monastery or stop for a spectacular view from a viewpoint overlooking it and the Wadi. At the beginning of the footpath, one can see the remains of an underground water cistern, from which the monks used to provide water to passers-by and pilgrims.

Wadi al-Qilt is one of the western tributaries of the River Jordan, conveying rain and spring water from the eastern slopes of the Jerusalem and al-Bire hills. The valley extends for 35 kilometers from beginning to end where it joins the Jericho valley. It has a steep elevation resulting from powerful erosion forces. Rocks of this valley are from the Paleocene age, composed of shale and calcium as well as flint layers, all dating back to the 4<sup>th</sup> geological period.

It is noteworthy that this valley crosses the Syrian African rift valley at the foothills of Jerusalem. It offers spectacular geological formations and rich natural scenes, covered with numerous flora and fauna, and a number of natural springs (Ein Fara, Ein al-Fawwar), which recharge in winter from the rainfall on the Jerusalem mountains, especially those east of the water division line.

Streams and waterfalls run during winter and spring, and sometimes extend into early summer.

A stream runs in the valley throughout the year, carried by a canal originally built by King Herod (37-4 BC) but renovated a number of times, most recently during the British mandate. A bridge dates back to Roman times and was also renovated and maintained during the Byzantine, Umayyad, and later periods. A number of viewpoints on the surrounding hilltops give a good idea of the historical and natural scenery of the Holy Land and the Jerusalem mountains.

### **Wadi al-Qilt Trails**

The Wadi has a number of hiking trails, most of which follow the old Roman route. The most scenic part starts 16 kilometers from the city of Jerusalem after al-Khan al-Ahmar (the Red Caravanserai, the Good Samaritan)), branching from the Jerusalem Jericho road eastward and flanking the valley until it reaches the Jericho plateau (currently closed in the middle) at the city's southern entrance, where the Winter Palaces of King Herod are located (Tloul abu al-'Alayeq). Among the main features of the valley is Dair Wadi al-Qilt, or the Monastery of St. George, built during the Byzantine times. The valley has spectacular scenes and unique geological formations and is surrounded by a number of caves, some of which were used by monastic monks during the Byzantine period.

## 4. Desert Priesthood / St. George (Coziba) Monastery

### The Most Famous Monastery in the Jerusalem Wilderness

During the Byzantine period, a phenomenon spread among the religious community, namely, a group of monastic monks leaving cities to lead secluded lives in remote areas of the Jerusalem desert. The movement started in Egyptian rural areas and spread and deepened into Palestine, where archaeological excavations revealed about 80 locations in the Jerusalem desert, an area 80 by 20 kilometers in size. This phenomenon attracted academic and archaeological studies and became dissertation themes for MSc and PhD degrees. The locations where

monasticism and seclusion prospered included Dair Mar Saba Monastery, near the village of al-'Ubaydiyya near Bethlehem, Dair Wadi al-Qilt (St. George - Coziba) along the Jerusalem-Jericho road, Dair Hijla near the Baptism site along the River Jordan, and Dair Qruntul (Temptation) in Jericho.

### Desert Monasticism Pioneers

Three people left their footprints in the monastic movement in the Jerusalem desert. The first is Monk Chariton, who established the first Laura (group of monastic cells or caves) around 330 AD, the second is Euthymius (376 - 473 AD), who attracted thousands of conscripts in this practice, and the third is Saba (439 - 532 AD), the great organizer of this phenomenon.

### Monastic Styles

Two styles dominated monasticism. The first is known as Coenobium, whereby a group of monks live in a

monastery in a cooperative manner, with each performing a specific activity in addition to his main mission of worship, meditation, prayer, and reading. There was normally group and individual prayer, but food and social activities were common and cooperative. This practice required a location with a wall surrounding various facilities, mainly a church, a meeting and food hall, a close source of water, a small vegetable garden, and small units for seclusion.

The second style is known as Laura, comprising a secluded life for a group of monks within a specific periphery, with each monk living alone in a cave or a secluded enclave, eating and praying alone for five days of the week, meeting with his colleagues on Saturday and Sunday for group prayers and worship, then taking supplies and returning to his seclusion.

Regardless of the group or individual lifestyles of these monks, their lives were characterized by absolute simplicity and frugality in their behavior and food. Their basic nutrition came from bread and what they could scrounge from their harsh environment, in terms of fruits and plants, some of which they dried. They sometimes had simple economic activities, such as reclaiming cultivable land, but wheat was normally imported from Jordan for the large monasteries. They also performed activities such as weaving baskets and ropes to barter with city dwellers or population concentrations in their vicinity. This monastic life in seclusion, away from the buzz of large cities, afforded some monks the

time to polish their talents in poetry, literature, and theology, enriching the cultural life of the Christian faith.

## **Wadi al-Qilt Monastery Entry and Reception**

Visitors who can make the steep trip up to the monastery on foot are welcome. The hike is gratifying, with the trail snaking by the water canal among some trees and vegetation. The monastery is open for visitors, both male and female, in the morning and afternoon. Visitors are met with a cold water drink and coffee, after the tiring hike by the Roman canal.

The monastery comprises a cave associated with the Prophet Elijah, which can be accessed by a staircase from the internal hall. Some myths have it that the prophet lived in this cave for three years. The monastery also includes a church, named after the Virgin Mary, a number of skulls belonging to monks who died during the Persian invasion, and a tomb said to be of St. George, after whom the monastery was named.





## 5. Prophet Moses (Nabi Mousa) Mausoleum (*maqam*) and Compound (1367/70 - 1948) / (668 - 1269)

After visiting Wadi al-Qilt and the Monastery, return to the Jerusalem - Jericho road, at the Jericho sign, and head for Jericho. Six kilometers down the road, follow the signs to Nabi Mousa Mausoleum, east of Jerusalem.

The Mausoleum is located south of Jericho in a remote desert area with sparse vegetation, amid sand dunes, overlooking the Dead Sea. A number of motives were behind building the Mausoleum, most important of

which was honoring Moses as one of the prophets mentioned in the Holy Quran, and because Muslims believe that their faith completes previous faiths (Christianity and Judaism), according to the Quranic verse: "The Messenger believeth in what hath been revealed to Him from His Lord, as do the men of faith; each one of them believeth in Allah, His angels, His books, and His messengers. We make no distinction, they say, between one and another of His messengers, and they say, we hear and we obey: We seek Thy forgiveness, our Lord, and to Thee is the end of all journeys". (al-Baqarah: 285). Building the Mausoleum in that area and in this size may be explained as a response to the desire to strike a balance with the group of monasteries established in the area since the Byzantine era.

### Sponsors and Architecture

In spite of historical references indicating that the Prophet Moses festival started in the Ayyubid era, no architectural remains are attributed to that. The oldest



## Mausoleum's Architectural Components

Architecturally, Nabi Mousa Mausoleum is considered the largest religious complex in Palestine after al-Masjid al-Aqsa, covering an area of about 5000 square meters and surrounded by a wall/fence. The compound comprises three floors and is entered through a door on the southern side, into a vestibule leading to an open central courtyard, with the five-bay mosque, Mausoleum, and water wells located in the middle. The courtyard is surrounded by over one hundred rooms and halls of different shapes and sizes. The compound also includes a stable in its basement, as well as corridors, storage, two bakeries, and two kitchens on the ground floor.

The compound has a minaret of medium height, but due to the topography of the area, it provides a spectacular view of the Jordanian mountain ranges. A large clearing to the south is used for shows and various activities during the festival period and as a parking space during normal days. To the east is a cemetery which is still used to bury those who feel blessed by the Mausoleum.

In addition to specific festival days when the place is very crowded, the compound attracts a number of local visitors and groups of Indian, Malaysian, and different regions from southeast Asia, as well as some Europeans, year round.

available indications relate to the Mamluk Sultan Baybars era, who ordered the Mausoleum to be built in 1269 - 1270 AD (668 H). Baybars is one of the establishers of the Mamluk state. He was a fighter and a firm administrator, and had architectural activities in Jerusalem, Palestine, and other areas of the Mamluk state, especially Cairo. Maintenance, renovation, and additions work at the Mausoleum never stopped between Baybars' efforts and the British Mandate period (1917 - 1948), especially during the Ottoman period, by some people whose names were documented, but mostly by others who preferred to remain anonymous out of humility. Among those during the Ottoman period whose names we know are: Afaendi Husam al-Din (who was most likely the financier and the supervisor) in 1604 AD (1013 H), Shaikh Mohammad al-Khalili around 1726 AD (1139 H), and the Mufti of Jerusalem, Muhammad Taher al-Husseini in 1885 AD (1303 H).

## Festivals of the Mausoleum

Nabi Mousa had, and continues to have, one of the greatest and most famous festivals in Palestine. The festivities start on the Friday preceding the Greek Orthodox Good Friday, roughly between April 22 and 25, and continue for a period of one week. They can be summarized, as documented towards the end of the last century, as follows:

### The Procession

The Festival started with residents of Jerusalem and curators of the Nabi Mousa Mausoleum congregating in al-Aqsa Mosque courtyard, then heading towards Jericho through Ras al-Amoud, passing through Via Dolorosa and Bab al-Asbat (St. Stephen Gate). City dwellers, especially those of Nablus and Hebron, and Jerusalem residents followed them in a procession with flags and banners, ornamented with Quranic verses and inscriptions depicting the names of the Righteous Caliphs and leaders of Sufism. *dabka* and *zaffa* (Palestinian wedding dances) troupes accompanied the procession, and people came by car and on horseback to the site. When the procession, especially numerous Sufi groups, arrived at the site, enthusiasm reached high levels, the tempo of drum beats accelerated, and special dances with sticks were performed as well as jousting with swords in perfect moves, accompanied by women eulogizing and spectators showing their appreciation.

Entering the Mausoleum, prayers, supplications, religious seminars, and recitation of the Quran were performed. People who attended were in the thousands, and tents had to be pitched around the compound, with new arrivals replacing departing ones. The festival was also a golden opportunity to fulfill promises, carry out circumcisions, and cut children's hair for the first time. Free food was distributed to as many attendees as possible from the Mausoleum's funds, as allocated for visitors. There was an abundance of services and food, to the extent that a special Halawa (candy) was developed for the occasion and named after the Mausoleum.

Celebrations continued for a whole week, until people started returning home on Thursday with the Three Banners' Procession (Nabi Mousa, Nabi Daoud, and al-Aqsa Mosque banners). When the procession reached al-Aqsa Mosque, the banners were placed there in preparation for the next season.

### Conclusion

After visiting Nabi Mousa Mausoleum, one can visit the city of Jericho and its special attractions, including the archaeological site of Tel al-Sultan, the palace of Hisham ibn 'Abedal- Malik, Qumran archaeological site, and other monasteries such as Dair Hijla and Dair Qruntul.

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## Glossary of Terms

*ablaq*: Stone courses of different hues, especially red and white, combined in the construction of facades, arches, and thresholds.

*arabesque*: Arab art of decorative patterns, common in Islamic ages, whose elements are basically geometrical or stylized plants units.

*riwaqs* : A regular series of bays, open from three sides, and covered by cross vaults resting on a series of piers on one side and a wall on the other.

*iwān*: A large vaulted square or rectangular hall, closed from three sides, with the fourth left open, often with an arch.

*balata* (Bay) ): A square space which is not surrounded by walls, with a cross-vaulted ceiling, usually forming part of a porticoe inside a mosque.

*turba*: A structure housing a tomb, usually covered by a dome.

*khan* (Caravanserai): A building dedicated for the stay of traders, their goods and animals, inside or outside cities.

*khalwa* (Monastic cell): A small room with or without a small window, where a Sufi seeks solitude.

*dirka*: Distributor vestibule immediately after the entrance.

*du'ama* (pier): Cubicle stone square or rectangular supports arches and vaults.

*ribat*: Architectural structure, originally built along the borders, and later inside cities to shelter Sufis and the poor. In Jerusalem, it was also used to house visitors.

*sabil* (fountain): An architectural unit dedicated to providing free drinking or ablution water for the purpose of gaining reward .

*saraya*: A palace or headquarters of the Ottoman ruler.

*saqqata* (Machicolation): Horizontal opening above gates and wall towers, which allows dropping boiling oil and other material to hinder an attack.

*shurafat*: Architectural decorative elements at the end of walls and towers, in various shapes and sizes.

*sinaj*: A group of tightly connected stones intertwined to form an arch or lintel.

*maqam* (Mausoleum) (): A tomb usually covered with a dome, sometimes part of an architectural complex, usually without corpse

*'atab* A single or multiple stone slab located above windows or doors.

*'aqaba*: Short street.

*qamariyya*: A circular window that does not open, filled with gypsum tracery and stained glass in the background.

*mujawir*: Anyone who left his place of residence and moved to one of the three holy Islamic cities (Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem), or a poor person staying at a Zawiyah or a Ribat.

Architectural complex: A group of buildings located in close proximity to each other, forming a unit and serving different purposes.

*mihrab* (Prayer niche): A hollow arch in a wall pointing to the Qiblah, indicating the direction of Mecca.

*mazaghel* ( Arrow slips): Narrow vertical openings for surveillance and defense.

*masjid* (Place of kneeling to worship): Building where Muslims perform their prayers and rituals.

*mastaba*: Stone elevated step used for seating, especially in front of shops and in schools.

*musaba'at*: Metal designs placed in window sills for protection.

*muqarnasat*: Decorative stalactite designs fashioned from stone or wood in the shape of arches or small domes.

*waqf* (Religious endowment): Allocation of tangible or real estate income for servicing charitable objectives, according to specific conditions.

*waqfiyya*: A document registered at or issued by the Shari'a Court stipulating the goals, conditions, and incentives for a specific religious endowment.

## Chronological Sequence of Main Events

638 AD (15 H): The Arabs conquer Jerusalem and the Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab arrives and issues the Umariyya Pact.

654 - 55 AD (34 H): The Prophet Muhammad's Companion Ubada ibn al-Samet dies in Jerusalem and is buried there.

660 - 61AD (40 H): Mu'awiyya ibn abi Sufian pledges allegiance to the Caliphate in Jerusalem.

670 AD (50 H): Archbishop Arcoluf from the Gallic region of France visits Jerusalem.

677 - 78 AD (58 H): The Prophet Muhammad's Companion Shaddad ibn Aws dies in Jerusalem and is buried there.

685 AD (65 H): Caliph 'Abed al Malik ibn Marwan pledges allegiance to the Caliphate in Jerusalem.

687 - 88 AD (68 H): Caliph 'Abed al Malik Ibn Marwan embarks on a large project to maintain al-Aqsa Mosque.

691 - 92 AD (72 H): The Dome of the Rock construction is completed.

747 - 48 AD (130 H): An earthquake hits Jerusalem, damaging al-Aqsa Mosque and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

757 - 58 AD (140 H): The Abbasid Caliph Abu Ja'afar al-Mansour visits Jerusalem.

771 AD (154 H): An earthquake hits Jerusalem.

771 AD (154 H): The Abbasid Caliph Abu Ja'far Al-Mansour visits Jerusalem for the second time and orders the construction of al-Aqsa Mosque.

775 AD (158 H): Another earthquake damages al-Aqsa Mosque.

779 - 80 AD (163 H): The Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdi visits Jerusalem and orders the renovation of al-Aqsa Mosque.

831 - 32 AD (216 H): The Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'moun maintains the Dome of the Rock.

832 - 33 AD (217 H): The Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'moun mints a copper currency in Jerusalem in celebration of the maintenance of the Dome of the Rock.

868 - 69 AD (255 H): Death of Muhammad in Karram al-Sajri, head of al-Karaamiyya order in Jerusalem, and his burial there.

908 - 09 AD (296 H): Issa ibn Mousa al-Noushari, first Abbasid governor of Jerusalem after ending the rule of the Tulunid state, is buried in Jerusalem.

913 AD (301 H): Mother of al-Muqtadir Billah, the Abbasid Caliph, orders that doors be built for the Dome of the Rock.

938 AD (326 H): A fire causes damage to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

942 - 43 AD (331 H): Takin ibn Abed al-Ah, the Abbasid governor of Egypt, is buried in Jerusalem.

945 - 46 AD (334 H): Muhammad al-Ikhshid, founder of the Ikhshidiyya state, is buried in Jerusalem.

946 - 47 AD (335 H): Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Mukadisi al-Bashshari, the famous geographer and author of *ahsan al-taqasim fi ma'rifat al-aqalim* ' is born in Jerusalem.

953 - 54 AD (342 H): Al-Hasan ibn Tughj, brother of Muhammad al-Ikhshid, is buried in Jerusalem.

960 - 61 AD (349 H): Anujour al-Ikhshidi, ruler of Egypt is buried in Jerusalem.

961 - 62 AD (350 H): Kafour, the Ikhshidi minister, orders the construction of al-Aqsa Mosque (Eastern wall).

965 - 66 AD (355 H): Ali ibn al-Ikhshid, ruler of Egypt, is buried in Jerusalem.

965 - 66 AD (355 H): Muhammad al-Sinhaji, the Moroccan ruler of Jerusalem, commits an act of aggression against the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

990 - 91 AD (380 H): Death of the famous geographer Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Muqadisi.

1009 AD (400 H): The Fatimid Caliph, al-Hakem bi Amrallah, orders the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

1016 AD (407 H): An earthquake damages the Dome of the Rock and some walls



of al-Aqsa Mosque.

1017 - 18 AD (408 H): The Fatimid Caliph al-Hakem orders the rebuilding of the Dome of the Rock.

1019 - 20 AD (410 H) : Al-Hakem permits the rebuilding of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

1207 AD (418 H): The Fatimid Caliph al-Zahir renovates the Dome of the Rock.

1033 AD (424 H): The Fatimids strengthen the walls of Jerusalem.

1033 AD (425 H): An earthquake severely damages al-Ramla and al-Aqsa Mosque.

1047 AD (438 H): The Persian traveler Nasiri Khasru visits Jerusalem and writes about it in his book: *sifarnama*.

1048 AD (439 - 40 H): Italian traders establish a hospital in Jerusalem, managed and served by the St. John Brotherhood.

1054 AD (445 - 46 H): The Patriarch of Jerusalem severs relations with Rome, after a rift in the Christian Church.

1054 - 63 AD (456 H): The Fatimid Caliph, al-Mustanser Billah, renovates the walls of Jerusalem.

1065 AD (457 H): 12,000 German and Dutch pilgrims perform a group pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

1068 AD (460 H): Shaikh Nsr al-Maqdisi establishes a school in Jerusalem.

1068 AD (460 H): A severe earthquake hits Palestine, especially al-Ramla and Jerusalem, causing cracks in the Dome of the Rock.

1072 - 73 AD (465 H): The Turkumans, led by Atas ibn Awaq al-Khawarizmi, take over Jerusalem and expel the Fatimids.

1093 AD (486 H): Abu Bakr ibn al-Arabi al-Andalusi visits Jerusalem and stays for over three years.

1095 AD (489 H): Imam Abu Hamed al-Ghazali visits Jerusalem, goes into seclusion, and writes in al-Aqsa Mosque.

1096 AD (490 H): The famous scientist Nsr al-Maqdisi dies in Damascus and is given a huge funeral.

1098 AD (491 H): The Fatimids, led by al-Afdal ibn Badr al-Jamali, reclaim Jerusalem.

June 1099 (492 Rajab): The Franks lay siege to Jerusalem.

15 September, 1099 (29 Sha'ban, 492): The Franks enter Jerusalem, storm al-Aqsa Mosque, and kill 70,000 people.

1120 AD (513 - 14 H): The Franks turn al-Jami' al-Aqsa Mosque into a church and their headquarters.

1141 AD (535 - 36 H): The Franks dedicate the Dome of the Rock as 'Temple Domino'.

4 September 1187 (25 Rabei' al-Thani, 583): Battle of Hittin, and Salah al-Din returns Jerusalem to Islam.

1192 AD (588 H): Salah al-Din declares the Salahiyya School, among other sites, a religious endowment.

1219 AD (616 H): The Ayyubid Sultan al-Mu'zaam 'Isa ibn al-'Adel demolishes the walls of Jerusalem so it does not fall in the hands of the Franks.

1299 AD (626 H): The Ayyubid Sultan al-Kamel ibn al-'Adel hands Jerusalem over to the Franks, with the exception of al-Aqsa Mosque.

1244 AD (642 H): Sultan al-Saleh Najm al-Din Ayyub and al-Khawarizmiyya reclaim Jerusalem from the Franks (Hittin II).

1260 AD (658 H): The Moghuls occupy Jerusalem without destroying it.

1260 AD (658 H): The Mamluks defeat the Moghuls in the battle of 'Ain Jalout in Palestine.

1291 AD (690 H): The Mamluk Sultan, al-Ashraf Khalil ibn Qalawun, reclaims Acre, the last Frank' stronghold.

1305 AD (705 H): Sultan al-Naser Muhammad ibn Qalwun orders the return of Dair al-Musallaba (the Monastery of the Cross) to al-Karg(the Georgian).

1537 - 41 AD (944 - 47 H): The Jerusalem Wall is built during the Ottoman era.

1545 - 46 AD (952 H): The Dome's base is covered with ceramic tiles instead of mosaics.

1551 - 52 AD (959 H): The Dome's octagonal structure is covered with ceramic tiles instead of mosaics.

1689 AD (1101 H): Traveler and sufi 'Abed al-Ghani al-Nabulsi visits Jerusalem.

1817 - 18 AD (1233 H): Comprehensive renovations of al-Aqsa Mosque by Ottoman Sultan Mahmoud II.

1838 AD (1253 - 54 H): A British Consulate, the first European consulate, is opened in Jerusalem.

1863 AD (1279 - 80 H): First municipal council is established in Jerusalem.

1864 AD (1280 - 81 H): Telegraph service is introduced in Jerusalem.

1867 AD (1283 - 84 H): Roads are opened for vehicles.

1886 AD (1302 - 04 H): City police is established.

1892 AD (1309 - 10 H): Al-Hijaz Railroad is established.

1892 AD (1309 - 10 H): Establishment of a public park in Jerusalem.

1901 AD (1318 - 19 H): Establishment of a museum and a theater.

9 October 1917 (24 Safar 1336): British General Allenby occupies Jerusalem and begins the British Mandate over Palestine.

1921 AD (1340 H): Establishment of the Supreme Islamic Shari'a Council, with its offices in al-Aqsa Mosque.

1924 AD (1342 H): Comprehensive renovations in al-Aqsa Mosque by the Islamic Council.

1927 AD (1346 H): An earthquake hits Jerusalem, causing damage to its buildings.

1928 AD (1347 H): The Islamic Council celebrates rebuilding damaged buildings from the earthquake.

August 1929 (Safar 1347 - Rabei' Awwal 1348H): Al-Buraq revolution spreads.

19 June 1930 (23 Muharram 1349H): The League of Nations' Committee arrives in Jerusalem to investigate the incidents of al-Buraq revolution.

1956 - 1964 AD (1375 - 1384 H): Comprehensive Hashemite renovation of the Dome of the Rock, replacing lead plates with aluminum ones.

7 June 1967 (29 Safar 1387): Jerusalem occupation by Israeli forces.

9 June 1967 (2 Rabei' Awwal 1387): For the first time since Salah al-Din Al-Ayyubi (1187 AD, 583 H), Friday prayers are not held in al-Aqsa Mosque.

11 June 1967 (6 Rabei' Awwal 1387): Israeli forces start demolishing al-Maghariba Quarter.

17 June 1967 (10 Rabei' Awwal 1387): Israeli forces confiscate the key to Bab al-Maghariba to al-Aqsa Mosque.

15 July 1967 (8 Rabei' Thani 1387): Al-Tinkaziyya School, adjacent to al-Aqsa Mosque, is sequestered and turned into headquarters of the Israeli Border Police.

1968 AD (1387 - 88 H): The Israeli Ministry of Religions secretly starts to dig a tunnel under the western wall of al-Aqsa Mosque.

21 August 1969 (2 Jumada al-Thani 1389 H): Michael Dennis Rohan burns al-Aqsa Mosque.

11 April 1982 (17 Jumada Al-Thani 1401): Extremist Israeli soldier Alan Goodman fires at the Dome of the Rock, killing one guard and injuring dozens.

3 September 1982 (15 Zhul-Qi'dah 1402): Yehuda Meir Gates, Rabbi of the Western Wall, attempts to storm al-Aqsa through the Sabil Qaytbay (drinking and ablution fountain) well.

8 October 1990 (19 Rabei' Awwal 1411): Temple Mount Trustees Group members try to establish a cornerstone. Clashes follow and 17 Palestinians are killed.

26 September 1996 (14 Jumada Al-Oula 1417): The Tunnel Intifada (uprising), resulting in the death of 72 people.

28 September 2000 (29 Jumada Al-Thani 1421): Ariel Sharon visits al-Aqsa Mosque compound under heavy protection, resulting in violent clashes with Muslim worshippers and the start of the second Intifada (uprising).

2004 AD (1424 - 25 H): Collapse of the al-Magharibah Quarter ascent entrance leading to al-Aqsa Mosque, after the street's foundations were weakened.

6 February 2007 (19 Muharram 1428 H): Israeli authorities start to excavate the remains of the Maghariba Quarter Ascent , replacing it with a steel bridge. The project meets with local, Arab, and Islamic protests, resulting in freezing it.

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