al Quds
A story of a city
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المدينة والحكاية

إعداد وإنتاج:
قسم الإعلام والأبحاث
مؤسسة القدس الدولية

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مقدمة

إنه القدو، مدينة السلام... نشيد الأحرار... وقبيلة الثوار... إنها المدينة التي استعِنت على النسيان، تحملها الأذهان حلاً يَكُر مع الزمن، وتحرَّسه الأحداث سورةً يَهْم الوعى... إنها إيليا التي جاء ذكرها في القديم، والقرية التي أمر الله بني إسرائيل أن يدخلوها سنةً، ما زالت تتربع على عرش القلوب حباً لا ينقطع، ما زالت الأرض المقدسة محورًا لي الفكر... لي الوجدان... لي العمل... لي الوجدان... لي العمل... لهما يملأ الكون عطرًا... يختصر التاريخ والجغرافيا وكل علوم الدين والدنيا.

لم يسكن بيت المقدس قومًا وترودوا من بجاها ما يباهون به الأم، فمنذ أن وصل اليهوديون ترابها أسرتهم، فاتخذوا لها من اسمهم اسمًا، يوسيس، ومنذ أن عرفوها الكنعانيون، كرسوها مدينة للسلام فعرفت بآور سالم، ثم أطلق الرومان عليها اسم جدهم إيليا، إلى أن زادها الله مجدًا بصلاة سيد البشر محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم فيها صلاة تختصر قصة القداسة والرسالات إماما أتباع البشرية جميعًا.

إنه بيت المقدس... مسيرة نبيًا محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم ومعرجة إلى السماء، وقريه عينه، وعروس المدن التي يذكرها ويبن قدرها... إنها قِبلة المسلمين الأولى، لا تستقبل إلا بخير ولا تذكر إلا بخير، مهبط الملائكة ومحطُّ البركة، وآرض المبدا والملاذ، إليها تُشود الرحال، وبها العصمة من الدجال، وفيها تُكثّر الذنوب وتضاعف الأجر، فيها المسجد الأقصى شقيق المسجد الحرام، بنته يده البروة بعده بأربعين عامًا، وفيها حائط البراق أثر الرسول لحظة انطلاق الأرض للسماء، وفيها قبة الصخرة، وفيها أُسوار من الطين تحرَّسه، وأجواف من البشر تحميها، وأديان موحدة تذكر فضلها!

إنه نفاس الليل والتِهْرَار يتعاقبهما على الأرض، وذاكرة الصيف والشتاء يتدالهما على الدنيا، إنها المدينة التي ترسم خريطة أمة، وتحكي حكاية صراع، وهي العاصمة المؤهلة دون غيرها لتتبارك من أحبها، وتلعن من خانها!
Introduction

It is al Quds (Jerusalem), the city of peace, the song of the free, and the mecca of revolutionaries. It is the city that could never be forgotten. It is carried in minds as a dream that grows with time. It is protected by the eyes of the believers. It is Aelia Capitolina that was mentioned in ancient times. It was the city that God ordered the Israelites to enter prostrating. To this day it still reigns supreme in the hearts and minds of believers all over the world. The holy land is still the focus of thought and conscience. Its honour fills the world with fragrance and epitomises history, geography and all religious and worldly knowledge.

Each nation that dwelled in the holy city revelled in its splendour. When the Jebusites entered the city, they gave it their name (Jabus). When King David conquered the city he built it around one of its strong fortresses and this fortress gave its name to the city (Zion). When the Canaanites dwelled in it they called it the city of peace (Ur Salem). The Romans called it Aelia Capitolina. God bestowed another of His favours on the city when Prophet Muhammad, Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH) visited it and led all previous Prophets (PBUT) in prayer at the Aqsa Mosque.

It is al Quds, the destination of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his night journey and the place from which he ascended to heaven. It was a city that he revered and talked of its good attributes. It is the first Qibla (direction of prayers). The place where life started and the place of resurrection. It is a city worthy of pilgrimage, a city where people are protected from the AntiChrist, a city where sins are forgiven and good deeds are rewarded manyfold. It is a city that embraces Al Aqsa Mosque that was built 40 years after the Sacred Mosque in Mecca. It is a city that has the Buraq wall, where Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) tied his steed on the night of Israa’ and Mi’raj.
As their hatred increases .. our love for you o’ Jerusalem increases, you are the source of our pride, the hope of our renaissance.. the eternal whisper of comfort to the faithful .. may dawn smile forever over your beautiful hills.

al Quds is more than a piece of land, more than a city, more than a capital city, it is more than all of that. It is part of the faith of muslims, the faith of Christian and part of the faith of all prophets. Since the start of messages al Quds has been the focal point, the holy place and the destination for pilgrims.
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al Quds was built and inhabited by the Jebusites (a Canaanite tribe) in 3000 B.C. Many people passed through this city throughout the ages and its name is found in most ancient manuscripts and holy books.

al Quds was conquered and destroyed at the hands of the Phehros, the Jews, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greek and the Romans until Muslim Arabs conquered the city and entered it peacefully in 636 AD. al Quds remained under the protection of Muslims until 1099 AD when it was occupied by the Crusaders who killed 70,000 Muslims in the yards f al aqsa mosque and their mischief in the city lasted for 90 years, when the Muslim leader Salahuddin liberated it. It remained free until 1917 AD when British troops occupied the city after defeating the Ottomans in the First World War. The British helped the Zionists establish a Jewish state on Palestinian land in 1948, where the western part of the city fell under Israeli control, unforgettable massacres were committed and the people of al Quds were uprooted. In 1967 the rest of the city was occupied by the Zionist state and was declared as its “eternal capital”.

History of al Quds
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al Quds sits almost in the middle of Palestine between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea. She enjoys the beautiful sea breeze and mountain gentle wind. She is embraced by mountains, most important of which are:


The old city is surrounded with a 40-foot-high wall with 34 watchtowers and seven gates which are:

Herod’s Gate, Damascus Gate, the New Gate, Jaffa Gate, Prophet David’s Gate, the Dung Gate and the Lion Gate.
Since 3000 BC, Semitic tribes who emigrated from the Arabian Peninsula settled in Palestine. The Canaanites settled in the planes while the Amorites settled in the mountainous areas and the Jebusites built a city where al Quds stands today and called it Jebus then Ursalem. Archaeological ruins of the Jebusite wall built around the city were discovered in the city.

Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) entered the city during the rule of the Jebusite king (Malki Sadiq). Many kings ruled al Quds while its population were mainly Canaanites and Jebusites. They were later joined by Philistines who emigrated from the shores of the Aegean Sea and gave their name to the land. They were joined by those who chose to remain after the fall of their transient Kingdoms such as Jews, Greeks and Byzantines. After the Muslim conquest, Muslims from various parts of the Islamic world came to visit the Aqsa Mosque and many of them decided to stay. The new comers who were Arabs, Kurds, Turks, Persians and Africans enriched the magnificent social texture of the magnificent city.
al Quds is the capital of holiness in the world. It is a city revered by two thirds of the earth’s population. It is the only city that links the three great religions of the world; Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) emigrated from Ur to Palestine, and Yaqub’s (Jacob) family immigrated from it to Egypt around 1656 BC. Musa (Moses) (PBUH) crossed the sea on his way back to Palestine but he died in 1227 BC before entering it. Prophet Dauod (David) (PBUH) made Jerusalem his capital in 1004 BC. His son Prophet Sulayman (Solomon) (PBUH) inherited him. Prophets Zakereya and Yahya (PBUH) were also sent as Messengers of God in al Quds. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) ascended to Heaven from al Quds on the night of Isra’ and Mi’raj.

Jewish presence in the city ended in 135 AD, after Emperor Hadrian quelled a Jewish revolt and he destroyed Jerusalem leaving no building of significance to the Jewish faith. He also changed the name of Jerusalem to Aelia Capitolina.

There are tens of Churches in the city, most prominent of which is the Church of Holy Sepulchre to which Christians from all over the world come for pilgrimage. The buildings of the city speak of its Islamic identity with mosques, religious corners “Zawaya and Takaya”, and enbnlements in every quarter, above all stands al Aqsa Mosque, the third Holiest Mosque of Islam, with its unique glory.
It is the land of resurrection, the first Qibla (direction of prayer), the land of Isra' and Mi'raj (night journey of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) from Makka to al Quds followed by ascension to Heaven.). People residing in it will be protected from the Dajjal (anti-Christ). The place where people who will be victorious until the day of judgement. Allah (SWT) blessed it where He says in the Quran: “But We delivered him and (his nephew) Lut (and directed them) to the land which we have blessed for the nations” (XXI:71). Allah has always described it as the Holy Land, where He said in the Quran citing Musa (PBUH) urging his people to enter it: “O my people! Enter the holy land” (V:21)
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After the decisive victory of the Muslims at the battle of Yarmuk in 636 AD, cities of Greater Syria opened their gates to Muslims. The Muslim army led by Abu Obaida besieged Jerusalem for a number of months hoping to enter it peacefully. Jerusalemites refused to hand the city over except to the supreme leader of the Muslims [as described in their books]. The Muslim Caliph at the time, Omar Bin Al-Khattab, travelled especially to Jerusalem to accept the surrender of the city by its Patriarch, and signed a treaty with the residents of the city that guaranteed their rights. When it was time for prayer while Omar was inspecting the Church of Holy Sepulchre, he was invited by the Patriarch of Jerusalem to pray at the Church, but he declined saying I do not want Muslims to claim the Church later, so he went outside and prayed close by, where a Mosque stands today next to the Church.
المدينة والحكاية والحدث
14.4 acres is the area of al Aqsa Mosque (buildings and plazas). After the Muslims entered the city, the first thing they did was to locate al Aqsa Mosque, to which they prayed in the early days of the message. The rock of mi’raj was their sign, it was the rock described by their beloved Prophet in his journey to heaven. The Muslims started building the mosque, and its area became a competition yard for caliphs and kings, who were eager to add their touches to this yard of holiness. It is a place of abundant blessing where good deeds are rewarded many fold. Who ever starts his pilgrimage or minor pilgrimage from that mosque to Makka, have their past and future sins pardoned and are rewarded with Paradise. One prayer in it is equivalent to 500 prayers in a regular Mosque. It is one of three Mosques that the Prophet (PBUH) said are deserving of making a special effort to travel to them, the two others being: the Sacred Mosque in Makka and the Prophet’s Mosque in Madina. The Prophet (PBUH) said when he was asked about al Aqsa: “The land of resurrection, go and pray there, if are not able to do so then send some oil to be used to light the Mosque.”
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This overwhelming holiness made the city at times, live under shadows of sadness. When some of the believers in its holiness decide that it is an exclusive property of theirs, the city suffers its most difficult times. 15 July 1099 C.E the “believers” came aiming at extinguishing everything that does not belong to them in the city.

Upon their entrance they killed 70,000 of the Muslim and Christian Arab population of the city, who pledged safety in the yards of al Aqsa Mosque. The gate of Mercy stands today as witness. Upon the Liberation of the city, Salahuddin closed all the gates from which the crusaders entered to commit their terrible massacre.
The peace that the city enjoyed is gone.
The reign of tolerance where the church stands wall to wall next to the mosque has come to an end after 500 blooming years.
It is now time to destroy mosques and extinguish Muslim presence. al Aqsa Mosque became a command center for the knights of the cross, the Dome of the Rock became a church, and the Marwani prayer hall beneath the mosque became a stable for the horses of the crusaders.
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The People of this land never lost their faith, hope, and spirit. The heart of the city was still pounding. The liberation project starts from the city of al Mosel, Imad al Dein Zenki initiates its first steps by conquering the Crusader kingdom of al Ruha in the north. His son Nur al Dein takes the lead after his death and continues the liberation effort together with Salahuddein who manages to unite Egypt with the kingdom of Nur al Dein, and inherits the burden of liberation. After a tiring straggle for reform, the army of Salahuddein stood in the battle field in the face of the crusaders, and achieved a decisive victory. Finally the city rested in the hands of peace, and the reign of tolerance is back again.
Once again the city of al Quds falls under occupation reflecting weakness of the Ummah. The British army led by Lord Allenby entered al Quds. Allenby stood in front of Salahuddin’s tomb in Damascus to say: “We are back Salahuddin”. A few weeks later, the Balfour declaration was issued. Palestine was partitioned and its people massacred at the hands of Zionist gangs under British protection. On 16 December 1949, David Ben Gurion, the first Israeli prime minister, declared that al Quds is the capital of his state starting January 1950. al Quds was transferred from British occupation to Zionist occupation which tightened its grip on the whole city on 5 June 1967.
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The occupiers hope to uproot the residents of al-Quds from their city and to strip the city of its history and identity. They follow a policy of quiet transfer to empty the city of its residents and put their hands on their possessions. These policies are based on: Confiscation of lands and building of Jewish settlements on those lands; demolition of Palestinian homes to force them move elsewhere, assaulting the residents and denying them freedom of movement to stop them from reaching health and education services and desecration of holy places.

Confiscation of Rights
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[Image of a scene with a man in uniform checking a driver's license]
تهويد المدينة ومقدساتها يستمر، واليهود يضعون يدهم على حائط الباراق ويطلقون عليه اسم "حائط المبكى"، رغم أن لجنة دولية شكلت في 14-1-1930م للنظر في ملكيته و قداسته لدى المسلمين واليهود بينت ملكية المسلمين للمكان الذي ربط فيه محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم دابته ليلة الإسراء والمعراج، كما قصر زيارة اليهود على الوجه الذي كان بداية الانتداب، أي بلا أبواق أو أصوات. بمجرد احتلالهم للمدينة لم يراع السادة الجدد أي حق، فسيطروا على الحائط وهموا حارة المغاربة المحيطة به وحولوا مساحتها إلى ساحة للصلاة.

Within the framework of Judaization of al Quds, the Jews put their hands on the Buraq wall and called it the “Wailing Wall” despite the fact that on 14 January 1930 an international committee formed to rule on the ownership of the wall ruled that the wall is owned by and is holy to the Muslims. They believe that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) tied his steed to it during the journey of Isra’ and Mi`raj. The committee allowed the Jews to visit the site without noise or blowing of horns. When the Zionists occupied the rest of al Quds, they confiscated the Magaribah quarter and destroyed it to convert it into a plaza for Jewish worshipers.
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The excavations underneath the Aqsa Mosque are threatening the foundations of the Mosque. Attempts to storm the mosque are on the increase. It is time for building the alleged temple, according to the Jewish calendar, so the mosque should fall by excavations, or by planting explosives, or be taken over to build the “third temple” or at least take part of it for Jewish prayers.
Judaization of al Quds is one of the pillars of Zionism. From the first day of occupation of al Quds, the process of Judaization has not relented. The process of resettlement and ethnic cleansing of original Palestinian population of the city has been carried out in tandem. Demolition of Palestinian homes, closure of Palestinian institutions, confiscation of Palestinian land and property, linking the economy of the city to that of the Occupation, defacing the Arab historic features of the city, changing names of places, extending the boundaries of the occupation municipality, reducing the areas on which Palestinians can build homes, imposing high taxes on Palestinians while being denied the necessary infrastructure, denying them construction permits and rejecting to reunite families in al Quds, are all means of Judaizing the holy city.

In short they turned the life for Palestinians in al Quds into hell to force them leave, or suffer the racist Israeli measures.
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After the occupation of Jerusalem in 1967 various Israeli governments sought to intensify the settlement activities in al Quds and established three main rings to besiege the city. The first is inside the city, specifically in the old city in what is known as the Jewish quarter which encompasses (Sharaf quarters) and whatever property confiscated from Arabs around it. The second is a number of settlements around the old city: Neve Ya’akov, Pisgat Ze’ev, French Hill, Hebrew University and Talpiot. These settlements separate Palestinian neighbourhoods from one another and prevent those neighbourhoods from expanding. A third ring is made out of settlements on mountains surrounding the city, Ramot Allon between al Quds and Ramallah to the north, Ma’ale Adummim between Jerusalem and the Jordan valley to the east, Harhoma between al Quds and Bethlehem to the south and Gilo between al Quds and Beit Jala to the south west.

The number of settlements in and around al Quds has become more than thirty with the goal of achieving demographic superiority for Jews over Arabs in al Quds.
المدينة والحكاية المكانية
The least that can be said about the apartheid wall is that it leaves disastrous effects on the Palestinian people. Besides the fact that it eats up their land, thus their livelihood; it also divides Palestinian families and isolates them from health and educational institutions. It also turns al Quds suburbs into isolated ghettos incapable of living or communicating with one another.
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كل يوم يشتد الحصار عليها أكثر، الاحتلال مصمم على أن ينزع عنها هويتها، هو يعمل ليل نهار كي يدخلها عصره المظلم.. انسحب من غزة فسولت له نفسه أن القدس هي الثمن البخش لهذا الانسحاب، ومنذ أن انسحب أعمل فيها الخطط والقرارات والإجراءات، لتحيي الحياة فيها أصعب يوماً بعد يوم.

والمدينة ترزح تحت هذا الحمل الثقيل. تنز تحت وطأة التراث الغريب الذي يحاول أن يزرع نفسه فوقها، تراه عمادة كتل البناء المتطاول الذي تصطدم به كل عين تنساب على مشهد القدس...

With each day the siege is tightened further. The occupation is keen on stripping the holy city of its identity and does not spare the efforts, day and night, to force it into its dark era. The occupation withdrew from the Gaza Strip and tried to make it the price for taking al Quds. Since its withdrawal from Gaza, the occupation has taken new steps in al Quds that renders the life for Palestinians in al Quds unbearable.
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But the city is there, withstanding as its people are. They are confronting their oppressor with all determination and patiences, in front of a machine that employs oppression and leaves destruction. al Quds is steadfasting, with the support of the good people of the Ummah who believe it should be free. The city gains its steadfastness from their determination, and its strength in the face of the occupier from their power and support.
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As long as faith is strong in the hearts and minds of its inhabitants. As long as she resides in the hearts and minds of millions of its people, the occupier will not enjoy his stay in al Quds, as the land gives birth every day to people who carry her in their hearts.
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The story of al Quds is endless, no price can be put on the city. Its people will defend it no matter how high the sacrifices are. No human being can bargain over it, it belongs to Humanity at large. Human heritage is more precious than to be subjected to an occupier. Because it is the trust of Heaven on Earth and beloved in Heaven, no human being, no matter how arrogant he is, can subjugate it.

Be blessed, O al Quds, with every drop of blood sacrificed for your sake, be blessed with every cry of pain made in your precincts, be blessed as you are the beacon that braves the oppressor's dark era, and lights the way for free men and women.
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IDENTITY:

Al Quds institution is an independent civil organization comprising Arab, Islamic and International personalities and bodies. Its aim is to work for safeguarding the city of al Quds, by preserving its Arab identity and its sanctified Islamic and Christian places. In order to sustainably serve the blessed city and cement the steadfastness of its people; the institution aims at establishing a comprehensive approach that covers immediate programs of relief and recure, periodical projects, and above all, strategic planning.
Together we Safeguard al Quds

www.alquds-online.org