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Am I Not a Human?

The Suffering of **Jerusalem and the Holy Sites** *under the Israeli Occupation*



Translated by
Salma al-Houry

By
Dr. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh



Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations



Al-Quds International Institution (QII)

Am I not a Human?

(7)

Book series discussing
the sufferance of the
Palestinian people
under the Israeli
occupation

The Suffering of Jerusalem and the Holy Sites under the Israeli Occupation

By
Dr. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh

Research Assistant
Fatima 'Itani

English Version

Translated by
Salma al-Houry

Edited by
Dr. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh
Rana Sa'adah



Al-Zaytouna Centre
For Studies & Consultations



Al-Quds International Institution (QII)
www.alquds-online.org

Prepared by: Dr. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh

English Version:

Edited by: Dr. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh & Rana Sa'adah

Translated by: Salma al-Houry

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Al-Zaytouna Centre for
Studies & Consultations

P.O.Box: 14-5034, Beirut, Lebanon

Tel: + 961 1 803 644

Tel-fax: + 961 1 803 643

Email: info@alzaytouna.net

Website: www.alzaytouna.net

Al-Quds International Institution (QII)

Beirut, Lebanon

Tel: + 961 1 751 725

Fax: + 961 1 751 726

Website: www.alquds-online.org

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Designed by:

Marwa Ghalayini

Printed by:

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Introduction

Jerusalem... Bayt al-Maqdis... Yabus... Dar al-Salam... Ur-Salem... it is a city that captivates you with its splendor, grandeur, and honorable history...; the heart of the sacred blessed land..., the land of the prophets, the bosom that holds *al-Aqsa* Mosque, the first of the two *qiblahs* (the direction to which Muslims turn in prayer), the second mosque ever built and the third mosque in status (next to the mosques in Mecca and Medina), the land of the *Isra'* (Prophet Muhammad's nocturnal journey from Mecca to Jerusalem)... earth's gate to the heavens, the love of the believers' hearts, and the center of attraction, holiness and inspiration for the followers of divine religions.

Its peace, stability and prosperity are an indication of the health, invincibility and strength of the nation; while its occupation by its enemies is an indication of the nation's weakness, backwardness and disunity.





The Israelis took control of Jerusalem's western part in 1948 and of its eastern part in 1967. They ravaged and devastated it and went to excess in deforming its land, people and structures. They brought in mixtures of settlers and allowed them to take the place of its native children.

The Zionist mentality is a “deterrent” mentality that sees only itself, based on confrontation, the shedding of blood, and the perpetration of oppression. It is unfit mentality for administering a sacred blessed land that embraces various religions, creeds, sects and races. It is a mentality opposite to the one that the Arab Islamic civilization had presented, which is the open “unifying” mentality, based on tolerance, assimilating the other, the administration of justice, and the granting of rights and liberties to all.

The suffering of Jerusalem and the holy sites under the occupation is immense and wide-ranging. This occupation reflects its ugly face in its practices against the land and the holy sites. It is suffering that touches all of life's domains, as this study will show.

This book is the seventh in the *Am I not a Human?* series. It speaks of the various aspects of suffering arising from the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the displacement of its people.

Our thanks go to Ms. Fatima 'Itani for her help in preparing some chosen passages and photos. Also our thanks go to Ms. Marwa Ghalayini for her beautiful production of the book. Besides, our gratitude to Salma al-Houry for the English translation and to Rana Sa'adah for editing it.

Dr. Mohsen Moh'd Saleh





Chapter 1: The Israeli Occupation of Jerusalem

The leaders of the Zionist movement announced the founding of Israel on the evening of 14/5/1948. The Zionists occupied the west of Jerusalem and expelled 60 thousands of its Arab inhabitants from the neighborhoods of Mamilla (*Ma'man Allah*), Upper al-Baq'a'a, Lower al-Baq'a'a, Qatamon, Talbiyyeh, Musrara, the German Colony, the Greek Colony, and part of Abu Tor and al-Thawri neighborhoods. The Palestinians own about 88.7% of the total area of West Jerusalem, which the Israelis have Judaized and built Jewish neighborhoods on its lands and on the lands of the confiscated Arab villages around it. Some of these villages are Lifta, on which the Israeli Knesset and a number of ministries were built, Ein Karem, Deir Yassin, al-Malha and others.¹

During the period 1948–1967, the municipal limits of West Jerusalem were expanded from 16,261 donums (about 16.3 km²) to 38,100 donums (38.1 km²).





In addition, 54 thousand Jewish settlers were brought to Jerusalem during the period 1948–1951, most of whom were given accommodations in the homes of the Arab Jerusalemites from which they were expelled. The number of Jews continued to witness a rapid rise, for it jumped from 84 thousands in November of 1948 to 197 thousands in June of 1967.² During this period, the Israeli authorities seized the areas surrounding West Jerusalem and its villages and built about 50 Jewish colonies in it.³

In 1967, Israel completed its occupation of East Jerusalem, which was under Jordanian control and which is considered part of the West Bank (WB). Since then, a frantic campaign to Judaize East Jerusalem began; and on 27/6/1967, the unification of Jerusalem's two halves under Israeli administration was announced. Then, on 30/7/1980, it was officially declared that Jerusalem is the eternal, unified capital of the state of Israel.⁴

Focusing on Jerusalem was a central issue in the Jewish Zionist thought, because of the religious and historical dimensions that the city represents. 50 years before the establishment of the Israeli state, Theodor Herzl, the founder of the World Zionist Organization said: "If Jerusalem is ever ours, and if I were still able to do anything about it, I would begin by cleaning it up. I would clear out everything that is not sacred...burn all the non-sacred ruins."⁵

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the UN Security Council have issued tens of resolutions that reject Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem and any material, administrative or legal measures that affect changes in Jerusalem's reality, and consider them null and void. These resolutions considered the Israeli state an occupation force that must get out of Jerusalem (and all of the WB and Gaza Strip (GS)). The first of these resolutions was A/RES/2253 (ES-V) which was issued by the UNGA on 4/7/1967. The resolutions came in succession, until Israel officially annexed



Resolution 2253 (ES-V): Measures Taken by Israel to Change the Status of the City of Jerusalem

The General Assembly, as it is deeply concerned at the situation prevailing in Jerusalem as a result of the measures taken by Israel to change the status of the City,

1. Considers that these measures are invalid;
2. Calls upon Israel to rescind all measures already taken and to desist forthwith from taking action which would alter the status of Jerusalem;
3. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly and the Security Council on the situation and on the implementation of the present resolution not later than one week from its adoption.

4/7/1967

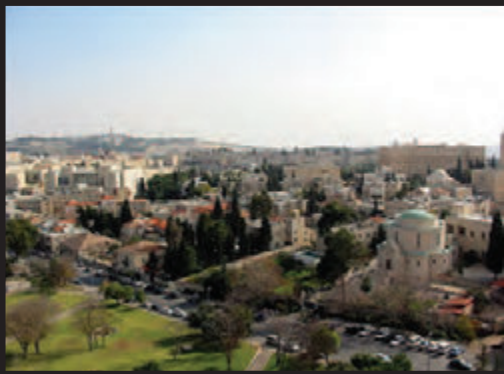
- Measures taken by Israel to change the status of the City of Jerusalem, General Assembly, UN, A/RES/2253 (ES-V), 4/7/1967, <http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/A39A906C89D3E98685256C29006D4014>

Jerusalem. Then, the UNGA passed Resolution A/RES/ES-7/2 on 30/7/1980 with a majority of 112 votes, with 7 opposed and 24 abstentions, calling upon Israel to “withdraw completely and unconditionally from all the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since June 1967, including Jerusalem.” Furthermore, on 20/8/1980, the UNSC issued Resolution S/RES/478, adopted by 14 votes to none with the abstention of the United States of America (US), in which it declared that “all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purport to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and in particular the recent ‘basic law’ on Jerusalem, are null and void and must be rescinded forthwith.” This resolution called upon those “States that have established diplomatic missions at Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the Holy City,” stressing that the “acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible.”





Some of the Arab Neighborhoods in West Jerusalem



West Jerusalem

Zionist gangs occupied west Jerusalem in 1948, and expelled 60 thousands of its Arab inhabitants.



Talbiyyeh Neighborhood

This neighborhood is considered one of Jerusalem's upper class neighborhoods. It is one of the neighborhoods that were occupied in 1948.



The Qatamon Neighborhood

This is one of the usurped Palestinian homes in this neighborhood that fell on 30/4/1948.



That the Israelis Have Occupied and Expelled the Inhabitants

The Sheikh Badr Neighborhood

It is part of the village of Lifta. Following the *Nakba* (the Catastrophe of 1948), most of the old buildings in the Sheikh Badr neighborhood were demolished; and in their place, buildings for the Israeli government, the Hebrew University, the Knesset, and Bank of Israel were erected on its lands. The picture shows the Israeli Knesset building erected on the lands of this neighborhood.



Al-Thawri Neighborhood

The Israelis occupied al-Thawri neighborhood, which is also called Abu Thor, on 15/5/1948.



The Musrara Neighborhood

Israel changed the name of this neighborhood to Morasha.





Some of the Villages That Israel



Al-Maliha Village

It was occupied on 15/7/1948. Then in 1949, the Israelis established the suburb of Manahat on its lands.

Lifta Village

It was occupied on 1/1/1948; and on its lands, the settlements of Mei Naftoah and Giv'at Shaul were established.



Beit Safafa Village

Attack on this village started on 25/12/1947. Then when the armistice between Jordan and Israel was declared on 3/4/1949, Beit Safafa remained divided, one half under Israeli occupation and the other half in Jordan, separated by barbed wire.





Had Annexed to the West Bank

Ein Karem Village

It was occupied on 18/7/1948. Then in 1949, the Israelis built the settlements of Beit Zayit and Even Sapir on the village's lands. Also in 1950, the Ein Karem Agricultural School was built there. As for the rest of the lands, they were annexed by the West Jerusalem Municipality.



Deir Yassin Village

It was occupied on 9/4/1948. Then in the summer of 1949, the settlement of Giv'at Shaul Bet was established on the eastern part of the village. Today, the building expansion of west Jerusalem has overtaken the hill and site of Deir Yassin from all sides.



Then, on 3/12/2003, the UNGA adopted the Resolution A/RES/58/22, which stipulates that “any actions taken by Israel to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the Holy City of Jerusalem are illegal and therefore null and void and have no validity whatsoever.” Resolutions continue to be issued to this day; yet, though they recognize the Palestinians’ rights, they lack the required resolve and the necessary mechanism to force Israel to respect international resolutions.⁶

The Israeli authorities have carried out a frenzied campaign to Judaize the land and the person in Jerusalem, and strived to obliterate its Arabic and Islamic identity. So they confiscated lands and properties, built settlement neighborhoods, brought in Jews from all over the world. In addition, they placed the Jerusalemites under miserable and harsh conditions in an expelling environment, brushing aside all international laws and conventions. The Hague Convention of 1907 does not allow in its Article 46 the occupying state to confiscate private property. Its Article 55 states that the “occupying State shall be regarded only as administrator and usufructuary of public buildings, real estate,...” While Article 56 states the following:

The property of municipalities, that of institutions dedicated to religion, charity and education, the arts and sciences, even when State property, shall be treated as private property. All seizure of, destruction or willful damage done to institutions of this character, historic monuments, works of art and science, is forbidden, and should be made the subject of legal proceedings.⁷

Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, dated 12/8/1949, relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, states that the “Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.” While Article 53 of the same convention states that any destruction by the “Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging



With these few words, Theodor Herzl, the founder of modern political Zionism, summarized the systematic Israeli policies toward Jerusalem since its occupation in 1948.

“If Jerusalem is ever ours, and if I were still able to do anything about it, I would begin by cleaning it up. I would clear out everything that is not sacred... burn all the non-sacred ruins.”

- Quotes: Herzl Speaks His Mind on Issues, Events and Men, site of Doing Zionism, <http://www.doingzionism.org/resources/view.asp?id=1634>



individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited...”⁸

The Israeli state worked gradually on expanding Jerusalem’s municipality, so to be able to definitely annex other areas of the WB to its entity, and to carry out the operation of judaizing Jerusalem on a far-reaching, programmed scale. Thus, when Israel occupied Jerusalem in 1967, the area of East Jerusalem was 6.5 km² and that of West Jerusalem was 24 km². So it expanded the municipality’s area to 104 km², which it appropriated from





the lands of 28 Palestinian villages situated around Jerusalem. Most of these villages are located east of the city, that is, in the WB. Then Israel continued to expand Jerusalem's municipal boundaries during the seventies and the eighties of the twentieth century until they reached 126 km², 72 km² of them belongs to Jerusalem's east, while 54 km² belong to the west of the city.⁹

Israel has appropriated most of the lands east of Jerusalem. These were swallowed by either, Israel's Ministry of Construction and Housing, Ministry of Finance, or Jerusalem's Municipality; and the settlements that surround East Jerusalem from all sides were built on them. Israel has classified 21 thousand donums of the remaining lands as unregulated, i.e., the Palestinians are not allowed to build on them or put them to use. It classified 17 thousand others as green areas, service areas and roads. Thus, only nine thousand donums remained of the 72 thousands that were designated for construction; that equals 12.5% of East Jerusalem's area or 7.25% of the Jerusalem Municipality area imposed by the occupation.¹⁰

Israel earmarks to its Jerusalem Municipality an annual budget estimated at \$857 million (The term \$ used throughout this book is the US\$). It also approves a yearly emergency budget for this municipality estimated at \$162 million on average. This means that the real value of the Jerusalem Municipality's budget for 2009 is estimated at \$1.019 billion. This is in addition to the budgets that the city spends through specialized ministries, such as the Ministry of Construction and Housing and Ministry of National Infrastructures, and other governmental departments. Wealthy Jews and Zionist Christians from outside Israel, in particular from the US, help finance the projects of the settlement organizations active in Jerusalem, such as Ateret Cohanim (lit. crown of the priests), Ir David Foundation (Elad), the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, the Temple Mount and Land of Israel



Faithful Movement, and other societies. Anyhow, according to estimates, these societies execute projects in Jerusalem that have a yearly budget of no less than \$150 million. There are also civil society organizations and institutions, such as that of Yad Sarah Organization, and the Jewish National Fund, that has an annual budget estimated at \$30 million, most of which are collected in the US, Canada and Germany.¹¹





Chapter 2: Assault on al-Aqsa Mosque

The Israeli authorities endeavor to achieve a permanent and direct Jewish presence in *al-Aqsa* Mosque and its periphery. They try to make of it a contested area between Muslims and Jews. They work on paving the way to confiscate parts of it, and then in later stages, to take control of it, in preparation of building what is called the Third Temple. They encouraged or overlooked repeated storming incidents by Jewish extremists who claim that they have a right to pray at “the Temple Mount.” They also endeavor to turn it into an area open for Jews and tourists, to give it the appearance of a museum or a touristic shrine, and to deprive it of its solemnity, status and Islamic character. Moreover, Israeli authorities have allowed the construction of synagogues at the Mosque’s walls such as the Tankaziyya School Synagogue, below the Mosque such as Wilson’s Arch, and in its periphery such as the Ohel Yitzhak (Tent of Isaac) and Hurva Synagogues, in order to give the Old City a Jewish character, to facilitate repeated acts of storming the Mosque and to provide cover for the excavation works.





A photo of the Moroccan Quarter before the Israeli occupation demolished it following the 1967 war, along with a number of adjacent quarters in the Islamic neighborhood that surrounds *al-Aqsa* Mosque. Another newer photo shows the square that was set up over the rubbles of the Moroccan Quarter to facilitate the Jews' visit to the Western Wall, which they call "The Wailing Wall."



The Western Wall is situated in the western part of *al-Aqsa* Wall. The Jews view the Western Wall as the remaining part of their alleged Second Temple. They use it as a site where to cry over their lost kingdom, until it became known as the "Wailing Wall." As for the square facing it, where they perform their rituals, its lands are Islamic endowment lands confiscated by the Israelis.



Jewish Zionist instigation against *al-Aqsa* Mosque became manifest beginning in the twenties of the last century. At first, the Jews concentrated their demands on *al-Aqsa*'s Western Wall (*al-Buraq* Wall), which they call "the Wailing Wall." The Wall and the area around it are in fact Islamic endowment lands. This is substantiated with certificates and documents, and is a matter recognized by the International Commission for determining "the rights and claims of Moslems and Jews in connection with the Western or Wailing Wall at Jerusalem." Subsequent to the investigation it has made, the Commission declared that:

The ownership of the Wall, as well as the possession of it... accrues to the Moslems. The Wall itself as being an integral part of the Haram-esh-Sherif area is Moslem property. From the inquiries conducted by the Commission... it has emerged that the Pavement in front of the Wall, where the Jews perform their devotions, is also Moslem property.¹²

On 11/6/1967, Israeli forces evicted the inhabitants of the Moroccan Quarter, few minutes after giving them a warning to exit the premises. This was followed by the demolition of the Quarter's 135 houses facing the Western Wall, most of which are the property of Islamic endowments. Furthermore, the two mosques, *al-Buraq* and *al-Afdal* in the same neighborhood were destroyed. Also, the Israeli forces expelled about four thousand Palestinians from *al-Sharaf* neighborhood, or what is known also as the Jewish Quarter, and the surrounding area. In addition, 200 Arab families were stripped of the ownership of their homes there.¹³

So the Israelis started a feverish campaign of excavations under *al-Aqsa* Mosque and the surrounding region, focusing on the Mosque's western and southern areas, attempting to find any evidence of their temple. Moreover, during the period 1973–1974, the Israel Antiquity Authority (IAA) carried out excavations southeast of the Mosque, until it penetrated its southern wall below its pulpit and southeastern porticos.¹⁴ Then, during the period 1970–1988, several Israeli parties executed excavations of *al-Aqsa*'s western tunnel, in spite





This is a tunnel of the western wall's network of tunnels. These tunnels threaten *al-Aqsa* Mosque with collapse, as well as some of the Jerusalemites' houses there, due to cracks that keep getting wider, caused by Israeli excavations.

of resolutions by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that condemned Israel for doing that. The tunnel extended under the Islamic Court, and passed under five of *al-Aqsa* gates. It also passed under a number of historic religious and cultural buildings, including four mosques, Qaitbay Minaret, Suq al-Qattanin (Market of the Cotton Merchants), and a number of historical schools. The excavations reached a depth of 11–14 meters underground; while the tunnel reached 450 meters in length and 2.5 meters in height. These excavations caused the cracking of a number of buildings, among them the Ottoman Mosque, Ribat al-Kurd, al-Jawhiriya school and al-Manjakia school. The Israelis also connected the tunnel to a canal of 80 meters that the archeologist Conrad Schick had discovered in the 19th century. On 7/7/1988, and under the protection of the Israeli army, new excavations were executed by the Israelis at the crossing of Bab al-Ghawanima and Via Dolorosa, trying to dig an opening leading

to the underground tunnel. However, they were confronted by the inhabitants; and that compelled them to stop. On 24/9/1996, they tried once again when Benjamin Netanyahu was prime minister and they were able to dig a second opening for the tunnel from the side of the Omari School.¹⁵ This incident provoked a Palestinian *Intifadah* (uprising) and bloody confrontations.

In the period 1990–2000, the IAA carried out new excavations aimed at removing the traces of the discovered Umayyad palaces. It constructed two marble stairways and terraces over the Umayyad ruins at the southern wall of *al-Aqsa* Mosque.¹⁶



Moreover, during the period 1990–2004, the Israel Ministry of Religious Services supervised the excavations in the western tunnel and the prayer rituals inside it, in front of the Western Wall. It erected a synagogue in the widest part of it, which falls in the region of the Umayyad ruins.

Since 1967, the excavations have gone through 10 stages that were carried out actively but quietly and in secrecy. The Israelis focused on the Mosque's western and southern regions, during which time they confiscated numerous mosques and Islamic historical buildings, and then demolished them. For instance, on 14–20/6/1969, they destroyed 31 historical buildings and evicted their occupants.

Regarding the attacks on *al-Aqsa* Mosque during the period 1967–1990, 40 attacks were carried out against it. Neither the peace settlement nor the Oslo Accords were instrumental in stopping these attacks. So during the period 1993–1998, 72 attacks were recorded, indicating a rise in the intensity of the fierce campaign against one of Islam's holiest sites. During the period 21/8/2006–21/8/2008, the attacks against *al-Aqsa* Mosque totaled 21. While for the period 21/8/2008–21/8/2009, they totaled 43 attacks.¹⁷ This points to the ferocity of the Israeli assault and to its escalation in the last few years.

The most infamous of these attacks was the arson attack on *al-Aqsa* Mosque on 21/8/1969. The accused in this attack was a Christian fanatic called Dennis Michael Rohan who belonged to the Church of God. The fire consumed the Mosque's furniture and walls. It also burned its great pulpit built by Nouredine Zanki, and put there by Salahuddin al-Ayyubi, following the liberation of *al-Aqsa* from the Crusaders in 1187 AD. Israel released Rohan after a mock trial that ruled that he bears no responsibility because he was judged to be legally "insane." Furthermore, The Supreme Muslim Council of Jerusalem declared that the Israeli authorities were not only slow, but even tried to prevent the Muslim population from helping to extinguish the fire.¹⁸





The Arson Attack on



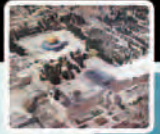
An external view of *al-Aqsa* Mosque fire that took place on 21/8/1969.

The arson crime spread to the pulpit inside *al-Aqsa* Mosque.



The fire destroyed the historic wooden ceiling of the Mosque.





al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969

Widespread destruction befell *al-Aqsa* Mosque.



Israel allowed only a small number of fire engines to enter *al-Aqsa* to put out the fire.

Smoke rises from *al-Aqsa* Mosque amid attempts by fire engines and the Jerusalemites to put it out.





One month after the fire, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) was formed, when the leaders of the Islamic states got together to discuss ways to protect *al-Aqsa* Mosque and Jerusalem. However, the weakness of these states, their contradictory loyalties and ideologies, their failure to adopt practical and serious steps, caused this organization to be an almost worthless institution, whose achievements do not go beyond convening meetings, issuing statements and venting emotions.

On 28/1/1976, the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court approved "the right of Jews" to pray in the courtyards of *al-Aqsa* Mosque at any time of day.¹⁹ Then, on 9/5/1980, an attempt to destroy *al-Aqsa* was uncovered when more than 120 kilograms of high explosives were discovered in its vicinity. Furthermore, on 11/4/1982, a Jewish soldier, by the name of Alan Harry Goodman, broke into *al-Aqsa* Mosque and shot at the gate's guard. He hurried to the Dome of the Rock Mosque, firing heavily and indiscriminately, hitting a number of worshippers. Some soldiers stationed on the rooftops of adjacent houses joined him in firing at the Dome of the Rock. Muslims rushed to defend the mosque, causing about 100 of them to be injured in these confrontations.²⁰ Nevertheless, on 20/4/1982, the United States vetoed a Security Council resolution condemning this incident, and was the only Council member to do so.²¹ There were repeated attempts to blow up *al-Aqsa* Mosque in January, August and December of 1984. Then, on 17/10/1989, the Temple Mount Land of Israel Faithful Movement laid the cornerstone for the Third Temple near the entrance of *al-Aqsa* Mosque.²²

The Palestinians in Palestine and Jerusalem in particular are vigilant in protecting *al-Aqsa* Mosque in spite of what they endure of occupation and coercion. They always rush to the defense of its sanctity with their bodies and stones, after having lost the Arab and Islamic support. There was never an Israeli attempted attack that was not confronted by Palestinians, even if that led to having massacres committed against them. An example of this is what



The Israelis Desecrate *al-Aqsa* Mosque

The occupation soldiers desecrate the Blessed *al-Aqsa* Mosque and ascend the nave of the Dome of the Rock Mosque, in 1967.



Israelis wander about
al-Aqsa Mosque.



took place on 8/10/1990, when 34 were killed and 115 were injured, after a Jewish group attempted to lay the cornerstone for the Temple inside *al-Aqsa* Mosque.²³ Also what took place on 25–27/9/1996, following the anger *Intifadah* that erupted following the Israeli authorities' opening of a Hasmonean tunnel under the Western Wall of *al-Aqsa* Mosque. This *Intifadah* led to the killing of 80 Palestinians²⁴ and the injury of 1,600 others. Intervention by Palestinian police in defense of the Palestinians led to the killing of 14 Israeli soldiers and the injury of 50 others.²⁵

The visit by the intransigent right-wing opposition leader, Ariel Sharon, to *al-Aqsa* Mosque courtyard caused the outbreak of *al-Aqsa intifadah* in 2000.



The provocative visit by Ariel Sharon, the leader of the Likud Party, to *al-Aqsa* Mosque sanctuary on 28/9/2000 was the spark that set off *al-Aqsa Intifadah*, which turned out to be one of the most noteworthy of the Palestinian people's uprisings. The first confrontations resulted in the death of five and the injury of more than 100 Palestinians.²⁶ This *Intifadah* continued for five years during which more than 4,172 Palestinians were killed and more than 45 thousands were injured.²⁷ However, their perseverance and resistance led to the killing of about 1,330 Israelis.²⁸

Some extremist Jews declared 2005 the year of the Temple. Thus, *al-Aqsa* Mosque became the target of a number of attacks that Jewish settlers



carried out in collusion with the occupation's government. The most noted of these was an attempt to storm the Mosque that the radical group Revava called for on 10/4/2005.²⁹ This attempt was frustrated by the Palestinians who rallied to the defense of *al-Aqsa* Mosque. However, those extremist elements called for storming the Mosque again on 9/5/2005; this attempt also failed.³⁰ Thereafter the attempts continued but at a less intense pace. The preparatory works for the temple also continued, on 5/8/2009, they put the largest model of the temple ever to be built with such precision on permanent display at Aish HaTorah Yeshiva's visitors center overlooking Western Wall,³¹ in addition to finishing preparing the necessary garments for "the Temple's High Priest" and displaying it for public viewing.³²



A bridge in the area of the Western Wall, built to connect the Moroccan Quarter to *al-Aqsa* Mosque through the Mughrabi Gate.

The Israeli attempts to take control of *al-Aqsa* Mosque continued in 2005; as on 1/7/2005, it built a ramp in the area of the Western Wall. Its purpose was to provide the largest number of Jews and foreign tourists an access structure to Mughrabi Gate of *al-Aqsa* Mosque.³³

On 3/1/2006, in a press conference, Sheikh Raed Salah revealed the existence of a Jewish synagogue beneath *al-Aqsa* Mosque, made up of two floors, the first a synagogue for women and the second a synagogue for men.





It is situated close to the Dome of the Rock, 90 meters away from its center and it includes seven rooms tracing the Jewish history.³⁴ On 21/9/2006, this site was opened under the name of The Chain of Generations Center and was produced and presented by The Western Wall Heritage Foundation. It is built on two levels; the first encompasses seven historical scenes and the second level brings visitors to the Hall of Light.³⁵

In September 2007, the Israeli authorities announced the inauguration of the newly renovated Rabbi Getz synagogue at the limits of *al-Aqsa*'s Western Wall, 90 meters west of the Rock of *al-Aqsa* Mosque. The extensive renovations of the synagogue and its renewal were financed by a wealthy Ukrainian Jew. The proximity of the synagogue to the Western Wall and the location of the "holy of holies" have enhanced its significance primarily among certain Jews.³⁶



Al-Aqsa Foundation for Endowment and Heritage revealed that the Ohel Yitzhak synagogue (Isaac's tent), consists of a two-story building that contains a large hall, housing the Jewish religious book "Tanach" and teaching rooms. On top of the building, there is a big high dome, constructed in a way to make it conceal the Dome of the Rock Mosque.

Below the Jewish synagogue, there is a network of excavations and tunnels connected to the synagogue and to the Western Wall area, as well as to a tunnel close to al-Mathara Gate, which is one of *al-Aqsa* Mosque gates.

- "Isaac's Tent"... To conceal the Dome of the Rock, site of Islamonline, 13/10/2008; and site of Aljazeera.net, 22/8/2009. (in Arabic)



On 12/10/2008, another move to strengthen the Jewish presence in the area was the “reopening” of the “Ohel Yitzhak” synagogue in the Old City, between the Cotton Merchants Gate and the Chain Gate, some 80 meters from al-Haram al-Sharif. Ohel Yitzhak was purchased by the Friends of Everest (a US non profit organization), under the direction of Irving and Cherna Moskowitz. A comprehensive archeological dig beneath it was also funded by the organization. Ohel Yitzhak was turned over to the Western Wall Heritage Foundation to be used as a functioning synagogue, house of study and eventually a museum.³⁷ On 5/3/2008, Israel National News (*Arutz Sheva*) announced that the IAA was opening a 25 meter long tunnel that will connect the Western Wall Tunnel directly with the Ohel Yitzhak synagogue in the Muslim Quarter of Jerusalem.³⁸

On 12/3/2006, the Israeli president, Moshe Katsav, and in the presence of Jerusalem’s mayor Uri Lupolianski and the two chief rabbis of the Hebrew State, inaugurated “Wilson’s arch” as a new prayer room in al-Buraq Square (Western Wall courtyard). This room is situated under the building known as the court building in Jerusalem. During the ceremony, Katsav called for building a road that connects the Western Wall courtyard to City of David; that meant additional excavations below *al-Aqsa* Mosque.³⁹ An almost-ready plan was put in place to build a tunnel that connects Silwan to the Marwani prayer area, as a preliminary step toward realizing their dream of erecting a synagogue in it.⁴⁰

On 30/6/2006, the *Haaretz* newspaper mentioned that the IAA will start excavations and begin removing the ramp of the Mughrabi Gate, which collapsed due to torrential rains, on 14/2/2004. The Western Wall Heritage Fund initiated a plan to replace the ramp with a bridge, to which the government contributed \$1.1 million.⁴¹ On 13/8/2006, Israel invited tenders for demolishing the Mughrabi Gate ramp.⁴² The Jerusalem Municipality issued the formal permit, on 22/1/2007, for the construction of the new Mughrabi Gate





ramp. The planned construction went well beyond a restoration of the status quo ante, envisioning the creation of a wide, 200 meter long ramp instead of the existing 75 meter ramp. Then, excavations at the site began, on 5/2/2007, producing immediate outrage and controversy.⁴³

The Israeli dredging and excavation works at the Mughrabi Gate gave rise to a massive wave of Palestinian, Arab and Islamic indignation. Islamic scholars and endowment officials denied the claim by Israeli authorities of the existence of a prior coordination or understanding regarding the Mughrabi Gate excavations. The Islamic scholars and endowment officials in Palestine held the view that Israel wishes, through what it calls restoration, to allow the entrance of a large number of the public to the Mughrabi Gate, by way of al-Buraq Square and the Jewish Quarter. That it aims to change the area's features and expose *al-Aqsa's* Western Wall, making it liable to fall. It also aims at tampering with Islamic relics as a first phase in laying its hands on al-Buraq Mosque situated within *al-Aqsa* walls, using it as a foothold to gain control of *al-Aqsa*.⁴⁴



The Israelis tearing down the Mughrabi Gate Road, adjacent to *al-Aqsa* Mosque, in February 2007, in an attack on Islamic endowments and sanctuaries.



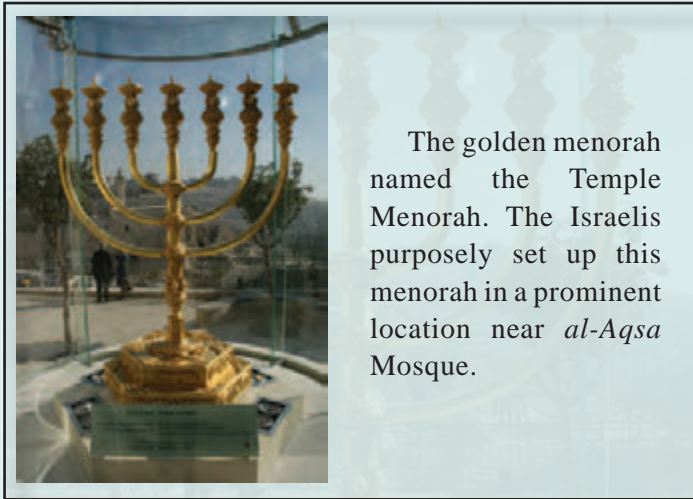
Israel has always insisted on its claim that what it is doing does not affect Islamic holy sites or the status quo. It agreed to let a specialized Turkish delegation verify the matter. In point of fact, a Turkish delegation did scrutinize the Israeli measures in the Mughrabi Gate area and issued its report in November 2007. Its report stressed that “the work being conducted by Israel does not abide by the appropriate [excavation standards], and the dig testifies to the fact that Israel is interested in destroying artifacts from the Islamic periods,” the report quoted the envoy as saying. “It is Israel’s responsibility to cease it immediately.”⁴⁵

It seems that the Israeli authorities did not heed the Muslims’ protestations, for, as usual, they waited till these protestations died down and gave in to the pressure exerted on the government by the “Rabbi for the Kotel and Holy Places” and the “Western Wall Heritage Fund.” And so on 17/12/2007, IAA has been instructed by the cabinet to continue its work at the Mughrabi walkway near the Western Wall in Jerusalem. Furthermore, the Israeli cabinet decided to allocate about \$900 thousand for the completion of archaeological and conservation work. The director-general of the Prime Minister’s Office was charged with locating this money, as well as the funds for construction of a permanent bridge at the site, at an estimated cost of \$3.5 million. The budgetary source will be located as soon as the plans are approved by the Jerusalem Regional Planning Commission. On 29/11/2007, the cabinet approved the Ministerial Committee for Jerusalem Affairs decision, instructing the IAA to “remove any finding that is not archaeological” which refers to all Palestinian finds and most of those of the Ottoman period, i.e., later than 1700 AD.⁴⁶ Within the framework of this policy, the original Israeli plan to renovate the ramp, which was presented to the Israeli Regional Planning Committee, suggested the removal of all or part of the structures tucked under the ramp in order to allow an enlargement of the prayer area reserved for Jewish women in front of the Western Wall. Israel attorney Danny Seidemann





said that there were proposals for a structure strong enough to hold 300 Israeli police standing on the ramp at one time, in full gear.⁴⁷ Thus, it will give room to the Jews to burst forth in large numbers into the Mosque's courtyard.



The golden menorah named the Temple Menorah. The Israelis purposely set up this menorah in a prominent location near *al-Aqsa* Mosque.

Among the other provocative actions, there is the one carried out by The Temple Institute of putting up a golden menorah, the Temple Menorah, facing the Mughrabi Gate, close to *al-Aqsa*'s western side. This menorah weighs one-half ton and contains 45 kilograms of 24 Carat gold. It has an estimated value of \$3 million which was donated by a leader of the Jewish community of Ukraine.⁴⁸ It was set up on a visible and high location, facing *al-Aqsa* Mosque from the west.

In early 2008, *al-Aqsa* Foundation revealed that the Israeli authorities had dug a new tunnel adjacent to the Western Wall of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, which extends 200 meters. It starts from the left of al-Buraq Square, takes the direction of the old city, then north to inside the Old city, passing below tens of Jerusalemite houses, reaching al-Wad Street, in Hammam al-'Ein neighborhood where an excavation area is located. Furthermore, the Israeli authorities are working on



deepening the excavations and directing them toward the Chain Gate, where they go reversely from Hammam al-‘Ein south toward al-Buraq Square. This is done in order to join the tunnel’s two ends, and connect al-Buraq Square and the region of the Mughrabi Gate to the Jewish Synagogue at Hammam al-Ein.⁴⁹ The existence of a new tunnel in Silwan, situated south of *al-Aqsa* Mosque was also unveiled; it has a length of 600 meters and extends from Wadi Hilwah neighborhood in Silwan, reaching the southwestern corner of *al-Aqsa* Mosque.⁵⁰

In mid-February 2008, a cave-in occurred near Qaitbay Fountain inside *al-Aqsa* Mosque courtyards, between al-Mathara and the Chain gates. The existence of large fissures in the houses of the Jerusalemites living in the same area was revealed.⁵¹ Moreover, in July 2008, the Islamic-Christian Front for Defending Jerusalem and its Holy Sites made known the fact that the fissures and cracks are increasing, and becoming wider in the buildings and houses situated in the southern part of *al-Aqsa*, in Wadi Hilwah area, up to ‘Ein Silwan. This is in addition to a great number of historic houses adjacent to the Western Wall of the Mosque, in particular the neighborhoods adjacent to *al-Aqsa*, mainly Damascus Gate (*Bab al-Amud*), the Chain Gate and the Iron Gate. The number of historic houses that are no longer habitable in that area due to large and dangerous cracks in their ceilings and walls has reached 13 houses; while their residents refuse to abandon them, even if they collapsed over their heads.⁵²

The period coinciding with the war on Gaza Strip has witnessed unprecedented security measures that reduced the number of worshippers in *al-Aqsa* Mosque during Fridays to no more than three thousands. As the occupation imposed a security ring around the old City and surrounded it with a larger security ring in its periphery, preventing anyone younger than 50 from entering *al-Aqsa* to pray, also preventing even the Old City’s residents who are younger than 50 from entering it. These measures have never before been taken by the occupation, even during *al-Aqsa Intifadah*.





Chapter 3: The Judaization of the Old City and the “Holy Basin” Region

The Israelis seek to change the Islamic identity of Jerusalem’s Old City to a Jewish identity, and to erect a sacred Jewish city parallel to it, but shares with it the same status. This is the plan called *Kedem Yeroushalayim* (Jerusalem First). This city extends below *al-Aqsa* Mosque, in Silwan suburb, in parts of the Islamic Quarters, and in al-Sharaf neighborhood “the Jewish Quarter” in the Old City. It is connected to a group of gardens, parks, museums and archeological sites, set-up above ground in the periphery of the Old City. It extends south of the Old City where Silwan Suburb is situated, and to its east where the Mount of Olives and al-Tur suburb. Israel calls the plan to erect the Jewish city, the Holy Basin Plan. A great many government bodies and settlement societies work on this project; most prominent among them are IAA, the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, Ir David Foundation (Elad), the Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful Movement, Ateret Cohanim, and



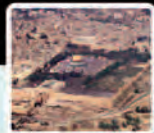


the Company for the Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem (JQDC).



The Israeli writer Danny Rabinowitz stated that in 1968 he worked as a volunteer in the Western Wall excavations. He admitted that these excavations revealed the existence of Umayyad structures. And that when he returned to the site in the early seventies, he found no trace of these structures, having been removed from the whole area.

Excavation operations and archeological digs are most active at *al-Aqsa* Mosque and in Jerusalem's Old City. The Israeli excavations were never directed at learning the truth as much as at proving Jewish claims and trying to find evidence of the Torah's corrupted accounts and Israeli historical narrations. There is strict Israeli refusal to let international scientific circles, which are non-Jewish and neutral, participate in the excavations around *al-Aqsa* Mosque. The fact that asserts that Israel endeavor to manipulate the discovered relics and modify them to prove Jewish Zionist claims. And so they purposely obliterated discovered Islamic relics, changed the location's features and falsified its original identity. In an article published in the summer of 1998, the Israeli writer Danny Rabinowitz admitted that, in 1968, he worked as a volunteer in the excavations at the Wailing Wall; some of what these excavations revealed was the existence of Umayyad structures.



He also said that when he returned to the site in the early seventies, he found no trace of these structures as they had been wiped out from the whole area. Some western scientific circles noticed the same thing. For in a letter that she published in *The Times* London newspaper on 17/8/1972, the British archeologist Kathleen Kenyon, Director of the British School of Archeology in Jerusalem, stated that the destruction of Islamic buildings along the wall of Jerusalem's Noble Sanctuary is considered a major crime, and that world public opinion must give every support to stopping these barbaric acts. The Irish volunteer, Paula Geranty, who worked alongside the Israeli professor Ya'akov Billig on the excavations around Jerusalem's Noble Sanctuary, mentioned that the Israeli archeologists endeavor only to uncover Jerusalem's Jewish history; and they intentionally obliterate the features of the other historical epoch.⁵³

The number of Israeli excavations has exceeded 60;⁵⁴ and they revealed Islamic, Byzantine, Roman and Jebusite relics.⁵⁵ A city of tunnels was formed that sometimes goes as deep as 40 meters below ground; this poses a threat to the foundations of *al-Aqsa* Mosque. The Israelis have carried out various excavations under the leadership of Nahman Avigad, Benjamin Mazar, Ute Wagner-Lux, Margovsky, Kaufman, Meir Ben-Dov...and others.⁵⁶

In the period 2000–2008, excavations were carried out in the Old City and in Silwan. These excavations concentrated in the Islamic Quarter of the Old City, near Hammam al-‘Ein area, the Chain Gate, al-Wad Street, and the Sheep Gate. The excavations covered all of the historical village of Silwan that used to be the City of Yabus five thousand years earlier, the remnants of the rocky Jebusite canal that used to carry water to Yabus residents was discovered.⁵⁷



The Excavations Under *al-Aqsa* Mosque and Its Periphery 2009





Israel has made great strides in constructing a fake Jewish holy city within the plan to restore “The Holy Basin.” The period between 21/8/2008 and 21/8/2009 has witnessed the uncovering of five new excavation sites, four of them south of *al-Aqsa* Mosque and the fifth to its west. With these, the number of excavation sites under the Mosque and in its periphery reaches 25. Thus, the number of completed excavations that are open to visitors has reached 13, while the number of active excavations is 12, knowing that these numbers designate those excavations that were officially made public. It is certain that there are a number of undeclared excavations, which normally would not be officially announced until the completion of their first stage.⁵⁸ Thus, the Israeli authorities overstep all the resolutions of UNESCO and the UN that condemn them. The excavations are conducted under the pretense of being part of scientific investigation. While in fact, they are used to crack what is above them of residential, commercial, religious and cultural buildings and to cause their collapse, then their demolition along with the eviction of their inhabitants.

There are Zionist societies that are active in carrying out Judaization projects in Jerusalem. For, on 21/6/2006, it was revealed that a deal was reached between the settlement organization Ateret Cohanim and the Jerusalem Municipality to open a tunnel that connects Solomon’s Quarries (Zedekiah’s Cave), that can only be accessed from outside the Old City walls, near the Damascus Gate, to one of the houses (*Beit Hatzalam*) that has been under the organization’s control for several years behind the Malawiyah Complex. When this tunnel is completed, control of the Islamic Quarter in the Old City would be complete, specifically al-Sa’diyyah neighborhood and the Red Minaret. This would involve an excavation of several dozen meters, which would approach a point that is within about 150 meters of the Temple Mount. The organization is already in contact with the IAA regarding the

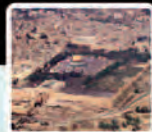




tunnel, which has been described as an “emergency exit” from the ancient cave.⁵⁹ There is a plan that reinforces that intention, prepared by JQDC, which aims at building a four-story parking lot south of the Sanctuary, in addition to commercial establishments and hotels. Its total area will come to 18 thousand square meters.⁶⁰

The Israeli government continued with its Judaization policy by announcing plans to build 10 synagogues. The most notable Israeli achievement in this regard during 2009 was the opening of the Hurva Synagogue, which is an immense synagogue, located in al-Sharaf neighborhood, to the west of *al-Aqsa* Mosque. It consists of four stories, topped by a huge dome, equal in height to the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. It hides al-Qibli Mosque completely from the view of the person looking at it from the west. It was intended that this synagogue be part of the overall panorama of the city. It is considered the most important Jewish landmark ever planned to be erected in the Old City, with the Israeli government financing one third of its cost. It was inaugurated on 15/3/2010.⁶¹

In addition, the Jerusalem Municipality has announced an Israeli plan aimed at seizing lands in Silwan, and confiscating 150 donums to house Jewish immigrants.⁶² The Municipality has begun the process of approving a plan for a new housing complex, including a synagogue, in the heart of the Arab neighborhood of Silwan south of the Old City. The plan, submitted by the right-wing Elad association, includes 10 apartments, kindergarten classrooms, a library and underground parking for a 100 cars.⁶³ Elad is active in this area and has as its objective taking possession of the Arab houses there, considering them part of historical Holy Basin.



The Hurva Synagogue

This is one of the most prominent Israeli religious structures in Jerusalem. It is a huge synagogue located in al-Sharaf neighborhood, west of *al-Aqsa* Mosque. This synagogue is considered the most important Jewish landmark ever planned to be erected in the Old City. The Israeli government financed one third of its cost. It was inaugurated on 15/3/2010.

The Israeli authorities continued confiscating East Jerusalem lands, building settlements and Jewish neighborhoods on them. In January 1968, they confiscated 3,345 donums from the lands of Shu'fat, al-'Isawiyyah, Mount Scopus and Lifta villages. They also confiscated 485 donums from the lands of Khillat Nuh, which is part of Jerusalem's Old City. They started building the first Israeli settlements east of Jerusalem, which are Ramat Eshkol, Giv'at Shapira (French Hill), and Ma'alot Dafna.⁶⁴ Three months later, they confiscated 116 donums from Jerusalem's Old City to establish on





them the Jewish Quarter. They also confiscated 765 other donums of the lands of Hizma and Beit Hanina villages, and established on them the Neve Ya'acov settlement.⁶⁵ The process of establishing Jewish settlements and neighborhoods followed in succession, until 25,402 donums were confiscated, and 15 Jewish neighborhoods and settlements were established on them. These include, in addition to those already mentioned, the settlements of Ramot, East Talpiot, Gilo, Atarot, Mamilla, Ramat Rachel, Pisgat Ze'ev, Har Homa (Abu Ghneim Mountain), Rehes Shu'fat and Giv'at HaMatos.⁶⁶

Taking control of al-Sharaf neighborhood, or what is known as the Jewish Quarter, was one of the gravest Israeli measures taken in the walled Old City of Jerusalem. For on 18/4/1968, the Israeli authorities issued an order to confiscate 116 donums, which included that neighborhood, in addition to the Chain Gate Street, al-Bashura neighborhood and the Moroccan Quarter. These used to include five mosques, two nooks, four schools, an ancient market and 700 buildings, of which, before the 1948 war, the Jews used to own a total of 105 buildings, while the Arabs used to own the remaining 595 buildings, consisting of 1,048 residential apartments, occupied by six thousand Palestinians and 437 commercial establishments. The neighborhood comprised also endowments belonging to the families of al-Khalidi, al-'Assali, and al-Ja'ouni.⁶⁷ Under various means of pressure, the Israeli authorities managed in 1980 to expel the remaining Arab family (that of Ayoub Tutunji) from that neighborhood. Also in 1993, they succeeded in expanding this neighborhood's area to 180 donums, knowing that the area of the walled Old City of Jerusalem is about 1,010 donums (almost one kilometer square), of which *al-Aqsa* Mosque occupies 141 donums, while residential neighborhoods occupy the remaining 868 donums.⁶⁸



The JQDC Company seeks to register 1,300 real estate properties in the Old City in the Land Registry Office. Accordingly, they confiscated 382 family endowments, 15 Islamic endowments, nine church endowments, 257 private properties, as well as six municipal endowments.⁶⁹ A report issued by the Palestinian Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs stated that, in 2008, the registration and confirmation of 120 properties in Jerusalem to the benefit of settlers was disclosed, done through forged documents and in an illegal manner. It was also disclosed that Israel intend to register 137 donums of lands and real estate properties in the region of the Mughrabi Gate and the settlement outposts inside the Old City, which belong to Islamic endowments.⁷⁰

Israel encourages the establishment of settlement outposts in the Old City and in its periphery, with the aim of removing the Palestinian neighborhoods from the area. Furthermore, these outposts constitute active cells that help in excavation activities and the building of synagogues. In the Muslim and Christian Quarters of the Old City alone, it is estimated that some 900 settlers (more than half of them yeshiva students) already control some 75–80 homes or complexes.⁷¹ The yeshivas are Orthodox Jewish religious schools.

There is close cooperation between settlement societies in the Old City and Israel Lands Administration (ILA). The Hebrew newspapers have revealed that the latter has smuggled more than 70 properties to these societies. This kind of activity, specifically, receives great support from the Israeli Custodian of Absentee Property and official governmental departments, such as the Ministry of Construction and Housing and the Ministry of the Interior, in addition to Jerusalem Municipality. It also became evident that ILA is renting Palestinian lands to Ateret Cohanim, and that in fact hundreds of donums have been smuggled to settlement societies, to contractors, and to Israeli construction companies.⁷²



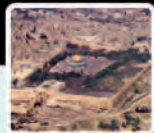


Sites of Jewish Synagogues in the Old City that Were Built Following the Israeli Occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967



Synagogue 

- Mahmud Abu 'Ata, Synagogues Encircling al-Aqsa, Al-Aqsa Foundation for Endowment and Heritage, see http://www.foraqsa.com/library/studies/konos_map.pdf



In a continuation of the policy of Judaizing the Old City, the Orthodox Jews who belong to the Galicia settlement school carried out digging and dirt removal operations in the Jewelry market, below the area known as Sabrah, with the aim of taking possession of it and enlarging the school. The market has an area of four donums.⁷³ In July 2005, Jerusalem Municipality approved a Town Planning Scheme for the construction of 21 housing units and a synagogue on a 3.8 donum site in the region of Burj al-Laqlaq (Stork's Tower) in the north-eastern corner of the Old City near Herod's Gate. Of this land, 1.9 donums are the absentee property.⁷⁴ In parallel, Palestinian homes in the Qarmi neighborhood are being seized. As an example, settlement organizations have appropriated a house in the first floor of the Zalloum family building.⁷⁵

As for the Silwan neighborhood, it extends from the southeastern corner of the Old City in the direction of Wadi Hilwah; and it is inhabited by 50 thousand Palestinians. In their midst, 400 settlers live and the number of settler families has reached 70. Israeli plans seek to build an archeological village in place of the Palestinian houses in Silwan, which the Israeli sources refer to as the City of David or Ir David. The Elad Foundation claims to be in control of 55% of the City of David area. Elad works as a quasi-governmental body and controls the archeological activities in the region. It has that include 11 houses in Wadi Hilwah region.⁷⁶ In October 2007, Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lupolianski had announced a plan to build 20 thousand new housing units in the areas situated among the Arab neighborhoods, in particular in Silwan.⁷⁷

Moreover, a plan was announced to build 200 settlement units in the Sheikh Jarrah region, on an area of 18 donums. The plan aims at demolishing the existing neighborhood in which 40 Palestinian families reside and constructing Jewish units in order to create a Jewish settlement expanse that surrounds the Old City where a large Palestinian majority is present.⁷⁸





Currently the execution of an Israeli municipal plan is underway, aimed at establishing a new Jewish settlement in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood on Karm al-Mufti land, where the Shepherd Hotel was located. The first plan was approved by the Local Planning Committee of the Jerusalem Municipality, thus allowing for the demolition of the existing building in favor of two new residential buildings, which will include 20 housing units and associated amenities. Further, another plan has been proposed in order to build an additional 90 housing units, a synagogue and kindergarten. The Israeli authorities had taken possession of the land and sold it, by way of the Israeli Custodian of Absentee Property, to the Jewish millionaire Irving Moskowitz, knowing that the land's owners are present and not absentee, and that they enjoy the benefit of residency in Jerusalem.⁷⁹

Putting into effect the policy of imposing a *fait accompli*, the Israeli government turned a large area that surrounds the Old City from the south and the east into a public park. Then it placed it under the control of the Elad Foundation, following a decree issued in 2002 by the Israel Nature and Parks Authority. There are plans to transfer control of another public park northeast of the city to radical Jews. In May 2009, a government plan was revealed, undertaken by the Jerusalem Development Authority (JDA), in cooperation with settlement organizations, that comprises the establishment of nine parks, touristic sites, and pathways around the Old City, with the aim of changing the existing geopolitical status quo.⁸⁰

The Bukharan Community Committee has claimed that it is in possession of a permit from official parties to build 104 housing units in the area of the Israeli police headquarters in Ras al-‘Amud neighborhood. Until 3/4/2008, the 11 donum site, on which the settlement is scheduled to be built, served



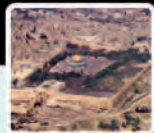
as police headquarters. It was then moved to a new building in the E1 area. This area connects the settlement of Ma'ale Adumim in East Jerusalem to West Jerusalem, and is also the subject of a deep diplomatic dispute. The move was made possible by construction funding by right-wing bodies, who wanted to vacate the building in Ras al-'Amud in order to build Maale David. This settlement's units are going to be sold as luxury apartments with all of the amenities. For example, a swimming pool, a clubhouse, a library, a large parking area and so on. Public buildings are also planned for the area such as a synagogue, kindergartens and a ritual bath.⁸¹ On the other hand, excavation works, under al-'Ein Mosque in Silwan by the Elad Foundation, are continuing.⁸²

According to data by the Israeli Ir Amim Organization, and in mid 2009, about 2,500 Jews were living in the "Holy Basin" area and in the Old City (outside the Jewish Quarter), of which 400 Israelis reside in Silwan neighborhood, and 400 others in Damascus Gate neighborhood.⁸³

Furthermore, Israeli aggression against Jerusalem has reached the Mamilla (*Ma'man Allah*) Cemetery. As, under the custody of JDA, the Jerusalem Municipality started erecting the Museum of Tolerance Jerusalem (MOTJ) on the Mamilla Cemetery grounds, situated west of Jerusalem's Old City, two kilometers away from Jaffa Gate. The cemetery is an Islamic endowment registered in the Land Registry Office. It contains the remains of a number of Prophet Muhammad's companions and their successors, as well as those of thousands of scholars and martyrs. It is the largest cemetery in Jerusalem, and its area is estimated at 135 donums. The cost of the MOTJ is estimated at about \$250 million.







The Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles has assumed financing this project.⁸⁴ The recent history of the cemetery indicates that, toward the end of 1985, the Ministry of Transport had set up a parking lot over a large section of it. During the years 1985–1987, excavations were carried out for the laying of sanitary sewage networks and enlarging the parking lot. Then, in September of 2002, the intention to erect a building for Israeli courts in the area of the Mamilla Cemetery was made known. In February 2004, Israeli newspapers announced the Israeli government's intention to open the headquarters of what is called “the Center for Human Dignity—MOTJ” in the city of Jerusalem, on what remains of the Mamilla Cemetery. In January of 2005, digging works started in the cemetery to erect the MOTJ. And on 23/2/2006, the Supreme Court issued an injunction to stop work in the Cemetery, with the exclusion of the work done by IAA.⁸⁵

The issue of building the MOTJ on the ruins of the Mamilla Cemetery was raised again in 2007. On 29/4/2007, the Israeli Supreme Court argued this file and asked the lawyers of the Israeli and American companies that are determined to build the museum to show the defense their documents, for they declined to produce them earlier.⁸⁶ In a report that he presented in July 2007 to the Israeli Supreme Court, Dr. Raphael Greenberg of Tel Aviv University revealed that the IAA archaeologist excavating the area wrote in his concluding report that there were at least 800 graves still left in the area and that he unequivocally recommended prohibiting construction there. However, in January 2007, the IAA presented a report that made no mention of this recommendation and stated that there is “no need” for continued excavation, and construction of the MOTJ could proceed.





The Mamilla



Mamilla (*Ma'man Allah*) Muslim Cemetery whose name means water from God or blessing from God.

It is the largest Islamic cemetery in Jerusalem. Its area is estimated at two hundred donums. It contains the remains of a number of Prophet Muhammad's companions and their successors. Israel endeavored to change the cemetery's features. Thus about 95% of its graves were disinterred, and their area was turned into a parking lot, a public park and other uses. Part of the cemetery is



(Ma'man Allah) Cemetery



used as the main offices of the Israeli Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor. In addition, Israel is planning to build the Museum of Tolerance Jerusalem (MOTJ) on what remains of the cemetery's land.

Aggression and ethnic cleansing continue, even against the dead...

- Site of The Palestinian Information Center (PIC), <http://www.palestine-info.info/arabic/alquds/history/maqbrah.htm>.

Some of the pictures were taken from the *Haaretz* newspaper.



Greenberg said the maps the IAA presented to the court are “in opposition to the reality in the area,” because they show that excavation is complete in areas where it has not even begun. Greenberg notes that the IAA defined the Mamilla Cemetery, which has been a Muslim burial ground since the Middle Ages, as one Jerusalem’s special archaeological sites. Greenberg said the graves have rare archaeological value and their destruction would stand in stark opposition to professional archaeological ethics. “It is not the job of the IAA to see to the welfare of entrepreneurs,” wrote Greenberg.⁸⁷ On 29/10/2008, the Israeli High Court gave its final go-ahead to the construction project, thereby bringing to an end all legal attempts to stop the project.⁸⁸

In the same context, the Israeli authorities, with the support of the Jerusalem Municipality, were considering a proposal for the establishment of a cable car system that would transport tourists and visitors to the Western Wall.⁸⁹

The dredging of Palestinian land continued in favor of executing the Jerusalem Light Rail project in East Jerusalem to connect Israeli settlements to West Jerusalem. The Israeli Ministry of Transportation and Jerusalem Municipality charged a consortium of private companies with the task of building the first line of the rail project. The CityPass consortium responsible for the light rail project includes two French companies: Connex/ Veolia and Alstom, in addition to three Israeli companies. Through their participation in the development of the Light Rail project, the two French companies lend legitimacy to Israel’s illegal annexation of East Jerusalem.⁹⁰



In 2005, the scandal of selling the Orthodox Church real estate took place; it was revealed on the 18th of March. It consists of a secret transaction signed between two Jewish settlement groups and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, according to which the two Jewish groups bought the lands on which stand the Imperial Hotel, the Petra Hotel, and 27 stores owned by the Patriarchate in Omar Ibn al-Khattab Square, near Jaffa Gate, west of the Old City. This is the scandal that grew until it led, on 6/5/2005, to the deposition of Patriarch Irineos I, when his implication in the scandal was established.⁹¹ Following Jerusalem's Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Church Patriarchate election of Patriarch Theophilos III as the new patriarch of the Church on 22/8/2005, attempts by the occupation government to extort him and impede the official ceremonies of his investiture continued, by linking its endorsement of his appointment to his endorsement of the sale of the Greek Orthodox properties in Jerusalem.





Table (1): Some Judaized Names in Jerusalem's Old City⁹²

Arabic name	English name	Hebrew name	Site
<i>Bab al-Asbat</i>	Lions' Gate	Sha'ar HaArayot	At the middle of the city's eastern wall
<i>Bab al-Rahmah</i>	Golden Gate	Sha'ar HaRahamim	At the middle of the city's eastern wall
<i>Bab al-Jadid</i>	New Gate	HaSha'ar HeHadash	At the wall's northwestern corner
<i>Bab al-Khalil</i>	Jaffa Gate	Sha'ar Yaffo	At the middle of the city's western Wall
<i>Bab al-Sahirah</i>	Flowers Gate	Sha'ar HaPerachim	Middle of northern wall
<i>Bab al-Nabi Dawud</i>	Zion Gate	Sha'ar Tzion	In the southwest part of the wall
<i>Bab al-'Amud</i>	Damascus Gate	Sha'ar Shkhem	The northern wall of Jerusalem's Old City
<i>Ha'it al-Buraq</i>	Western Wall	HaKotel HaMa'aravi	The southern part of the Western Wall of Jerusalem's Noble Sanctuary
<i>Bab al-Magharibah</i>	Dung Gate	Sha'ar HaAshpot	Inside the wall
<i>Harat al-Sharaf</i>	Jewish Quarter	Haroba' Hehode	Inside the wall
<i>Jabal al-Mukabbir</i>	—	Har Talpiot	Outside the wall
<i>Jabal al-Masharif</i>	Mount Scopus	Har HaTzofim	Outside the wall



Christian endowment properties were also target of Israeli assault, as a church in East Jerusalem was converted to a Jewish synagogue. The *Maariv* newspaper mentioned that this transaction provoked an acute diplomatic crisis with the Vatican and Germany, the Church's patron. For it was established that some Jewish parties had bought the church and turned it into a Jewish synagogue. And that, in itself, is part of a series of illegal and secretive transactions in Jerusalem.⁹³

On the other hand, Israeli authorities continue their infringement upon Jerusalem's cultural and historical identity through the "Government Names Committee," which undertakes the renaming of places, sites and streets, according to alleged Zionist, historical, or corrupted Torah considerations.





Chapter 4: Settlement Expansion

In support of implementing the Greater Jerusalem Plan, Yisrael Katz, a member of the Knesset from the Likud Party, presented a draft of a law to incorporate the settlements present outside Jerusalem's municipal limits (Ma'ale Adumim, Giv'at Ze'ev and the Gush Etzion area) and place them under the municipality's control. This is not a new proposal, for it was previously presented by the former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Transportation Minister Shaul Mofaz. This plan separates East Jerusalem and numerous Palestinian concentrations completely from the WB, and from all sides. It also annexes vast Palestinian lands and places them under Jerusalem's control, and cuts off geographic continuity between Jerusalem and WB. In an interview with the *Jerusalem Post* newspaper, the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert described Ma'ale Adumim settlement as an integral part of Israel, and described continuing construction operations on the blocs surrounding the city as "legitimate," the same as within the municipal limits.⁹⁴





During the election campaign for city mayor held in 2008, the then candidate and mayor Nir Barkat spoke about the intention to establish a Jewish settlement neighborhood that connects Jerusalem and Ma'ale Adumim (Jerusalem's Eastern Guard), which would have an area of two thousand donums and on which four thousand housing units will be built, in addition to a Hi-Tech industrial park. Sources close to him added that he will cooperate with the Israeli Ministry of Construction and Housing that had begun the necessary steps for a planned new Jewish neighborhood north of Jerusalem. This plan includes the building of more than 10 thousand settlement units, in addition to two tunnels that would connect the Jordan Rift Valley area to the eastern settlements in Jerusalem and Beit El in Atarot neighborhood without opening the wall, in addition to developing the industrial park. As for the Regional Outline Plan 1/30 that merges with the city's Plan 2020, it points to developing the Jerusalem District with regard to its economic, social and educational aspects. This would be done by intensifying construction, expanding existing neighborhoods and building new ones, granting privileges to Jerusalem, and declaring it a development area of the first degree. The plan also includes encouraging immigration to the city, establishing new industrial parks, in addition to a strong transport infrastructure, involving a network of railroads, wide boulevards, tunnels and bridges. In addition, the plan would give care to the basin surrounding the Old City by establishing legations of the world Jewish congregations, to let them become the link between the city and the world's Jewry.⁹⁵

Furthermore, Ateret Cohanim has obtained permits for building another 300 housing units in the Abu Dis area, facing the Separation Wall; the site was named Kidmat Zion. This was followed by an announcement made



by Israeli authorities of inviting bids to build 307 housing units in Jabal Abu Ghneim. Also on an initiative by The Ministry of Construction and Housing, the building of one thousand new housing units in Jabal Abu Ghneim was approved.⁹⁶

The Har Homa Settlement

The building of the Israeli Har Homa settlement on Jabal Abu Ghneim is linked to Israel's policy of encircling Jerusalem by a settlement belt. This settlement is considered an example of Israel's heedlessness of the peace process and of its endeavor to create facts on the ground and Judaize Jerusalem, following the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993.

Regarding the settlement reality in Jerusalem, the facts in the beginning of 2002 show that many of the settlement units in Jabal Abu Ghneim remain empty, in spite of the extremely easy payments offered.







During 2007, many tenders were issued by Israeli authorities to build hundreds of housing units in various settlements. For example, on 15/12/2007, a tender was issued to build 1050 housing units near Jabal al-Mukabbir, and on 30/12/2007, another tender was issued to build 440 housing units in Armon Hanatziv, part of the Talpiot settlement south of Jerusalem.⁹⁷

On 15/1/2007, *Haaretz* newspaper revealed a new plan to establish a settlement neighborhood on the lands of Qalandia, north of Jerusalem. The plan aims at building between 11–13 housing units, to house more than 60 thousand settlers. It includes digging a tunnel under Kfar ‘Aqeb village, to connect the new neighborhood to Kochav Yaakov settlement, situated east of Jerusalem and built on the lands of the village of Barqah.⁹⁸

In parallel, and in November 2007, Jerusalem Municipality Planning and Building Committee approved the construction of 1960 new housing units in two separate neighborhoods; the first on an area of 70 donums and the second on an area of 527 donums in the Ramat Shlomo settlement established on the lands of the Shu‘fat village.⁹⁹

Within the drawn-up vision to further Israeli settlement in Jerusalem until 2020, the Israeli government has announced the confiscation of two thousand donums of the lands of al-Walaja village to establish a new settlement by the name of Giv‘at Yael. According to the plan, 13 thousand housing units will be built that can accommodate 55 thousand settlers.¹⁰⁰

In the context of the present Israeli occupation policy, the Israeli army commander of the WB has issued military order T/19/07, dated 9/10/2007, to confiscate 1,128 donums of the lands of al-Sawahirah, Abu Dis and Khan al-Ahmar, for the sake of Route 80. This street falls under





military order no. 50 related to roads and issued in 1983.¹⁰¹ The gravity of this road, from a political standpoint, lies in that it separates the north of the WB from its south. It isolates Jerusalem from its expansion to the Palestinian south and to the east, and invalidates its role as the center of activity and communication. This is in addition to expanding Jerusalem's limits in order to annex to it the settlement blocs in East Jerusalem, thus affecting a demographic change in favor of the Israelis. From an economic standpoint, this road weakens Jerusalem's status, removes it from the circle of commercial activity, eliminates it as a center of transportation and isolates surrounding villages from it.

After Annapolis, between 4/12/2007 and 12/2/2008, Israeli authorities issued tenders to build 31,990 housing units in the settlements of Jerusalem. Those tenders include the ones issued to build 11,000 in Atarot, 7,000 in 'Ein Yael, 4,000 in Giv'at Hamatos, and 7,300 in Pisgat Ze'ev and others.¹⁰²

Approval was given for building 800 settlement units in Ma'ale Adumim. Jerusalem Municipality announced Town Planning Scheme (TPS) Number 7984 on an area of 262.5 donums, to build 440 settlement units, in addition to a football field, in order to expand the settlement of East Talpiot, established on the lands of Sur Baher.¹⁰³

Building Plan Number 5834 A was also announced concerning the Giv'at Hamatos settlement, established on the lands of Beit Safafa village, southwest of Jerusalem, on an area of 411 donums, to erect 2,337 settlement units. This plan is part of a big plan to be executed on an area of one thousand donums, to establish on it 4,200 settlement units and nine hotels, to house 25 thousand settlers.¹⁰⁴



Table (2): Plans to Build New Settlements and Expanding Existing Ones in the Jerusalem Area 2008¹⁰⁵

Neighbourhood	Settlement housing units
East Talpiot-Western Armon Hanatziv (<i>Jabal al-Mukabbir</i>)	440
East Talpiot-Armon Hanatziv	180
Pisgat Ze'ev	763
Eastern Pisgat Ze'ev	759
Har Homa (<i>Jabal Abu Ghneim</i>)	121
Har Homa-Stage 2 (<i>Jabal Abu Ghneim</i>)	2,653
Ramot	180
Gilo	Hotels and residences: 1,905 units
Giv'at Hamatos (approved)	2,337
Giv'at Hamatos (submitted for public review)	813
Neve Ya'acov-Mir Forest (submitted for public review)	393

Israeli plans were made public regarding the building of seven thousand housing units in the Giv'at Yael settlement on the lands of al-Walaja village, 10 thousand housing units in the Atarot settlement on the lands of the Qalandia Airport, which is currently out of use, three thousand housing units in Gilo settlement, and 1,700 additional settlement units in Pisgat Ze'ev settlement.¹⁰⁶





Work has continued on the infrastructure of the E1 settlement, which is part of the Ma'ale Adumim bloc. (This bloc is comprised of eight settlements: Kedar, Ma'ale Adumim, Allon, Kfar Adumim, Almon, Neve Brat, Mishor Adumim, and E1). To construct its infrastructure, \$50 million were invested. The area of this settlement is 12,442 donums. Its lands were appropriated in 1994, deemed state property, from the villages of al-Tur, al-'Isawiyyah, al-'Eizariya, and 'Anata. According to the plan, four thousand housing units, 10 hotels and an industrial park will be built in the E1 area, in addition to moving the police headquarters of "Judea and Samaria" to it. The plan generated harsh criticism from the American government and the



Beit Safafa Village

This village is situated southwest of Jerusalem. In 1970, the Gilo settlement was established on it. It is one of the settlements that constitute the settlement belt around Jerusalem. In the process of building residential units for Sephardic Jews, hundreds of longevous olive trees, planted hundreds of years ago, were uprooted.

- Leonardo Hosh et al., Jewish Settlements and Roads Change the Features of Jerusalem, The Palestinian Information Center (PIC), see <http://www.palestine-info.info/arabic/alquds/tahweed/almostamrat.htm> (in Arabic)



European Union. Both demanded that the plan be frozen, on the grounds that it violated Israel's commitments according to the Road Map. Following this pressure, the Israeli government froze the project in 2004. However, building of the police headquarters was continued on the grounds that, like army bases, the police station would not be seen as creating facts on the ground, but rather as a building that could be removed.¹⁰⁷ Thus, the biggest police headquarters in the WB area was inaugurated in April 2008.





Chapter 5: The Separation Wall

Erecting the Separation Wall around the WB reflects an aspect of the Zionist isolationist mentality, which is a product of Israel's security worries and its fear of the native inhabitants, i.e., the Palestinians. In that, it does not differ from the mentality of white settlers in South Africa. That is why the Wall reminds of the apartheid policies previously adopted by the white regime there. That apartheid state had the same nature as the Israeli state, which surrounds itself by religious, political, cultural and lingual walls that separate it from the region around it, isolated in a hostile environment. The Wall is a testimony to the fact that Israel did not succeed in making itself an acceptable entity in the region.

Perhaps the most important objective of the Wall is to implement the plan of Judaizing Jerusalem by confiscating its lands and surrounding it with rings of walls and settlements that strangle it and isolate it from its Arabic





and Islamic environment. The former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert had stated that everyone who lives outside the Wall is in fact outside the state of Israel;¹⁰⁸ thus confirming the fact that this wall is not only a security wall, but also a demographic, political and economic one.

The Israeli government had erected a fence around the GS following the outbreak of the first *Intifadah* in 1987. Furthermore, Yitzhak Rabin won the 1992 elections on the slogan: “Us Here, Them There, Peace with Rabin.” In April 2002, the Israeli government approved the building of a Separation Wall in the WB; and work on it started on 16/6/2002. The government officially sanctioned the building of 652 km of the Wall in October 2003 and June 2004. In addition, Prime Minister Sharon announced in March 2003 a plan to build a wall in the Jordan Valley, east of the WB, having a length of 132 km. Then in May 2005, an Israeli ministerial committee decided that the Wall should incorporate the Ma‘ale Adumim settlement, east of Jerusalem.

In Jerusalem, the Wall’s path extends about 167 km,¹⁰⁹ with Israel erecting the Separation Wall around Jerusalem and seeking to confirm it, in its peace settlement with the Palestinians, as the final borders, 163 km² of the lands of East Jerusalem on which the largest Jewish settlements are located will be added. Thus, the area of land that Jerusalem will encompass behind the Wall will become 289 km².

According to the reports that probe the Wall’s impacts, 231 thousand Palestinians, about 56% of Jerusalemites, will be segregated by the Wall.¹¹⁰ Until October 2007, the construction of 78.5 km of the Wall around Jerusalem was completed. There were 30.6 km under construction, while 58.2 km were awaiting the start of their construction. At the same time, the construction of 10 of the 13 gates in the Separation Wall around Jerusalem was completed.¹¹¹



The Separation Wall Plan seeks to exile more than 60 thousands Jerusalemites from their city and tear up the fabric of their social and economic relationships. Through the Wall, Israel is trying to reduce the ratio of Palestinian residents in the Holy City to 22%; while their ratio now is more than 35%. It is a ratio the level of which the Israeli Ministerial Committee for Jerusalem Affairs had decided in 1973 that it is necessary to reach.





The Wall and Israeli Settlements Surrounding Occupied Jerusalem





Table (3): Development and Progress of the Operation to Erect the Wall in Jerusalem¹¹²

	Length (km)	Percentage of the wall length (%)
Completed construction	78.5	47
Under construction	30.6	18.3
Construction not yet begun	58.2	34.7
Total	167.3	100

The Wall will follow a path around Jerusalem, starting from the north of Bethlehem, encompassing Rachel's Tomb, and isolating from Jerusalem the villages of Abu Dis and al-'Eizariya. Then, it proceeds north to encompass the Ma'ale Adumim settlement, then west to isolate 'Anata, Shu'fat Refugee Camp, Hazma, al-Ram, Kafr 'Aqab and Rafat from Jerusalem. As for the villages of Bir Nabala and al-Jib villages that found themselves outside the Wall, they will be besieged by another wall that will deny them access to Jerusalem, in such a manner that they will not find for themselves an opening, except in the direction of Ramallah. Also the village of Beit Hanina will find itself west of the Wall, surrounded from three sides by it and by settlements; and it will also not find for itself an opening except by way of Bir Nabala, in the direction of Ramallah. According to estimates, the Wall will isolate from Jerusalem 18 Palestinian villages and towns, inhabited by 220 thousand Palestinians. These villages and towns constitute a natural extension of Jerusalem and are





part of the Jerusalem Governorate. Furthermore, they are linked economically and socially to Jerusalem, as well as religiously and politically. In addition, they will be deprived of their main source of income. On the other hand, more than 60 thousand Palestinians who carry Jerusalem Identity Cards (ID) will find themselves outside the Wall, of a total of 230 thousand Palestinians who carry this ID that allows them to live, reside and work in Jerusalem.

Thus, with the completion of the Wall, the Jerusalem Governorate will have lost 90% of its lands; and the settlement ring around the city will have been completed, beginning with Abu Ghneim (Har Homa) settlement in the south to Ma'ale Adumim in the east, passing by the settlements of Pisgat Ze'ev and Giv'at Ze'ev to the north of the city. Moreover, the completion of this ring that poses a threat to Jerusalem means, in short, isolating 617 holy sites and cultural landmarks from their Arabic and Islamic environment.

As an example of the suffering of Jerusalem's residents and villages, the Wall splits al-Sawahirah village which has a population of 25 thousands, placing 10 thousands of them east of the Wall and the remaining 15 thousands west of the Wall. The Wall also splits Abu Dis village, isolating Umm al-Zarazir and Khillet 'Abd neighborhoods from the rest of the village.

The Wall cuts al-Salam suburb, west of 'Anata Village into two parts, divides the village of Upper Beit Hanina into two, prevents the entrance and exit of its inhabitants except through gates or tunnels, and separates it from seven thousand donums of its agricultural lands. The Wall surrounds al-Jib village to expropriate 85% of its lands and leaves it with 1,770 donums of the original nine thousand donums.¹¹³



About 26 thousand Palestinians living in eight concentrations in Bir Nabala, 'Azoun, and al-Zawiya will be besieged from all sides by the Separation Wall. This will lead to separating entire families from their relatives, delaying school and university students from their classes in Jerusalem, and preventing Muslims and Christians from reaching their places of worship in the Holy City.

➤ The Palestinian Information Center (PIC), 10/7/2009.

Also in the north, the Wall isolates four villages inhabited by 15 thousand Palestinians in the villages of the Bir Nabala enclave, which comprises the villages of Bir Nabala, al-Jib, al-Judeira and Beit Hanina al-Balad. It is surrounded by the Wall from three sides. And on the fourth, there is an Israeli security road closed to Palestinians. Movement in and out is through a tunnel to Ramallah which passes under a motorway restricted for Israeli vehicles only.¹¹⁴





With childish gaze, eight years old Ahmad stood watching from afar the gigantic Israeli cranes placing huge concrete blocks on the outskirts of East Jerusalem. The cranes were completing the construction of the Separation Wall that the Israelis had started building in June 2002.

Perhaps Ahmad did not grasp the reality of what is going on around him of political events and of the allegations used by Israel to convince the world that the purpose for building this wall is to meet its security requirements. What he understands is that he no longer will be able to visit his friend Ghassan who lived only one minute away from his home. He no longer will be able to see those beautiful sceneries of green plains, mountains and trees that are now behind the Wall. All that he will see are huge cement blocks. Even the Israeli declaration regarding changing the color of these blocks to look better will not change this reality, he is no longer able to play with his friend as he used to; and it seems to him now as if his friend's house is at the other end of the world.

In fact, Ahmad is but one of the tens of thousands of Palestinians who live in the northern parts and are kept out of Jerusalem.

- Aljazeera.net, 3/10/2004,
<http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/563F14E2-2213-494B-A850-FE3B148233BC.htm>



A field study conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, in cooperation with BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, in the period 15/5–10/6/2006, showed that 72.1% of Jerusalemite households with students in higher education were forced to be sometimes absent from university because the area was closed; in addition, 69.4% of households with students enrolled in basic/secondary education could not do so for the same reason. Furthermore, the results of the survey show that access to health centers was a difficulty for 34.5% of the households in Jerusalem governorate.

About 21.4% of Palestinian households reported to have at least one member who was separated from relatives. In addition, 18% of the Palestinian households in Jerusalem governorate were separated from the father, whereas 12.7% of the households are separated from the mother. The results of the survey show that 32.9% of the Jerusalemite people have changed their last place of residence. The percentage of persons who changed their place of residence for the first time after the beginning of constructing the wall in 2002 amounted to 53.9% of the total persons changed their previous place of residence. The results show also that the time spent to pass checkpoints was an obstacle for 94.7% of the households. They reveal also that the ability of 84.6% of the households in Jerusalem to visit family and relatives has been affected by the wall. The wall has also affected the ability of 40% of the households to visit religious and holy sites. The survey results indicated that the percentage of households faced obstacles to marrying a partner living on the other side of the wall has increased from 31.6% before the construction of the wall to 69.4% after construction of the wall.¹¹⁵





The name: Haya

Description: a university student studying journalism at Birzeit University.

Her story starts from the end, from the tragedy. Haya looks at her hand that flew away as she was at the Israeli “Security Wall,” and says, “how did this happen? I do not know. All I remember is that I tried to traverse the wall that stands between me and my university and lectures. While I was passing through an opening in it, through which only a lean body can pass, a soldier saw me and shouted stop, stop. I paid no attention to him, for this was not the first time that I do this same thing, as it is a daily trip that I and many other students are compelled to make.”

She goes on while trying to suppress a lump in her throat, “I continued my passage with the same defiance. However, the bullet that he aimed at me was faster than my attempt to move away from its path, so it lodged in my hand. I bled for more than an hour; for they prevented the ambulance from reaching me to take me to the hospital. This delay forced the doctors later to make the decision to amputate it. The construction of this Nazi Wall took away any hope of, or the mere talk about, a settlement in the region.”

This is the suffering of thousands of students in Jerusalem who, because of the Separation Wall around the city, are forced to go through checkpoints and wait long hours to be able to reach their schools, and then return from them to their homes.

- Aljazeera.net, 3/10/2004,
<http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/D54E36A4-BF1B-42D7-B34B-A4C74F9C40BC.htm>



The villages of northwest Jerusalem have become a dry area, after the Separation Wall isolated them from the cities of Jerusalem and Ramallah, and after the Israel National Water Company (Mekorot) tightened its control of water resources, and started supplying the villages with only 25% of their daily needs. On the one hand, this measure caused great harm to the crops; and on the other hand, it forced farmers to refrain from raising sheep and poultry.

Furthermore, the villages of southeast Jerusalem constitute another example of the isolation imposed by the Separation Wall. As the two villages of Sheikh Sa'ad and Jabal al-Mukabbir have become together more like an isolated island. The number of their inhabitants is about 15 thousands. These villages are considered the eastern gate of the city, as they cannot be separated from it because they lack the necessary services, specifically health centers. Moreover, the residents of these villages have been isolated from their only cemetery, their children's schools, their work places and their families. This led more than 25% of them to leave their villages.¹¹⁶





Chapter 6: Judaizing the Population

Israeli official statistics show that the chart of population density in the Old City indicates the presence of 89,042 Muslims, 8,042 Christians in the Armenian Quarter, 9,625 Christians in the Christian Quarter and 8,232 in al-Sharaf neighborhood (or what is called the Jewish Quarter).

The demographic worry held sway over the Israeli occupation since the capture of the whole of Jerusalem in 1967. Since then, the occupation endeavored to achieve a decisive Jewish demographic majority in the city, in its capacity as Israel's capital. Shortly after its occupation in 1967, the number of Jerusalem's residents (east and west) totaled 266,300; of which 197,700 were Jews (74.24%) and 68,600 were Arabs (25.76%).¹¹⁷ For that end, a law was enacted in 1973 that limits the Palestinian ratio in the city to 22%; however, it was never able to achieve this ratio. In Jerusalem, Israel faced a major problem, represented in the fact that Jerusalem is considered an expelling city to Jewish residents. For during the years 1980–2008, the number





of Jews emigrating from the city exceeded the number of those immigrating to it by more than 100 thousand emigrants. The balance of Jewish immigration to the city was negative in every year of that period, with the exception of 1986.¹¹⁸ This is due to two factors: the high prices in Jerusalem, in particular home prices, because rich Jews from around the world took interest in buying houses in the city; and the constant struggle between religious and secular Jews, which sometimes affects the level of services provided for residents, their way of life, and their standard of education.

Hence, by the end of 2008, the number of Palestinian residents of Jerusalem came to about 268,600; while the number of Jews came to 495 thousands, 295 thousands in West Jerusalem and 200 thousands in its East. The ratio of Palestinians in the city is 35.2% against 64.8% for Jews.¹¹⁹ The Arab demographic growth in Jerusalem in the first decade of the 21st century varied between 3% and 3.7%; while the Jewish demographic growth for the same period varied between 0.9% and 1.6%.¹²⁰ It is expected that the ratio of Palestinians in the city will reach 40% in 2020, if the Palestinians and Israelis continued to experience the same rates of growth.

Table (4): Number of Palestinians and Jews in Jerusalem at the End of 2008 (thousands)

	East Jerusalem	West Jerusalem	Total	Percentage (%)
Palestinian	268.6	-	268.6	35.2
Jews	200	295	495	64.8
Total	454	295	763.6	100



To face this matter, on the 40th anniversary of its occupation of the whole of Jerusalem, on 7/8/2007, Israel approved a plan that costs \$200 million. It aims at attracting Jewish citizens to move from where they are to come live in Jerusalem. This plan included a number of projects; among them, facilitating and reducing taxes, establishing a special academy to teach Jerusalem's history and heritage, erecting a huge judicial center, granting the Municipality exceptional subsidies worth \$50 million, and moving all the police service institutions and tens of governmental departments to Jerusalem, which means moving about 10 thousand employees to the city during a period of eight years. It also included a plan to restore the walls of East Jerusalem and its ancient alleys, as well as to set up offices and employment centers.¹²¹

Economic strangulation of Jerusalem started immediately after its occupation; as the Israeli authorities intentionally exerted pressure on the Jerusalemites to shift the economic weight to West Jerusalem or outside the Municipality's limits. That was done by imposing exorbitant taxes on store owners and industrial plants in East Jerusalem; aside from granting as few permits as possible to new plants, and the absence of special industrial parks for these plants. This policy led to a wide economic migration toward the areas surrounding the city, where relatively better conditions are available for economic investment.

Thus, the economic weight started shifting north (al-Ram) or east (al-'Eizariya and Abu Dis); where the Israeli military authorities resorted to leniency in granting permits and to easing taxes, compared to the exorbitant taxes imposed in East Jerusalem; this is in addition to the existence of large areas of lands and approved structural plans. At the time when Jerusalem was suffering from land confiscation, freezing of structural plans, and building restrictions. All these factors combined led to the migration of capital toward





Successive Israeli governments have worked on implementing the recommendation of the Ministerial Committee for Jerusalem Affairs of 1973, headed by Golda Meir, which decreed that the Palestinian population of Jerusalem should not exceed 22% of the city's total population. That is why Israel resorted to the use of various means to implement this recommendation, the last of which was revoking the IDs of Jerusalem's Arab residents.

the areas surrounding Jerusalem. In parallel, the presence of industrial plants led to a great building boom; as the municipality encouraged development projects, such as al-‘Eizariya project. This, in turn, caused a significant shift of the population toward the suburbs, and resulted in emptying a large part of the Old City and its surroundings. Yet, with the outbreak of *al-Aqsa Intifadah*, and owing to closures and the setup of barricades, the Israeli policy of revoking ID cards, on the pretext that one's residence is outside the municipal limits, and the construction of the Separation Wall, the Jerusalemites returned, moving from their residences outside the municipal limits to within these limits. Thus, the number of those who returned until the beginning of 2007 came to about 40 thousand Palestinians, causing residential and educational overcrowdedness in housing units and school classes.¹²²



In order to achieve the desired objective, which is the reduction of the Arab presence in Jerusalem to the least possible number, Jerusalem's Municipality tried to avoid providing municipal services to indigenous Jerusalemites. Departing from the law of granting Israeli IDs to Jerusalemites, it became incumbent on Palestinian Jerusalemites to pay all their dues to the Municipality and the state, such as income tax, the Arnona municipal tax, the National Health Insurance, and the property tax; this is in spite of their low income and the inferior quality of the services that they receive, in comparison to the Jews; the fact that led to a worsening of the conditions of Jerusalem's Arab residents.





Chapter 7: Expelling the Jerusalemites by Revoking Their Jerusalem Residency Permits

The policy of quiet expulsion, i.e., depriving many Jerusalemite families of their citizenship right, had started in 1967; and it is continuing to this day. For during the period between January 1995 and March 2000, and through the Ministry of the Interior, Israel has practiced a new method to reduce Jerusalemites' numbers. And that by revoking the citizenship ID of every Jerusalemite who is unable to prove that he was and still is a resident of Jerusalem, and forcing him to leave the city forever; and in this case, he loses all his rights.

Israel resorted to revoking Israeli ID cards from Jerusalemites who had moved to live in the cities located at the artificial limits of Jerusalem municipality, i.e., WB cities surrounding Jerusalem. Israel considers





There are 86,226 Jerusalemites who have lost their residency right in Jerusalem since 1967 and up to mid-June 2010.

➤ *Alquds* newspaper, 27/7/2010.

those suburbs outside Israel, based on Article 11A of The Entry into Israel Regulations issued in 1974. These regulations limit the cases that allow the revoking of ID cards and cause loss of residency right to three:¹²³

1. If a person stayed outside Israel for at least seven years.
2. If a person has obtained a permanent residence permit in another country.
3. If a person has obtained citizenship of another country by naturalization..

Thus, the Jerusalemites become deprived of their rights to reside outside their country to study or work, or to have dual citizenship. What is crucial in all of that is the matter of reunification of Jerusalemite families and the registration of their children. Since 2000, the Israeli government has decided to freeze all requests for family reunification. On 31/7/2003, the Knesset enacted the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law, which denies Jerusalemites and Palestinian Israeli citizens (the 1948 Palestinians), who had married WB residents, family reunification and forces them to live apart. On 14/5/2006, the Supreme Court endorsed this law.¹²⁴



The Suffering of Jerusalemites Regarding Their IDs.

Following Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967, and its annexation to its western part, it dealt with its inhabitants as permanent residents in Israel. They did not possess the right of citizenship like the rest of the population in the other occupied territories. Israel granted them instead the "Blue ID" cards. This is the main ID document that the Palestinian Jerusalemites possess. Yet from a legal standpoint, it is tantamount to a permanent residency card that is renewed every five years in Israel's Interior Ministry. At the same time, this card does not entitle them to obtain what the WB residents get by virtue of the Oslo Accords, such as a Palestinian passport and other documents.

As for the nationality that the Jerusalemites carry outside Palestine and outside Jordan, it is the Jordanian nationality (without a national number). As, according to it, they get temporary Jordanian passports, valid for five years. However, the Jordanian authorities consider them Palestinians who do not enjoy all the rights that a Jordanian national enjoys inside the Jordanian kingdom. For, they hold three different political and legal statuses; at the same time, they carry none of the nationalities of these parties in a permanent or fixed manner. Furthermore, they cannot travel except after obtaining special permits from Israel.

- Jerusalem's Captives, Statistics and Numbers, site of Al Quds City, 31/1/2009, <http://www.alquds-online.org/index.php?s=37&ss=36&id=766>





The Jerusalemites' suffering continues and persists. Under Israeli occupation, no one has immunity; for Israel has started implementing the law of withdrawing IDs. This happened to four Jerusalemite Palestinian Legislative Council members, who are: Muhammad Abu Tair, Muhammad Toutah, Khalid Abu 'Arafa and Ahmad 'Atwan. Following their detention, the Israeli authorities confiscated their Jerusalem IDs and notified them that they should leave the city within a month, after which their resident status would be revoked. Israel threatened them with forced expulsion measures, in case they did not comply with this threat.

This Israeli policy led to the revocation of a total of 8,558 resident cards in the period 1967–2007; while the number of cards revoked during 2008 alone reached 4,577 cards; which means that the cards revoked during 2008 represent 34.8% of the total number of cards revoked since the city's occupation, the number of which comes to 13,135 cards revoked over a period of 41 years.¹²⁵



An Illegal Resident

“Gh” is a Palestinian born in Jerusalem. Due to a visit he had made to Jordan in 1976, he lost his permanent residency. In 1995, “Gh” married a Jerusalemite woman who bore him seven children. When in 1996 his wife submitted a request to reunify the family, they withdrew her ID. It took her four whole years to get it back. As for “Gh”, after exerting great effort, he was able, in 2000, to obtain a one-year temporary residency. In 2002, and after undergoing security checks, he was promised an ID within a month. Nevertheless, the Israeli Ministry of Interior decided to reject his request for security reasons. “I am 51 years old,” “Gh” says. “I work as an accountant. I underwent 34 security checks in eight years, and I have a letter from the Ministry of Public Security confirming that I do not represent a security threat. What more do they want from me? I underwent an open heart surgery, and I need treatment; but I am afraid to leave the house. After nine years of promises, I became an illegal resident.”

➤ See <http://www.ahewar.org/debat/show.art.asp?aid=10425>





Faisal al-Husseini is a Palestinian leader who faced up to the Israeli practices aimed at Judaizing Jerusalem. His dream was the establishment of a Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital.

Following the June 1967 war, Jerusalem fell under Israeli occupation; so al-Husseini decided to return to it; and he took up residence in al-Sawwaneh neighborhood. In 1979, he founded the Arab Studies Society in “Orient House.” He dedicated his efforts to researching Palestinian history and heritage, and to preparing maps that prove that the Palestinians have entitlement to Jerusalem. He searched for documents that prove the Palestinians’ ownership of buildings, houses and lands, in particular those in West Jerusalem.



Orient House - Jerusalem



In 1996, he was appointed member of the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), then became Palestinian Authority Minister without portfolio, in charge of the Jerusalem file, as the PLO representative in Jerusalem.

Al-Husseini succeeded in making Orient House the official Palestinian headquarters in the city, to which many institutions are affiliated, and which conducts a wide range of political and social activities.

Al-Husseini died on 31/5/2001 in Kuwait. His body was transported to Jerusalem where he was buried. In August of the same year, the occupation authorities closed Orient House and confiscated its belongings.





Chapter 8: The Policy of House Demolitions and Withholding Building Permits

The plans concerning regulation and building in Jerusalem were made for the sake of limiting the Jerusalemites' population and constructional growth. This state of affairs compelled the Jerusalemites to build without permits, thus subjecting their homes to the threat of demolition. The prospect of a Jerusalemite obtaining a building permit is an almost impossibility. For the cost of a permit may go as high as \$30 thousand, in addition to the length of time it takes to obtain one. Furthermore, the land itself must be already registered in the Land Registry Office in the name of the permit seeker. And if he happens to have inherited it from his father, the problem becomes much more complicated.





According to present regulations, the area available for building in Jerusalem does not exceed nine thousand donums of a total of 72 thousand donums, the total area of the eastern part of the city. Anyhow, building within these available areas requires obtaining the necessary permits that take on average three years for a single apartment, and cost on average \$300 per square meter.¹²⁶ As for the average number of building permits granted annually to the Arab population, it does not exceed 200 permits. For in the period extending



At least 28% of all Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem have been built in violation of Israeli zoning requirements.

Based on population figures, this percentage is equivalent to some 60 thousand Palestinians, who are at risk of having their homes demolished by the Israeli authorities. This is a conservative estimate and the actual figures may be much higher.

- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs–Occupied Palestinian Territory (OCHA), The Planning Crisis in East Jerusalem: Understanding the Phenomenon of “Illegal” Construction, April 2009, http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_planning_crisis_east_jerusalem_april_2009_english.pdf



from November 2007 to November 2009, Israel granted to the Jerusalemites only 400 building permits, compared to more than three thousand permits granted during the same period to Jewish settlers in East Jerusalem. This is apart from the government settlement plans.¹²⁷

These arbitrary Israeli measures prompted thousands of Jerusalemites to leave their city and go live and start their families in the WB, or even emigrate abroad; the fact which caused them to lose their status as citizens of the city. Yet, there are some who preferred to stay and live with his family in inappropriate, even tragic, living conditions, in order to preserve his right to stay in the city. The insuperable building law, in addition to the politicized and racist plans, led the Jerusalemites to resort to building without permits, and in a way that is compatible with their financial circumstances. The available data indicate

On 11/11/2004, Uri Shitrit, the then Director of urban planning, urban design and architectural administration for the City of Jerusalem, issued a directive to demolish all the buildings in al-Bustan neighborhood for the sake of building a public park called “King David Park”.



And on 21/2/2009, the Jerusalem municipality handed 134 Jerusalemite families, consisting of 1,500 persons living in 88 buildings in al-Bustan neighborhood, orders to vacate their homes in preparation for their demolition and the establishment of this park.

- The truth about what is going on in al-Bustan neighborhood, site of Al Quds City, 27/2/2009, <http://www.alquds-online.org/index.php?s=17&ss=17&id=802>; and see <http://www.miftah.org/PrinterF.cfm?DocId=7644>





that the number of unlicensed buildings currently present in Jerusalem has reached 15 thousand buildings. A consequence of building without permits was the imposition of exorbitant fines on the citizens, which, during the years 2001–2005, amounted to about \$33 million.¹²⁸



During 2009, Jerusalem Municipality has demolished approximately 110 residential units in Jerusalem; of which 35 houses were demolished by their owners, on the orders of the occupation, in what is known as self-demolition. These measures placed the Jerusalemites in a state of apprehension and fear for their future and that of their homes.

➤ *Assabeel* newspaper, Jordan, 21/4/2010.



According to available reports, in the period 2000–2008, Israel has demolished 869 houses belonging to Jerusalemites.

Table (5): Number of Demolished Houses in Jerusalem¹²⁹

Year	Number of demolished houses
2000–2003	319
2004	183
2005	120
2006	78
2007	97
2008	72
Total	869

It should be noted that it is necessary to receive these statistics with some caution, because they contradict other statistics. For the numbers put out by The Grassroots Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign, for example, indicate that the occupation machinery have demolished about 137 houses in Jerusalem and its environs, of at least 165 houses demolished in the WB during 2007.¹³⁰

Since the beginning of 2009, Israel has increased the pace of its eviction operations. Most notable of these was handing about 1,900 Jerusalemites occupying 120 properties in al-Bustan and al-‘Abbasiyyah neighborhoods in the suburb of Silwan, south of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, orders to vacate their homes. This is the biggest eviction operation planned in Jerusalem by Israel since the demolition of the Moroccan Quarter in 1967. Besides, there are vigorous attempts to expel the residents of Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood that includes 27 properties, inhabited by about 500 Palestinians. Moreover, there are expulsion attempts going on, using various means, against the Islamic Quarter of the Old City and al-Tur neighborhood... and others.¹³¹





Um Kamel... the Ambassador of Steadfastness in Jerusalem

The story of Hajjah Fawziyyah, known as “Um Kamel al-Kurd,” summarizes chapters of the suffering of many others like her who had their homes in East Jerusalem confiscated by Israel. She was thrown, by force, out of her home in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood. However, she put up resistance, and pitched her tent in front of her confiscated house. Here starts the story of her steadfastness.

Um Kamel Tells Her Story

At first, they confiscated half my house after the judge had asked us to come to an understanding with our new Jewish neighbors on dividing the house in two, quietly and without going to court. When my sons refused the understanding order, an unjust ruling was issued against us, to the effect that the house should be closed and we should pay a 120 thousand shekel fine... We paid the fine and we closed the second half of our house; while the execution department confiscated all its contents.

A Jewish family resided in the confiscated part of the house. It practiced all kinds of tricks and ploys to throw us, my semi-crippled husband (Abu Kamel) and myself, out for good from the other part of the house after they had driven out our children. The settlers' children used to periodically vandalize the beautiful scenery of my house's courtyard... they used to pour dirty water and throw trash at the door of my room. In addition, the wife of the Jew who usurped half my house used to bring a picture of a Palestinian child, wearing the traditional headdress, the Kufiyyah. She would buy her son, who is not yet five years old, a beads gun, and ask him to shoot beads at the picture of the Palestinian boy, saying, “aim at his eye, mouth, chest... thus we drive this Palestinian woman out of the house,” meaning me.



Financial Temptation

In the face of my rejection of all these threats, the past Israeli Minister of Tourism, Benny Elon, came to my house and offered me a blank check, saying, “Um Kamel! We want this house, put any figure you want. If you wish, we will give you ten millions; but it is important that you get out...” I laughed and told him, “all the world’s figures cannot make me sell my country and my memories.”

On 9/11/2008, after the occupation failed to uproot me from the remaining part of my house, a large contingent of the Israeli army, police and Special Forces stormed into the house at night, finding my sick husband and myself in it; they threw us out into the street.

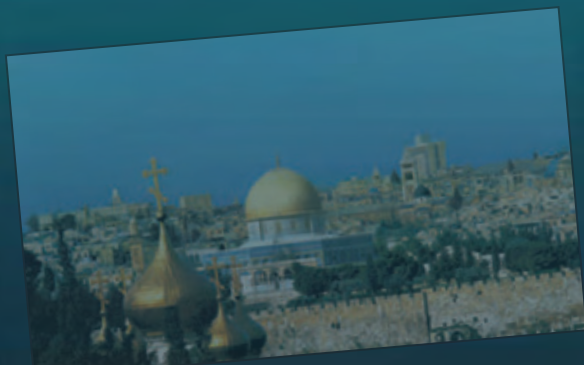
Thereupon, I moved to a new life. I refused to leave the house’s courtyard and I set up a protest tent, which, in its turn, was subjected to confiscation more than six times. They pursued me with cash fines, in addition to a notable statement published in Hebrew newspapers by former Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni regarding the numerous delegations and groups visiting my tent, in which she threatened me with expulsion, saying that I must get out of my tent immediately. Rather I must get out of all of Jerusalem... What added to my perseverance is that my tent has become bigger than their occupation.

Abu Kamel Dies

Abu Kamel could not bear the pain of eviction, and he had a heart attack that night. He continued to contend with pain. He said to me that day, “I want to die here; I want to be buried here, close to my home.” However, he was moved to the hospital because his condition had worsened. On 22/11/2008, he asked me to bring him food. My son hurried to the market and brought him food. He ate, shaved, and then he asked me, “When I get out of the hospital O Fawziyyah! To where shall I return?” He passed away!! What he did not find on earth, he will find with God.

- Aljazeera.net, 11/5/2010; *al-Khaleej* newspaper, al-Shariqa, 17/4/2009. See also The Occupation Begins the Practical Steps to Usurp the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in Jerusalem, starting with the house of the Jerusalemite family al-Kurd, site of Al Quds City, 5/12/2008, <http://www.alquds-online.org/index.php?s=17&ss=17&id=744>





Chapter 9: Attacks on Islamic Holy Sites and Endowments

Islamic endowments and holy sites did not escape Israeli attacks, confiscation and attempt to wipe their traces. For Palestine is full of holy sites and land pieces that their owners had endowed for the service and needs of Muslims, the poor, the needy, the knowledge seeker, the wayfarer, and those in the service of mosques. Endowments in Palestine total about 1,680 thousand donums (6.25% of the area of Palestine), representing 10% of the totality of agricultural lands. In Palestine, there are 340 villages that are considered total or partial endowments, such as the villages of Bourin, Beit Foureek, Shatta and Sa'sa'.

In the territories occupied in 1948, the Israelis have seized most endowments, on the pretext that they are absentees' properties. They handed them over to Jewish immigrants who established on them settlements and





agricultural, industrial and commercial enterprises. Even the Muslims' mosques, graveyards and historical monuments did not escape this assault. For, since the establishment of Israel and up to 2006, the occupation forces have destroyed 76 Islamic worship sites, and turned 18 mosques into synagogues (Jewish houses of worship), in addition to 17 mosques that were turned into barns for animals.¹³²

For example, al-Dhaher Bebars Mosque in al-Majdal, built more than 700 years ago, was converted into a restaurant. As for the most famous mosque in Jaffa, al-Saksak Mosque, it was turned into a club for Jews of Bulgarian descent. The Qaysariyah Mosque was turned into a bar and a tavern; the Small Mosque in Haifa became a center for drug use and prostitution; while Safad Mosque was turned into an antiquities museum and tourism bureaus. In Ashkelon, Imam Hussein Mosque and Shrine were demolished; in their place, a Jewish hospital was erected. The other mosques were not better off than those we have mentioned as examples, for they were subjected to similar fates; among these, the mosques of Acre, Tiberias, Safad, Houqeen, Aqrat, Abu Kabir, Salama, Qibyah, Amwas, Loubia, Sarafand... and others.¹³³

Regarding the Sanctuary of Abraham (*al-Haram al-Ibrahimi*) in Hebron, its share of Israel's hostile practices was and continues to be immense. As most its area was confiscated and made into a synagogue and a shrine for the worship of Jews. More than once the call for Muslim prayer (*Adhan*) in it was barred, under the pretense of weddings being held in it. These parties are accompanied by loud music, drinking and dancing; all of which takes place under the protection of the Israeli army. In November 2008, Israeli forces closed the Sanctuary of Abraham for two days, ostensibly to allow Jewish worshippers to commemorate the death of the biblical matriarch, Sarah. During the same month, the settlers assaulted once again an Islamic cemetery and a mosque in Hebron, by writing words insulting to the Prophet



Muhammad (peace be upon him) on the mosque's walls. Jewish settlers tried to burn down al-Ra's Mosque, situated east of Hebron. In addition, they threw trash inside it.¹³⁴

In March 2006, the Kadima Party turned the historic Red Mosque in Safad into the headquarters of its election campaign. While al-Manshiya Mosque in Acre was subjected to repeated attacks, as on 15/5/2006, a group of settlers, men, women and even children, set fire to it. Two years later, some Jewish settlers desecrated it, and wrote on its walls phrases offensive to Islam and Arabs. On 9/5/2009, tens of extremist Jews wrote racist slogans on its walls. In 2008, al-Zaidani Mosque of Tiberias city was converted into a warehouse for building materials. And on 9/1/2009, a group of extremist settlers tried to burn down Sea Mosque in Tiberias.¹³⁵

In 2008, an Israeli decree was issued to tear down al-'Umari Mosque in the village of Umm Tuba south of Jerusalem; in spite of the fact that this mosque was built during the rule of the Caliph 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab, and was rebuilt during the Ayyubid era. It is the only mosque of this village of about three thousand people.¹³⁶

During 2009, the mosques of the occupied WB were subjected to 15 attacks; most of which concentrated on Hebron and were directed against the Sanctuary of Abraham. The most violent among them was the attack at dawn on Friday 11/12/2009 in the Yasuf village, when settlers set fire to the Hasan Khadr Grand Mosque, east of the city of Salfit, north of the WB. This fire led to burning large sections of it. On 2/6/2009, extremist Jews threw a dead pig on the entrance of Nabi Elias Mosque in the city of Qalqilya.¹³⁷

During the Israeli aggression against GS that lasted 22 days, starting on 27/12/2008 and until 18/1/2009, Israel targeted 152 mosques, totally destroying 45 of them, and inflicting partial damage on the remaining 107.¹³⁸





The Sanctuary of Abraham Massacre

Date: 25/2/1994

Time: Dawn prayer

Place: The Sanctuary of Abraham

Event: Firing bullets from an automatic assault rifle on prostrating worshippers

Criminal: Baruch Goldstein

The massacre started when Baruch entered the Mosque during dawn prayer. He stood behind one of the mosque's columns and waited until the worshippers prostrated themselves and started firing his machine gun on them, while others helped him load ammunition that included dum dum bullets. The shrapnels of bombs and bullets pierced worshippers' heads, necks and backs.

During the execution of the massacre, the Israeli soldiers, present in the Sanctuary, closed the mosque's door to prevent the worshippers' escape. They also kept those coming from outside the Sanctuary from reaching its courtyard to come to the rescue of the injured. Israeli officials counted 39 Palestinians killed at the mosque; the Palestinians figured 52, plus 70 wounded. The killer continued shooting till he was eventually cracked over the head by a fire extinguisher hurled by someone in the crowd and then beaten lifeless.

➤ Aljazeera.net, 3/10/2004; and *Time* magazine, 7/3/1994.



The Sanctuary of Abraham Epitomizes Hebron's Suffering: Siege and Partition

The story of the Sanctuary of Abraham is that of all of Hebron, in continuously confronting the attacks of the settlers and the Israeli army. It is an old story, the bitterness of which can be tasted with every step taken toward the Sanctuary. Coming closer to it, the picture of the suffering becomes clearer.



The first thing that meets a person is a revolving iron barrier, which opens and closes on orders from the Israeli army; and through which visitors pass, one after the other.

At the Sanctuary's inner and outer gates, there are Israeli electronic doors, manned by conscripts, males and females, especially assigned to search those coming in to visit or pray. All those who traverse the barrier for the first time feel distress and sorrow for what is taking place; especially that the search has humiliating dimensions to the Palestinians; in the hope that this will make them stop their visits.

This is what Iman al-Rajabi felt when the Israeli soldier at the barrier forced her to take off her belt, with what this implies in conservative societies. Iman thought long about the matter; at first she refused to submit to the soldier's orders. But she was stuck between two barriers, with no other way out. If she did not comply, they can intercept her at the other gate. She had no choice but to obey the order, deeply distressed; a state for which the soldier cared less.

Grief turns into anguish upon entering the Sanctuary and seeing the partition that has befallen it at the hands of the occupation authorities and settlers. An iron barrier rises inside to divide the Sanctuary into two parts: the greatest part was confiscated by the Jews, and constitutes four-fifths of the mosque. The remaining part belongs to the Muslims, and makes up the remaining fifth of its area. Each part has its own doors and path. However, the difference is big between the two. There are checkpoints on the Jewish side, and no IDs are demanded from the young men going to prayer. They are not detained under the sun or rain for hours, and they are not forced to take off their clothes and be searched. This only happens to Palestinian worshippers, men, women and children.

➤ *Al-Akhbar* newspaper, Beirut, 16/5/2009.





Israeli Attacks Against



The dome of The Sea Mosque in Tiberias, on which slogans of Satan Worshipper groups are written in red.

The historic mosque of Tiberias that has become a garbage dump.



Ein al-Zeitun Mosque in Safed, in the Northern District of Israel, which Israel had turned into a cows' barn.

Islamic Holy Sites

The historic al-Sit Sakina prayer house, built in the Mamluk period, and which was converted into a synagogue named Rachel's Tomb Synagogue.



The Nabi Daoud Mosque was converted into a Jewish synagogue under the name of King David's Tomb Synagogue.

Hammam al-'Ein building, one of the historic Islamic buildings over which they erected "Tent of Isaac" or Ohel Yitzhak Synagogue.





The cemetery of Biyar 'Adas village that was turned into a parking lot, a pedestrian walkway, and a site for trash containers in the middle of Hod Hasharon settlement, built over the village's ruins.



On 21/7/2009, some Jewish societies and personalities presented a request to the Supreme Court to endorse considering Gate of Mercy Cemetery, which is adjacent to the eastern wall of *al-Aqsa* Mosque, a public garden, and to begin converting 1,800 square meters of the cemetery's area into a biblical garden. On 16/3/2011, the Israeli Supreme Court approved the biblical garden.



The Israelis claim that the aim of the excavations and constructions in the Mamilla Cemetery is to build the "Museum of Tolerance."

How can tolerance be combined with digging up the graves of others?!



The Israelis did not respect the sanctity of Muslims' graveyards, as part of Yazur cemetery near Jaffa was confiscated in order to build a street on it; the rest was turned into workshops and a garbage dump. Sheikh Mu'nis Cemetery near Jaffa was converted into workshops and factories. On another part of it, buildings belonging to Tel Aviv University were erected. As for the Istiqlal Mosque in Haifa, part of it was cleared, and around three thousand graves were disinterred; in their place, a tourist hotel was built. The Israelis disinterred the grave of Fatima, daughter of al-Hussein the son of 'Ali ibn Abi Taleb, in the Bani Na'im village near Hebron, claiming to be looking for archeological remains. They also tried to dig up the grave of Sheikh Ezzedeen al-Qassam, symbol of struggle and patriotism in twentieth century Palestine.¹³⁹

On 21/6/2009, the Israeli Supreme court allowed the construction of cow barns over the graveyards of the displaced al-Barwah Village. On the next day, the same court gave the same ruling regarding the displaced Ijzim village. On 18/8/2009, Israel tore down the southern wall of al-Naqib Cemetery in Lod.¹⁴⁰



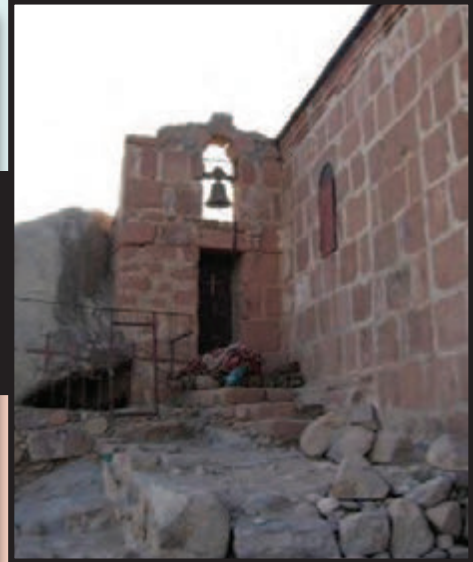


Chapter 10: Attacks on Christian Holy Sites and Endowments

Israeli attacks were not confined to Islamic endowments; for Christian holy sites were also subjected to attacks. Thus, in 1948, the Israelis occupied the church of Notre Dame de France in Jerusalem, in order to use it as a base for their attacks. In addition, Israel dredged the graves in the courtyard of Church of St. Mary Magdalene at Gethsemane in Jerusalem, in order to build a road over it. This step was taken without notifying the dead persons' families, so that they would remove their remains.

On 3/3/2006, a Jewish settler, along with his wife and daughter, carried out an attack against the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth, using gas bombs and firecrackers. This took place during prayer for the coming Easter holiday, when tens of worshippers were present in the basilica. This caused burns to parts of the Church, in particular the prayer hall; and resulted in protests during which some people were injured.¹⁴¹





Israeli Attacks Against Christian Holy Sites

Throughout the last fifty years, Christian holy sites were subjected to official Israeli attacks, or attacks by Jewish extremists. For, some real estate and land endowments were confiscated, such as al-Mansoura Church. There were attempts to burn down churches, as has happened to the Baptist Church in Jerusalem. Israeli authorities have demolished tens of churches in many Palestinian villages and cities that were destroyed in 1948, as soon as their inhabitants had left them, such as al-Bassa Church. Moreover, many churches were subjected to theft by Israeli gangs; as in 1969, a Jewish gang stole the Virgin Mary Icon and her gold crown from the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

Christian cemeteries did not escape Israeli attacks; as in 1948, Israeli bulldozers plowed Christian graveyards and converted them into fields and orange groves. This is in addition to the many unethical acts of desecration carried out by Jewish extremists against Christian holy sites, such as urinating and defecating in many locations inside the Monastery of the Cross in Jerusalem.

- ‘Adnan Ibrahim Hasan al-Sabbah, “The Role of Palestinian Civil Society in the Protection of Holy Sites,” Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), <http://www.isesco.org.ma/arabe/publications/Mokad/p18.php#> (in Arabic)



From time to time, the police and Jewish settlers attack Christian clergymen in Jerusalem's streets and churches, beating, insulting and cursing them, and even spitting on them! This occurred more than once, in particular during the Syriacs' celebration of Easter and the Copts celebration of their holidays. Some Christian religious sites were subjected to arson, such as the one that burned the Baptist Church in West Jerusalem on 24/10/2007; this comes after its first fire in 1982.¹⁴² On 27/4/2008, the Israeli authorities attacked Christian worshippers and prevented them from getting to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to perform their religious rites. In addition, on 28/10/2008, a settler stormed into the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, assaulted a number of monks, and smashed several wooden crosses in a tourist shop adjacent to the Church. On 18/4/2009, a scuffle broke out in the vicinity of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher between Palestinians and the Israeli police, during the "Holy Saturday" celebrations, because the Israelis tried to prevent Palestinian Christians from entering the Church, and allowed in only foreign tourists. On 29/4/2009, Jerusalem's Municipality issued orders to demolish buildings in the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate in Jerusalem's Old City, situated on the Via Dolorosa (Third and Fourth Stations).¹⁴³

On the other hand, the Orthodox Church owns one quarter of the Old City, the area of which is one kilometer square. It also owns vast lands, monasteries and cemeteries, outside Jerusalem's Old City, in addition to real estates in the largest Palestinian cities. However, a substantial part of these properties were passed to the Jewish occupiers, by way of sale or long-term 99 years lease.

The Orthodox Church has lost its cemetery, the lands of Mar Saba Monastery in Bethlehem, and the lands of Jabal Abu Ghneim in Jerusalem, which were turned into a large Israeli settlement, called Har Homa.





The Church of the Holy Sepulcher

During 2009, Israeli attacks were not confined to attempts to control Church endowments in collusion with the Greek clergy; this year also witnessed an assault on the most sacred Christian holy site in the city. That took place when Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) began, on 23/11/2009, to carry out excavations and restoration operations near St. Mary's Gate in the western wall of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. It was said that the aim of these operations was to reopen the closed Mary's Gate, without consulting the Church or even coordinating with it.

- Mohsen Moh'd Saleh (editor), *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2009/10* (Beirut: al-Zaytouna Center for Studies and Consultations, 2011), p. 315.



It has also lost what used to be the biggest shelter for Jerusalem's pilgrims coming from Moscow, on which today the Moscowbiya Detention Center stands, and the lands of Abu Tor. Furthermore, the headquarters of Israeli president, the prime minister's official residence, the Israeli Ministry of Education building and the Israel Museum, all of these are Israeli government facilities built on lands belonging to the Orthodox Patriarchate in West Jerusalem. These are the lands of Talbiyyeh neighborhood, Abu Tor Monastery, Abu Ghosh, and Monastery of the Cross. For some time now,

The former Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, Irineos I, a Greek, had sold a large piece of land in Jerusalem, belonging to the Church; and known as Omar Ibn al-Khattab Square. It includes two hotels and 27 shops, and is situated in Jerusalem's Old City at Jaffa Gate.

- Who is Selling the Church's Real Estates in Jerusalem?, *Almustaqbal* newspaper, Beirut, 21/12/2009, <http://www.almoustaqbal.com/stories.aspx?StoryID=384438>



Israel wanted to own them definitively. As for the Knesset building, it was built on the land of Rehavia, west of Jerusalem; after the ILA had rented it in 1952 from the Orthodox Church, for a period of 99 years. According to the contract, on the authority of which the deal was concluded, Israel has the automatic right to extend the term of the contract. In addition, the contract grants the president of the Israeli Supreme Court the right to appoint an arbiter to draw up the conditions for extending the contract as he sees fit, and without referring to the Patriarchate; which is, in this case, under legal





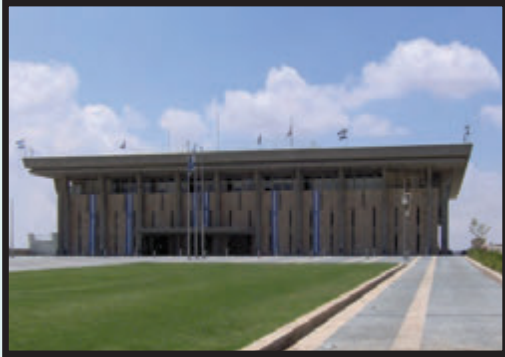
obligation to comply with it! It should be pointed out that the total of these lands, situated west of Jerusalem, have an area of 520 donums, on which stand the Israeli Knesset building, the residence of the Israeli president, that of its prime minister, and other governmental buildings and residences. Their value is estimated at more than half a billion dollars.¹⁴⁴ On 9/5/2008, the Israel National Fund proposed renewing the lease for a further 999 years instead of 99 years, for only nine million dollars. However, on 10/3/2011, the property was leased for a new 99 years period as of 2051, i.e., for the next 140 years, for approx \$23 million.¹⁴⁵

One of the most important lands that The Jerusalem Municipality had rented for 250 years from the Orthodox Patriarchate is that of al-Ansari that has an area of more than 25 donums, and is situated only few hundred meters away from *al-Aqsa* Mosque. This is the land on which this municipality had lately started to establish biblical gardens, in an attempt to achieve total control over what is called the “Holy Basin,” to Judaize Jerusalem. Israel has confiscated numerous Christian endowment lands near al-‘Eizariya and Abu Dis, east of Jerusalem. These are the lands on which the Ma‘ale Adumim settlement was established. This is in addition to turning some of them into parks and parking lots, such as the endowment lands in Damascus Gate in Jerusalem’s Prophets Street.¹⁴⁶

The Christian Arabs openly accuse the patriarchate leadership of not being trustworthy where the Church’s properties are concerned. As transactions were discovered that involve selling and renting Palestinian Church lands, for long periods of time, to Israeli authorities. This took place since Israel was established, in particular, in the first half of the fifties of the twentieth century.



Some of the Israeli Government Facilities Built on Lands Belonging to the Orthodox Patriarchate



The Israeli Knesset, built
over the Ruins of Sheikh
Badr Village



Headquarters of the
Israeli Government



The Ministry of
Education and Culture



The Israeli Museum



This is in addition to harassing patriotic personalities inside the Church, such as Father 'Atallah Hanna. Today, the Christian Arabs demand that the Palestinian and Jordanian authorities amend the law pertaining to their church, allowing the Greek hegemony over it to be lifted.



Archbishop Theodosios 'Atallah Hanna stated that, whoever sells endowments and real estates to Israel represents only himself. No! Rather we can stigmatize his action as high treason against the Church, Jerusalem, and the people. In fact,

there are among the Greek patriarchs who followed in succession since 1948 as heads of the Patriarchate those who wasted or relinquished some vital and strategic Orthodox properties in Jerusalem. This is not a secret, nor is it hidden from anyone. As for us, we believe that it is absolutely not admissible to be satisfied with condemning and rejecting what those had done; we should rather find a legal mechanism that would enable us to recover these endowments. This is because I absolutely believe that what had been passed stealthily, under occupation, is an invalid measure, null and void, bereft of any legality or legitimacy. For the presence of occupation is initially illegal; and what transpires from the occupation has no legal aspect.

- An interview with 'Atallah Hanna, *al-Mushahid Assiyasi* magazine, 10/11/2007, <http://www.almushahidassiyasi.com/4/5023>



On 18/3/2005, the Hebrew newspaper *Maariv* revealed a secret deal made by the Orthodox Church Patriarch Irineos I, between the Orthodox Church and two Jewish settlement groups; according to which, the Church relinquished the lands on which stand the Imperial Hotel and Petra Hotel, as well as 27 trade establishments, owned by the Orthodox Patriarchate in Omar Ibn al-Khattab Square in the Jaffa Gate area in Jerusalem's Old City. Following a wave of widespread protests against the Patriarch, he was dismissed from his post on 5/5/2005, when his implication in the matter was confirmed.

On 22/8/2005, Theophilos III was elected the new Patriarch. Upon his election, he promised to safeguard Orthodox endowments and to do his utmost to regain what the Church had lost during the reigns of his predecessors, in particular that of Irineos I. Israel continued its attempts to extort him and hinder the official ceremonies of his investiture, by linking its approval of his appointment to his approval of selling the real estates of the Greek Church in Jerusalem. He was compelled to make the threat that he will resort to the International Court of Justice to gain Israel's recognition of him, and that they are trying to blackmail him... They made him understand that if he did not approve real estate deals with those close to the government in Israel, he will not be recognized as Jerusalem's Patriarch. This recognition was issued on 16/12/2007, following an evident American intervention and a long period of suffering designed to let the new patriarch understand that the last word concerning him belongs to Israel.¹⁴⁷





Name: Theophilos, a Greek term, meaning God's friend.

Occupation: Jerusalem's patriarch. He succeeded Patriarch Irineos I who was dismissed because of a deal he made, which sold to Jews real estates belonging to the Patriarchate and located in the region of the Jaffa Gate.

His most important pledges: he signed a pledge in the Jordanian Interior Ministry, composed of eight clauses, to ensure the interest of the followers of his religious denomination and cancel the powers of attorney issued by Irineos I. He announced, time and again, that the Orthodox Patriarchate is not a real estate agency, that the era of weakness in this regard has passed, and that the Patriarchate will defend, with all its might, every speck of dust of its properties. It will not allow exploiters to seize the chance for quick gain at its expense or that of its parishioners.

Yet later, he was accused of submitting to Israeli extortion, and concluding a deal to sell 71 donums of Church endowments from the land of Mar Elias Monastery, on the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road.



On 9/8/2009, the Executive Committee of The Orthodox Conference in Palestine issued a statement in which it revealed that the Greek Patriarch Theophilos III had sold an area estimated at 71 donums of the lands of Mar Elias Monastery, located on the road connecting Jerusalem to Bethlehem, south of Jerusalem. The Patriarch had concluded this transaction in total secrecy. In its session of 6/8/2009, the Holy Synod admitted the right of the second company to the land, and approved its sale by Theophilos III.¹⁴⁸ This meant that this Patriarch is following in the steps of his predecessor Irineos I in submitting to Israeli extortion; even if that came at the expense of the properties and endowments of the Christian Arabs in Jerusalem, and affected negatively facing up to the Zionist scheme in Palestine.





Conclusion

All the cosmetics of the world cannot beautify Israel's ugly face and its practices in Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Israeli aggression had targeted West Jerusalem until it expelled all its Arab residents and confiscated their lands. It had also targeted East Jerusalem, destroying the Moroccan Quarter and confiscating al-Sharaf neighborhood. It has spread its settlement outposts everywhere in Jerusalem's Old City. It has laid siege to *al-Aqsa* Mosque with attacks, excavations and forbidding visits, at the time when it prepares to erect the alleged temple in its place. The Israelis brought to East Jerusalem about 200 thousand settlers, built about 15 settlements and settlement neighborhoods, and surrounded Jerusalem with a racist Separation Wall, behind which, there is another wall of settlement blocks, circling Jerusalem and keeping it from connecting with its Palestinian Arab Muslim environment.





Simultaneously, they confiscated most of the Palestinian lands east of Jerusalem, and denied the Palestinians the right to build on them; while placing the Jerusalemites under harsh economic, social, educational and political conditions, to force them to leave. They also revoked the ID cards of thousands of Jerusalemites, and are in the process of subjecting 15 thousand Palestinian homes to demolition and destruction, on the pretext that their owners did not obtain valid permits for them.

In spite of all this suffering, the Jerusalemite is steadfast in his land, clinging hard to it. His insistence and perseverance are a source of pride and glory to every Palestinian, Arab and Muslim, rather to every human being seeking rightness, justice and freedom. Yet this steadfastness must find those who support and sustain it, from those who stand by the Palestinians' just cause. Everyone must go past the language of slogans and hopes to the language of progress and deeds that get implemented on the ground. It is the battle of wills in which what is effective is preparation, more work, sacrifice and perseverance.



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¹⁰ See Ziad al-Hasan, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

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The Suffering of

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under the Israeli Occupation

معاناة القدس والمقدسات

تحت الاحتلال الإسرائيلي

7

Am I Not a Human?

This Book

The Israeli occupation is accelerating the pace of Judaizing Jerusalem and the holy sites in Palestine, at all levels. It starts with the excavations under *al-Aqsa* Mosque, the attempts to burn the mosque or demolish it, and building Jewish synagogues below or around it. The book explains the Israeli process of Judaizing the population, as by harassing the city's native inhabitants and trying to expel them, while bringing in Jewish settlers from all over the world. Israeli authorities work vigorously on Judaizing the Holy City's features, through demolishing houses, razing relics and Islamic and Christian cemeteries as well as establishing settlements over their ruins, in addition to constructing the Separation Wall in an attempt to separate Jerusalem from West Bank and its Arabic environment, and renaming places and streets according to alleged historical considerations.

This book is the seventh in the series *Am I not a Human?* that speaks about the various aspects of suffering that resulted from the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the expulsion of its people; it uses a style that addresses the mind and the heart, within a scientific, methodical and documented frame. The book presents only a part of what Jerusalem and the holy sites in Palestine suffer under Israeli occupation. It is a suffering that touches all of life's aspects, as this study illustrates.



Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations

مركز الزيتونة للدراسات والاستشارات

P.O.Box: 14-5034 Beirut - Lebanon

Tel: +961 1 803 644 | Tel-fax: +961 1 803643

info@alraytouna.net | www.alraytouna.net



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