

A request to *imams*:

In light of the ongoing violence in Masjid al-Aqsa, please dedicate a *khutba* about Masjid al-Aqsa so that your congregations can be reminded of the struggle in Palestine.

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نستهديه, و نعوذ بالله من شرور
أنفسنا و من سيأت أعمالنا, من يهده الله فلا مضلله و من يضلله فلا هادي
له . و نشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له و نشهد أن سيدنا و نبينا و
مولانا محمدا عبده و رسوله.
أما بعد:

قال الله تعالى في القرآن المجيد و الفرقان الحميد:
سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى
الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

و قال النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم:
عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: صَلَاةُ الرَّجُلِ
فِي بَيْتِهِ بِصَلَاةٍ وَصَلَاتُهُ فِي مَسْجِدِ الْقِبَاةِ بِخَمْسٍ وَعَشْرِينَ صَلَاةً وَصَلَاتُهُ
فِي الْمَسْجِدِ الَّذِي يُجْمَعُ فِيهِ بِخَمْسٍ مِائَةٍ صَلَاةً وَصَلَاتُهُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ
الْأَقْصَى بِخَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ صَلَاةً وَصَلَاتُهُ فِي مَسْجِدِي بِخَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ صَلَاةً
وَصَلَاةً فِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ بِمِائَةِ أَلْفِ صَلَاةٍ
رواه أحمد

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.

My dear respected ‘*ulama*, elders, brothers, mothers, sisters and youngsters: *Assalamu*
‘alaykum wa rahmatullah wa barakatuh,

It is with great pain that I stand here today in front of you.

In the comfort of our beautiful homes and mosques, dressed in finery, my heart bleeds and
cries at the thought of what is taking place in the al-Ard al-Muqaddasah, Bayt al-Maqdis and
Masjid al-Aqsa—the Holy Land, Jerusalem and the Farthest Mosque.

O believers:

- This is the land of our patriarch – Sayyiduna Ibrahim (peace be upon him),
- This is the place from which our beloved and blessed Prophet (peace be upon him) began his ascent to the Heavens,
- This is the place that was the *qiblah* in the early stages of Islam,
- This is the place that was the abode and refuge of all Prophets from time immemorial,
- This is the place from where *wahy*, revelation, descended,
- This is the land of resurrection, *mahshar*,
- This is the place where the blessed Prophet (peace be upon him) led *salah* with the closest angels to Allah behind him,
- This is the land which is home to the third Holiest site in Islam, the Third Haram of Islam – Masjid al-Aqsa.

My respected and dear ones, my heart pains and cries at the thought of what is taking place there at this moment in time.

A site that is Islamic and has been Islamic and Muslim for over 1400 years, today it cries out to the Ummah for help and yearning, and it has been doing so since 1967 when Israeli Occupation began.

As its sanctity and holiness is violated repeatedly, Al-Quds and Masjid al-Aqsa cries out to the Ummah.

As the rights and honour of Muslims, who have lived in its vicinity and worshipped there for 1400 years, are violated repeatedly, Al-Quds and Masjid al-Aqsa cries out to the Ummah.

Our Condition

As it cries out, our condition remains indifferent.

We have become desensitised to what is taking place in Palestine, and in Jerusalem and Masjid al-Aqsa specifically.

The constant seeing and hearing of violence in the vicinity of Masjid al-Aqsa has made us indifferent to what is taking place.

Blood and killings and violations—they have little impact on our hearts.

Our younger generation is such that it has been born and nurtured in a way that Israeli Occupation is seen as the norm. We have become desensitised to the issue. It is sad, but this is the case.

Our younger generations are growing up without realising that along with the two Harams in Makkah and Madinah, Masjid al-Aqsa is also a sacred Islamic site. However, when we look at the corpus of Islamic literature – the Quran and Hadith – we see the *fadail* of Masjid al-Aqsa time and again.

Merit 1

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : ((لَا تُشَدُّ الرَّحَالَ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ : الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ، وَمَسْجِدِ الرَّسُولِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، وَمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى))
(Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Translation: Abu Hurayrah relates that the Prophet said, "You should not undertake a special journey to visit any place other than the following three Masajid (with the expectation of receiving greater reward); the Sacred Masjid of Makkah (Ka'bah), this Masjid of mine (the Prophet's Masjid in Madinah), and Masjid al-Aqsa (of Jerusalem)."

- We see that along with the Harams in Makkah and Madinah, the third Haram of significant Islamic importance, as detailed by the Prophet (pbuh) is the Haram in Jerusalem.

Merit 2

عن أبي ذر رضي الله عنه قال : قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَيُّ مَسْجِدٍ وُضِعَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوَّلَ ؟ قَالَ : ((الْمَسْجِدُ الْحَرَامُ)) قَالَ قُلْتُ : ثُمَّ أَيُّ ؟ قَالَ : ((الْمَسْجِدُ الْأَقْصَى)) ، قُلْتُ : كَمْ كَانَ بَيْنَهُمَا ؟ قَالَ : ((أَرْبَعُونَ سَنَةً ، ثُمَّ أَيُّمَا أَدْرَكَتَكَ الصَّلَاةُ بَعْدُ فَصَلَّهُ فَإِنَّ الْفَضْلَ فِيهِ))

(Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Translation: Abu Dharr reported that he asked the Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah, which Masjid was built first on earth?" The Prophet e replied, "The Sacred Masjid of Makkah." Abu Dharr again asked, "Which was next?" The Prophet said, "The Masjid al-Aqsa." Abu Dharr t further asked "How long was the period between the building of the two Masajid?" The Prophet e said, "Forty years." Apart from these, offer your prayers anywhere when it is time to pray, as excellence lies in it."

- From this Hadith we see it was the second *masjid* built on the earth.

Merit 3

فعن البراء رضي الله عنه قال : ((صَلَّيْنَا مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ نَحْوَ بَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ سِتَّةَ عَشَرَ أَوْ سَبْعَةَ عَشَرَ شَهْرًا ثُمَّ صَرَفَهُ نَحْوَ الْقِبْلَةِ))
(Narrated by al-Bukhari)

Translation: Al-Bara' narrates, "We prayed along with the Prophet facing Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) for sixteen or seventeen months. Then Allah ordered him to turn his face towards the Ka'bah (in Makkah)."

- When the Prophet (pbuh) arrived in Madinah, he would lead the Companions in prayer towards Jerusalem. This remained the case, according to this Hadith, for 16 or 17 months. Then the Qibla was changed. We understand from this that Masjid al-Aqsa was the first Qibla of the Muslims.

Merit 4

{سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى
الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ} [الإسراء: 1]

Translation: “Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from Masjid Haram to Masjid Al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing.”

Allah mentions Himself in this Quran that He Himself has blessed this *masjid*, it is because of this that it is said: if this was the only *fadilah* that the Masjid al-Aqsa had, then it would be sufficient.

Merit 5

فَعَنْ مَيْمُونَةَ مَوْلَاةِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَتْ : قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَفْتِنَا
فِي بَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ ؟ قَالَ ((أَرْضُ الْمَحْشَرِ وَالْمَنْشَرِ ...))

(Narrated by Ibn Majah)

It is narrated in a Hadith that Maymunah (ra) asked the Prophet (pbuh) regarding Jerusalem, Bayt al-Maqdis. He replied: It is the land of the gathering and resurrection.

Merit 6

فَعَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ :
((أَتَيْتُ بِالْبُرَاقِ وَهُوَ دَابَّةٌ أَبْيَضُ طَوِيلٌ فَوْقَ الْحِمَارِ وَدُونَ الْبَعْلِ يَضَعُ
حَافِرَهُ عِنْدَ مُنْتَهَى طَرَفِهِ قَالَ فَرَكِبْتُهُ حَتَّى أَتَيْتُ بَيْتَ الْمَقْدِسِ قَالَ فَرَبَطْتُهُ
بِالْحَلْقَةِ الَّتِي يَرْبُطُ بِهَا الْأَنْبِيَاءُ قَالَ ثُمَّ دَخَلْتُ الْمَسْجِدَ فَصَلَّيْتُ فِيهِ رَكَعَتَيْنِ ثُمَّ
خَرَجْتُ فَجَاءَنِي جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ بِإِنَاءٍ مِنْ خَمْرٍ وَإِنَاءٍ مِنْ لَبَنٍ فَأَخْتَرْتُ
اللَّبَنَ فَقَالَ جِبْرِيلُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اخْتَرْتَ الْفِطْرَةَ ثُمَّ عَرَجَ بِنَا إِلَى
السَّمَاءِ))

(Narrated by Muslim)

Translation: Anas ibn Malik relates that the Prophet said, “I was brought the Buraq, a tall white beast, bigger than a donkey but smaller than a mule. It could place its hooves at the

farthest boundary of its gaze. I mounted it until I arrived at Bayt al-Maqdis. I tied it at the ring where the Prophets tied it before (i.e. the Buraq Wall or Western Wall). I entered Masjid al-Aqsa Sanctuary and prayed salah (two rak'ah there).”

- Masjid al-Aqsa is the place where the Prophet (pbuh) travelled by night to and from there he transcended upwards towards the heavens on the Night of Isra and Miraj.

Merit 7

في حديث عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: ((لَمَّا فَرَعَ سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ دَاوُدَ مِنْ بِنَاءِ بَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ سَأَلَ اللَّهَ ثَلَاثًا: حُكْمًا يُصَادِفُ حُكْمَهُ، وَمُلْكًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ، وَالْأَيُّ يَأْتِي هَذَا الْمَسْجِدَ أَحَدًا لَا يُرِيدُ إِلَّا الصَّلَاةَ فِيهِ إِلَّا خَرَجَ مِنْ ذُنُوبِهِ كَيَوْمِ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ)) فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: ((أَمَّا اثْنَتَانِ فَقَدْ أُعْطِيَهُمَا، وَأَرْجُو أَنْ يَكُونَ قَدْ أُعْطِيَ الثَّلَاثَةَ))

(Narrated by al-Nasa'i)

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr related that the Prophet said, “When Sulayman ibn Dawud constructed Bayt al-Maqdis, he asked Allah three things. He asked Allah adjudication in line with his ruling, which he was given, He asked Allah, an empire which cannot be attained by anybody after him, which he was given and he asked Allah when he completed the construction of Masjid al-Aqsa, that whoever comes solely to perform Salah in this Masjid He forgives his sins, leaving him like the day his mother gave birth to him.”

Final Comments

My respected brothers and sisters, the merits of Masjid al-Aqsa are many. Likewise there are merits in relation to the people who are completing the *fard* on our behalf in defending it, praying there and looking after it on our behalf.

عَنْ أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَهْلُ الشَّامِ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ وَذُرَارِيَهُمْ وَعَبِيدُهُمْ وَإِمَاؤُهُمْ إِلَى مُنْتَهَى الْجَزِيرَةِ مُرَابِطُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ أَحْتَلَّ مِنْهَا مَدِينَةً فَهُوَ فِي رِبَاطٍ وَمَنْ أَحْتَلَّ مِنْهَا ثَغْرًا مِنَ الثُّغُورِ فَهُوَ فِي جِهَادٍ

(Narrated by Ibn Asakir)

Abu Darda' related that the Messenger of Allah said, “From al-Sham to the furthest point of Upper Mesopotamia, the inhabitants therein, along with their spouses, children and servants (men and women) are in a state of ribat (guarding the Muslim frontier) in the path of Allah. Whoever occupies any land therein is in ribat. Whoever occupies any frontier therein from the many frontiers is in Jihad.”

Respected brothers – spare a moment thinking about what is taking place within Jerusalem, within Masjid al-Aqsa. The people there are our brothers. Their struggle is our struggle. However, today we remain in slumber and indifferent. This should not be the case.

I pray that Allah Most High grants me and one and all the *tawfiq* to understand the *fadail* of Masjid al-Aqsa, to understand and feel the plight of Masjid al-Aqsa, to understand and feel the plight of the people who defend Masjid al-Aqsa, to understand and feel the plight of those who inhabit with *ibadah* and *salah* Masjid al-Aqsa on our behalf. This is the sacred Islamic duty that we should all feel in the least with heart and mind.

و آخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين