

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



# The Virtues of the Sacred Land of the Masjid al-Aqsa Compound and What Surrounds It

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BASED ON THE WORK BY SHAYKH DIYA AL-DIN AL-MAQDISI  
TRANSLATED BY JAMAAL DIWAN

## Introduction

What follows is a partial translation of a collection of narrations on the virtues of the Holy Land by Shaykh Diya al-Din al-Maqdisi. Collections such as these were made to increase the love in the hearts of the believers for sacred places and times, as well as righteous actions. This particular one was compiled in the period shortly after the liberation of Palestine under Sultan Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, by a scholar who took part in the *jihad* against the Crusaders. We present this humble effort as a guide to be read in these days wherein hardship and oppression are befalling the people of Palestine.

Those who wish to do so may hold gatherings in their homes or communities reading the text and asking Allah to alleviate the suffering of our brothers and sisters and give them victory against their oppressors. This is the intent behind making this work accessible.<sup>1</sup> This is an old practice of the Muslims where they would gather to read collections of hadith as a means of asking

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<sup>1</sup> These types of works are NOT meant to be used as hadith reference works. They are to show the general point of what they are compiled for, in this case to show the virtues of the Sacred Compound of al-Aqsa. Often the narrations mentioned in them are not the most reliable, and sometimes extremely weak or fabricated. When I chose the narrations for this abridgement I tried to choose ones that are more reliable and have mentioned their source when that was available. All in all, one should not use this as a hadith source unless the footnote indicates reliability.

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Allah for aid in the face of hardships and victory in the face of oppression. We pray that this simple effort is a means by which that beautiful tradition is continued.

This is a partial translation of a slightly longer work by the author. Here I have only mentioned one narration for each section of the text. In the original there are anywhere from a single narration to several narrations in each section, for a total of sixty-six narrations in the entire collection. The numbers in brackets at the beginning of the narrations reflect the number of that narration in the original work.

## The Author

The imam, Diya al-Din, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahid, al-Maqdisi, was born in 569h and died in 643h. He was part of the famous Maqdisi family which was filled with scholars and pious people. His father was Shaykh Abd al-Wahid, a formidable scholar and righteous person. He, the father, had two daughters and three sons, all of whom became scholars. His mother was Ruqayyah bint Shaykh Ahmad. She was the sister of the two great and well-known scholars, Muwaffaq al-Din and Abu Umar. These latter two visited the great Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani in the end of his life and took spiritual guidance from him. They are part of the connection of Shaykh Abd al-Qadir to the *jihad* movement against the crusaders that liberated Palestine under the leadership of Sultan Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi. In fact, Salah al-Din had a regular litany of prayers that he received by way of Shaykh Abd al-Qadir that he maintained during his life and which he passed down to his children. This is the spirit of true *tasawwuf*. Shaykh Diya al-Din's aforementioned mother was known for her scholarship and piety. She would command the people to good and forbid them from evil and was known for being a mediator for disputes among the people. She would teach hadith based on her *ijazah* from Shaykh Ibn al-Batti and the great scholar al-Mundhiri took hadith from her. She was known for her knowledge of the history of her family and her son narrated that from her and wrote a biography about her. Shaykh Diya al-Din's wife was Asiyah bint al-Shihab. She was a hafiz of the Quran and a narrator of hadith and was known for her piety. Shaykh Diya al-Din and his family were also part of the armies that liberated Palestine from the Crusaders. Sultan Salah al-Din held the family in high regard and would keep them together in one tent and seek their counsel on affairs.

## The Area



# The Virtues of the Sacred Compound of Masjid al-Aqsa and What Surrounds It

**Section: The Statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him): “Do not travel except to three masjids...”**

[2] Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Travel is undertaken to three masjids: the sacred masjid (Mecca), my masjid (Medina), and the furthest masjid (Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem).”<sup>2</sup>

**Section: The Saying of Allah, Glorified is He, “A door, the inside of which is mercy, and the outside of which is punishment.”**

[8] Ubadah ibn al-Samit, may Allah be pleased with him, was seen on top of the eastern gate of the Masjid al-Aqsa Compound crying. He was asked why and he said, “This is the place from which the Prophet told us that he saw Hellfire.”<sup>3</sup>

## Section: On the Angels That Are Appointed to the Three Masjids

[12] Abdullah ibn Masud said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Allah has three angels that are appointed. One is appointed to the Kabah, another is appointed to my masjid [in Medina], and another is appointed to Masjid al-Aqsa. The one appointed to the Kabah calls out every day, ‘The one who leaves the obligations that Allah has set leaves the protection of Allah.’ The one appointed to this masjid of mine calls out every day, ‘The one who leaves the way of Muhammad will not come to his Pond [on the Day of Judgment] and will not receive his intercession.’ The one appointed to Masjid al-Aqsa calls out every day, ‘The one whose food is impermissible will have their deeds thrown back in their face.’”<sup>4</sup>

## Section: What Was the First Masjid on Earth?

[13] Abu Dharr said, “I asked the Prophet (ﷺ), ‘Which masjid was the first on the earth?’ He said, ‘The Sacred Masjid (Mecca).’ I said, ‘Then which one?’ He said, ‘The Furthest Masjid (al-Aqsa).’ I asked, ‘How much time was between them?’ He said, ‘Forty years. Wherever you are when the time for prayer comes, pray. It will be a masjid for you.’”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Narrated by al-Bukhari.

<sup>3</sup> Mentioned in the tafsir of al-Suyuti.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Khatib rejected this hadith saying that its narrators are reliable except for al-Basri and Ahmad ibn Raja who are both unknown.

<sup>5</sup> Narrated by al-Bukhari.

### Section: The Virtue of Prayer in the Sacred Land

[15] Abdullah ibn Amr said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, ‘[Prophet] Sulayman asked Allah for three things. Two of them were given to him and I am hopeful that the third was as well. He asked Him for the ability to rule on issues in a way that aligns with His ruling, and he was given that. And he asked Him for a dominion the likes of which nobody will ever have after him, and he was given that. And he asked Him that anyone who comes to the Sacred Compound of al-Aqsa with only the intention to pray in it will be forgiven of their sins such that they are like the day that their mother bore them.’”<sup>6</sup>

### Section: On Praying in the Direction of the Sacred Compound

[23] Ibn Abbas said, “When the Prophet (ﷺ) was in Mecca he used to pray towards the direction of the Sacred Compound of al-Aqsa while facing the Kabah. He continued praying towards the Sacred Compound after migrating to Medina for a period of sixteen months, then the direction of prayer was changed to the Kabah.”<sup>7</sup>

### Section: On the Virtue of the Dome of the Rock

[32] Wahb ibn Munabbih said, “Allah said to the Rock [over which is the Dome of the Rock], ‘Upon you I place My throne, towards you I will gather My creation [on the Day of Gathering], and I will cause your rivers to gush forth with wine, honey, and milk.’”

### Section: The Antichrist will not Enter the Sacred Compound

[36] Mujahid said, “Junadah ibn Abi Umayyah ruled over us for six years. One time he gave a sermon and said, ‘A man from the companions of the Prophet, peace be upon him, came to us. We adamantly asked him to tell us something he heard from the Prophet directly and not something he heard from the people. He said, ‘The Prophet stood among us and said, ‘I warn you of the Antichrist, and he has an impairment in his vision (The narrator said, “I think he said his left eye.”) He will travel in the land with a mountain of bread and rivers of water. His sign will be that he stays in the earth for forty days wherein his reign will reach every place except for the sacred spaces of four masjids: the Kabah, the Masjid of the Prophet, the Masjid of al-Aqsa, and the Masjid of al-Tur. Whatever happens know that Allah does not have an impairment in His vision.’”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Narrated by Ibn Majah and al-Nasai.

<sup>7</sup> Narrated by Ahmad.

<sup>8</sup> Narrated by Ahmad.

## Section: The Stand the Muslims Will Take at the Sacred Compound when the Antichrist Emerges and His Blockading Them in It

[37]<sup>9</sup> Abu Umamah al-Bahili said, “The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) addressed us, and most of his speech had to do with telling us about Dajjal [the Antichrist]. He warned about him and among the things he said was, “There will not be any tribulation on earth, since the time Allah created the offspring of Adam, that will be greater than the tribulation of Dajjal. Allah has not sent any Prophet but that he warned his nation about Dajjal. I am the last of the Prophets and you are the last of the nations. He will undoubtedly appear among you. If he appears while I am among you, I will contend with him on behalf of every Muslim, and if he appears while I am not among you, then each man must fend for himself and Allah will take care of every Muslim on my behalf. He will emerge from *al-Khallab*, between Sham and Iraq, and will wreak havoc right and left. O slaves of Allah, remain steadfast. I will describe him to you in a manner in which none of the Prophets has described him before me. He will start by saying, “I am a Prophet,” and there is no Prophet after me. Then he will say, “I am your Lord.” But you will not see your Lord until you die. He is one-eyed, and your Lord is not one-eyed, and written between his eyes is *Kafir*. Every believer will read it, whether he is literate or illiterate. Part of his *fitnah* will be that he will have with him Paradise and Hell, but his Hell will be a Paradise and his Paradise a Hell. Whoever is tested with his fire (hell), let him seek the help of Allah and recite the first verses of Surah al-Kahf, then it will be cool and safe for him, as the fire was for Ibrahim. Part of his *fitnah* will be that he will say to a Bedouin, “If I resurrect your father and mother for you will you bear witness that I am your Lord?” He will say, “Yes.” Then two devils will appear to him in the form of his father and mother and will say, “O my son, follow him, for he is your Lord.” And part of his *fitnah* will be that he will overpower a single soul and kill him, then he will cut him with a saw until he falls in two pieces. Then he will say, “Look at this slave of mine. I will resurrect him now, then he will claim that he has a Lord other than me.” Then Allah will resurrect him and the evil one will say to him, “Who is your Lord?” He will say, “Allah is my Lord, and you are the enemy of Allah, you are Dajjal. By Allah, I have never had more insight about you than I have today.” Part of his *fitnah* will be that he will command the sky to rain, and it will rain, and he will command the earth to bring forth vegetation and it will do so. And part of his *fitnah* will be that he will pass by a clan and they will disbelieve in him, so all their flocks will perish and none will be left. And part of his *fitnah* will be that he will pass by a clan who will believe in him, so he will command the sky to rain, and it will rain, and he will command the earth to bring forth vegetation and it will do so, until their flocks will come back in the evening of that day, bigger and fatter than they have ever been, with their flanks stretched and their udders full of milk. There will be no part of the earth left that he does not enter and prevail over, except for Mecca and Medina, for he will not approach them on any of their mountain paths but that he will be met by angels with unsheathed swords, until he will stop at the red hill at the end of the marsh. Then Medina will be shaken with its people three times, and no hypocrite, male or female, will be left, all will come out to him. Thus, it will be cleansed of impurity just as the bellows cleanses the iron of dross. And that day will be called the Day of Deliverance.’

“Umm Sharik bint Abi al-Ukar said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, where will the Arabs be that day?’ He said, ‘On that day they will be few, and most of them will be in *Bayt al-Maqdis* (The Sacred Compound of Masjid al-Aqsa and its surroundings), and their leader will be a righteous man. When their leader has stepped forward to lead them in the morning prayer, ‘Isa ibn Maryam (Prophet

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<sup>9</sup> Rather than using the narrations that are quoted in the original work for this one I cross referenced their sources and found the original narration in Sunan Ibn Majah. That is what is mentioned here in the translation instead.

Jesus) will come down to them. Their leader will step backwards so that 'Isa can come forward and lead the people in prayer, but 'Isa will place his hand between his shoulders and say to him, "Go forward and pray, for the *iqamah* was given for you." Then their leader will lead them in prayer. When he has finished, 'Isa (peace be upon him), will say, "Open the gate [to the city]." They will open it and behind it will be Dajjal with seventy thousand Jews, each of them carrying an adorned sword and wearing a greenish cloak. When Dajjal looks at him, he will start to melt as salt melts in water. He will run away and 'Isa will say, "I have only one blow for you, which you will not be able to escape!" He will catch up with him at the eastern gate of *Ludd* and will kill him. Then Allah will defeat the Jews, and there will be nothing left that Allah has created which the Jews will be able to hide behind, except that Allah will cause it to speak - no stone, no tree, no wall, no animal - except for *al-Gharqad* (the box-thorn), for it is one of their trees and will not speak - except that it will say, "O Muslim slave of Allah, here is a Jew<sup>10</sup>, come and kill him!" "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'His (Dajjal's) days will number forty years: a year like half a year, a year like a month, a month like a week, and the rest of his days will be like sparks from a fire (they will pass quickly). One of you will enter the gate of Medina in the morning and not reach its other gate until evening comes.' It was said, 'O Messenger of Allah, how should we pray on those short days?' He said, 'Estimate (the times of) the prayer, as you do on these long days, then pray.' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "'Isa ibn Maryam, will be a just judge and a just ruler among my nation. He will break the cross, slaughter the pigs, abolish the *jizyah*, and charity will be left. No one will be appointed to (collect the zakah of) sheep and camels. Grudges and mutual hatred will disappear and the venom of every venomous creature will be removed. A baby boy will put his hand to a snake and it will not harm him. A baby girl will make a lion run away and it will not harm her. The wolf will be among the sheep like their sheepdog. The earth will be filled with peace just as a vessel is filled with water. The people will be united and none will be worshipped except Allah. War will cease and Quraysh will no longer be in power. The earth will be like a silver platter, with its vegetation growing as it did at the time of Adam, until a group of people will gather around one bunch of grapes and it will suffice them, and a group will gather around a single pomegranate and it will suffice them. An ox will be sold for such and such amount of money, and a horse will be sold for a few Dirham.' They said, 'O Messenger of Allah, why will horses be so cheap?' He said, 'They will never be ridden in war again.' It was said to him, 'Why will oxen be so expensive?' He said, 'Because all the land will be tilled. Before Dajjal appears there will be three difficult years in which the people will suffer severe famine. In the first year, Allah will command the sky to withhold one third of its rain and the earth to withhold one third of its produce. In the second year, He will command the sky to withhold two thirds of its rain and the earth to withhold two thirds of its produce. In the third year, he will command the sky to withhold all of its rain, and not a single drop will fall, and the earth to withhold all of its produce, and nothing will grow. All cloven-hoofed animals will die, except those that Allah wills.' It was said, 'What will the people live on at that time?' He said: '*Tablil* (La ilaha illa Allah), *Takbir* (Allahu Akbar), *Tasbih* (SubhanAllah) and *Tahmid* (Alhamdulillah). That will take the place of food for them.'"

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<sup>10</sup> The context indicates that this is a reference to those who were in the army of Dajjal.

### Section: On Residing in the Area Around the Holy Land and Its Coming Under Muslim Rule

[38] Dhu al-Asabi said, “O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), we are tested with living after your passing. To what do you command us?” He said, “Have concern for the area of al-Aqsa, perhaps you will be given descendants who will go to it in the mornings and evenings.”<sup>11</sup> This companion will be mentioned later from those who settled in the region.

### Section: On the Cultivating of the Holy Land

[43] Muadh ibn Jabal said, “The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘The cultivating of the Holy Land will correspond with the destruction of Medina. The destruction of Medina will correspond with the coming of the tribulations of the end of times (*al-Malbamaḥ*), and that will correspond with the opening of Constantinople. And the opening of Constantinople will correspond with the coming of the Dajjal.’”<sup>12</sup>

### Section: The Mahdy Will Inhabit the Holy Land

[44] Abu Said al-Khudri said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, ‘A man will come forth from my nation who speaks according to my sunnah. Allah will bring rain for him from the sky and its blessing will bring forth produce from the land. Justice and equality will spread everywhere just as oppression and injustice had spread before him. He will lead for seven years and inhabit the Holy Land.’”

### Section: The Group that Will Be on the Truth Will Be in the Holy Land and What Surrounds It

[Mentioned in a separate work that is related to this one] Abu Hurayrah said, “The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘There is a group from my nation who will fight in the area of Damascus and what surrounds it and in the area of the Holy Land and what surrounds it. They will not be harmed by those who betray them, steadfast on the truth until the end of time.’”

### Section: The Night Journey to the Sacred Compound

[46] Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “I was in the area of the Kabah and Quraysh was asking me about my night journey to the Sacred Compound and some of the details of the place. I was overcome by a feeling of hardship the likes of which I had not felt before. Then Allah raised for me the image of the place so whenever they asked me anything I was able to answer it. Then I saw myself in the company of other prophets. I saw Musa standing and praying. He was strong in build like the people of Shanu’ah. I also saw ‘Isa standing and praying and the most similar to him in

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<sup>11</sup> Narrated by Ahmad.

<sup>12</sup> Narrated by Ahmad.

appearance is Urwah ibn Masud al-Thaqafi. Then I saw Ibrahim standing and praying and the most similar to him in appearance is your companion (meaning himself). The time for prayer came and I led them all in prayer. When I finished with the prayer it was said to me, ‘Muhammad, this is Malik, the guardian of the Fire, greet him.’ I turned to him to greet him and he greeted me first.”<sup>13</sup>

### Section: The Place Where the Prophet (ﷺ) Prayed in the Sacred Compound

[57] Ubayd in Adam said, “I heard Umar ibn al-Khattab say to Kab, ‘Where do you think I should pray?’ Kab said, ‘If you take it from me you would pray from behind the Rock because then the whole city would be in front of you.’ Umar said, ‘Your opinion is similar to the Jews. Rather, I will pray where the Prophet prayed.’ Then he moved towards the direction of the *qiblah* and prayed.”<sup>14</sup>

### Section: On the Virtue of Assuming *Ihram* from the Sacred Compound

[58] Umm Hakim narrated from Umm Salamah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Whoever assumes *ihram* for umrah from the Sacred Compound is forgiven.”<sup>15</sup> Based on this hadith Umm Hakim traveled to the Sacred Compound just so that she could assume *ihram* from that location.

### Section: Mentioning Those Who Made *Ihram* from the Sacred Compound from the Companions

[61] It is narrated about Ibn Umar that he made *ihram* from the Sacred Compound.

### Section: The Companions Who Lived in the Holy Land

[63] Musa ibn Sahl al-Nisaburi al-Ramli said, “The names of the companions who lived in Palestine, including those who left families there after them and those that did not, are: Ubadah ibn al-Samit, Shaddad ibn Aws, Shamun, Abu Rayhanah, Salamah ibn Qaysar, Fayruz al-Daylami, Dhu al-Asabi, and Abu Muhammad al-Najjari. All of these lived in the Holy Land and died therein. From them the ones who left behind families who also lived in the Holy Land and are buried there are: Ubadah ibn al-Samit, Shaddad ibn Aws, Salamah ibn Qaysar, and Fayruz al-Daylami. The ones who did not leave behind families are: Abu Rayhanah, Dhu al-Asabi, and Abu Muhammad al-Najjari.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Narrated by Muslim.

<sup>14</sup> Narrated by Ahmad.

<sup>15</sup> Narrated by Ahmad.

<sup>16</sup> It is said that the graves of Shaddad ibn Aws and Ubadah ibn al-Samit are in the graveyard of *Bab al-Rahmah* which is located just behind the eastern wall of the Sacred Compound of al-Aqsa.



## Section: The Virtue of the Callers to Prayer in al-Aqsa

[64] Jabir said that the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked, “Which of the people will enter Paradise first?” He (ﷺ) said, “The prophets, then the martyrs, then the callers to prayer at the Kabah, then the callers to prayer at al-Aqsa Compound, then the callers to prayer at my masjid, then the rest of the callers to prayer according to their deeds.”

## Conclusion

At the completion of the reading of this text we raise our hands in prayer and ask Allah to aid our brothers and sisters in Palestine. He alone knows the difficulty they have faced for decades at the hands of their oppressors and the occupiers of their land. We know that we are required to take the spiritual means and material means necessary when facing any issue and we hope and pray that this work will be a small contribution to the spiritual means that will give victory to the oppressed in Palestine.

The oppression of the Palestinians is the central international issue of justice in our time. We hope that we always find ourselves on the right side of the struggle.

I, the needy servant of his Lord, Jamaal Diwan, heard this text in its entirety read to Shaykh Yusuf ibn Sadiq al-Hanbali. He gave us permission, *ijazah*, to read this text with the condition that we read it to our communities, students, and families with the intention of Allah giving aid to our brothers and sisters in Palestine. May it be so.

Anyone who would like the *ijazah* can see the video on the YouTube page of “The Hanbali School.”

*Translated and published on this last day of Ramadan, 1442.  
Jamaal Diwan*

