

Sacred Space: The Holiness of Islamic Jerusalem

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For many people in the modern world, the idea of a holy city is a contradiction in terms. We often experience the city as a godless realm, as crowded, noisy, dirty, filled with lonely, alienated people and afflicted with violence and crime. How can an all too human city, teeming with such unholy activities, be sacred? When we feel in need of spiritual replenishment, many of us tend to go out into the countryside, to a place of beauty and peace, where we can feel closer to God. And yet devotion to holy cities is far from dead. Pilgrims flock to Makkah in greater numbers than ever before. In 1993 a million more Roman Catholic pilgrims visited the French shrine at Lourdes, where the Virgin Mary is believed to have appeared, than in the previous decade. Why do people seek the divine in a holy city? What do they mean when they say that a city like Jerusalem is "holy" to them?

I had originally imagined that a holy city was usually associated with crucial events that had occurred at the start of a particular religious tradition. In the case of Jerusalem, that model certainly works with Christianity, because it is the place where Jesus is believed to have died and risen from the dead. But this is not true of Judaism. Jerusalem is not mentioned explicitly in the Torah, the first five most sacred books of the Hebrew Bible, and it is associated with none of the events of the Exodus from Egypt. Why should Mount Zion in Jerusalem be the holiest place in the Jewish world and not Mount Sinai, where God gave Moses the Law and bound himself to his chosen people? And

why should Jerusalem be holy to Muslims, when the formative events of their faith happened far away in Arabia, in Makkah and Madinah, the first and second holiest cities in the Islamic world.

It is true that Holy places are often linked to blessed events of the past. But a devotion to sacred space goes deeper. Long before human beings began to chart their world physically and scientifically, they developed what has been called a "sacred geography". Certain sites were felt to be closer to the divine than others. Perhaps there was a feature, like a rock or a waterfall, that stood out dramatically from its surroundings and which spoke, therefore, of **something else**, directing people's attention to that dimension of the world that transcends it. Mountains were very popular symbols of transcendence: when worshippers climbed to the summit of a holy mountain, they were making a symbolic journey to the divine. At the peak, mid-way between heaven and earth, they had risen above their mundane concerns and could imagine the gods coming down to meet them. Sometimes a god was said to have appeared in a particular place and claimed it as peculiarly his own. A holy place was, therefore, a location where people had an encounter with the divine; they were often helped to cultivate this experience by means of music and ritual or by means of sacred drama: even in an entirely secular context, theatre can still yield a powerful sense of transcendence. Very often the architecture of the shrine or temple, which set the place apart as holy, symbolically reproduced the interior journey that a worshipper had to make in order to reach his god¹.

Historians tell us that pilgrimage and devotion to sacred space is probably the oldest and most universal religious practice in the world. It seems deeply rooted in the human psyche, helping us to find our true place in the world. When Jews, Christians and Muslims pray facing the direction of Jerusalem or Makkah, they are turning away from the distracting concerns of their daily lives, finding an orientation, and focusing on the supreme value, putting other things in perspective. For Jews, Christians and Muslims, Jerusalem has been such a defining

place; it has become crucial to the identity of all three of the religions of Abraham. They have visited Jerusalem to get in touch with the deeper currents of existence and to find healing and peace. The mythology connected with holy places is often linked to the story of the golden age that is believed in all cultures to have existed at the dawn of time, when men and women lived in harmony with each other, with nature, and with the gods. This universal myth speaks of the peace and wholeness that people have always felt to be the ideal human condition; it is felt that life was not meant to be so painful, conflicted and fragmentary². When Jews, Christians and Muslims have said that Jerusalem or Makkah occupies the site of the Garden of Eden, this has been a way of saying that these most sacred places can yield a sense of that primordial, paradisaical harmony. When they visit these holy cities, they often feel that they have momentarily recovered this primal completeness and have returned to the harmony and unity that is inextricably associated with our experience of the divine. This notion of a return to an original wholeness is a crucial element in the Muslim experience of Jerusalem's holiness.

But religion is not just a matter of getting a satisfying experience. It must also have an ethical dimension. So too with the devotion to a holy place. It is not enough to feel a warm glow there; this must be translated into moral action. The unity and harmony must not remain a private luxury, but must also be expressed in the social life of the city in very practical ways. From the very earliest days, it seems, the cult of Jerusalem was inextricably bound up with the quest for social justice. Thus in the Hebrew Bible, prophets and psalmists repeatedly reminded their people that Jerusalem could not be a holy city of *shalom* (a word that is usually translated "peace" but which also refers to that sense of wholeness that people associate with a holy place) unless it was also a city of *tseddeq*, of justice³. It was no good worshipping God in his Temple in Jerusalem, if the people of Israel were not also caring for the poor, the vulnerable and the oppressed. This is an important point. Some of the worst

atrocities in Jerusalem's long and tragic history have occurred when people have felt so possessive about the holy city that they have put their desire to own or to gain access to its great sanctity ahead of this concern for justice and equity. The holiness of Jerusalem is not just a prize to be gained but an imperative to righteous action. It is a perpetual summons to reproduce on earth the justice of God. Despite the sanctity of its great shrines, a city can be made holy or unholy every day, insofar as its inhabitants live up to this vision of equity and social decency.

Jews, Christians and Muslims have often celebrated the holiness of Jerusalem in similar ways, but there is one striking difference in the Islamic conception of sacred space. In Hebrew, the word for "holy", *kaddosh*, means "separate". Jews celebrate the sanctity of things by separating them one from another: they separate milk from meat, the Sabbath from the rest of the week, and Jews from Gentiles. The sacred is thus singled out and divided absolutely from the profane. In a similar way, the holiness of Jerusalem was experienced as a series of graduated segregations. No Jew could enter the Temple area unless he had undergone a number of ritual purifications which separated him from the mortality and contamination of daily existence. The Temple was designed as a series of interlocking courts, each more holy than the last and each, therefore, barred to an increasing number of people. On the outermost rim of holiness came the Court of the Gentiles, or the pale of the sacred. Inscriptions banned non-Jews from progressing any further into the Temple precincts on pain of death. Next came the Court of the Women, who, like Gentiles, were excluded from the innermost sanctities of the Jewish world. Male Jews in a state of ritual purity could go on to the Court of the Israelites, whence they could watch the ceremonies, but they could not venture into the Court of the Priests, the descendants of Aaron and Zadok. No layman could enter the cult hall, the Hekhal, which was served by the Priests and which led into the heart of the shrine, the Holy of Holies, a dark, empty room which was forbidden to

all except the High Priest, who could only enter this inner sanctum once a year on Yom Kippur⁴.

Christians also cultivated an exclusive vision of Jerusalem's holiness. The Christian Byzantines, who governed Jerusalem from the fourth to the early seventh century of the Common Era, would not permit Jews to reside permanently in the holy city. They were simply allowed to visit the Temple Mount once a year to mourn the loss of Jewish Jerusalem, which had been destroyed by the Romans in the year 70. The site of the old Temple was left in ruins as a symbol of Judaism's defeat, and in the last years of Byzantine hegemony, the Christians used the Temple Mount as the city's rubbish dump. Christians from the West adopted still more drastic and murderous policies of exclusion. When the Crusaders conquered Jerusalem in 1099, they slaughtered 30,000 Jews and Muslims in two days, clearing them out of the holy city like vermin. This, the nadir of Jerusalem's history, is a chilling reminder of the atrocity that can occur when the possession of the sacred city is prized more than the equally sacred rights of its inhabitants.

Muslims, however, had a rather different sacred geography. There was no essential dichotomy between the sacred and profane, as in Judaism; since all things come from God, all things are good. The aim of the *ummah* was to achieve such integration and balance between human and divine, interior and exterior, that such a distinction would become irrelevant. Everything was holy in embryo and had to be made to realise its sacred potential. All space, therefore, was sacred and no location was holier than another. Yet Islam is a realistic faith and Muhammad knew that human beings need symbols on which to focus. Consequently from the earliest years, Muslims were taught to regard three places as sacred centres of the world. The first of these, of course, was Makkah. Just as Islam is seen as a return to the primordial faith of Abraham, so too is Makkah and its holy shrine, which the Qur'an teaches, was built by Abraham, regarded as the primordial sacred space. Just as there is only one God and one religion, made manifest in many forms, so too there is one

primal sacred space that is revealed plurally. All subsequent holy places in the Islamic world would derive their holiness from Makkah and can be seen as extensions of this central sanctity. All other shrines would thus reflect Makkah, the archetypal symbol of the sacred. This vision would be an expression of *tawhid*, the sacralization and unification of the universe⁵.

In a similar way, all future Islamic cities and states participated in the prime sanctity of Madinah, the home of the Prophet, just as all future mosques were modelled on the first humble mosque that Muhammad built in Madinah. The mosque reveals a more inclusive notion of sacred space than we have seen hitherto in either Judaism or Christianity. There was no separation of sacred from the profane, the spiritual from the sexual, the religious from the political. Muhammad and his wives lived in little apartments around the periphery of the courtyard; public meetings to discuss social, political, and military, as well as religious matters were also held there. The whole of life must be brought into the ambit of holiness as an expression of *tawhid*. Since all space is inherently sacred, the mosque should not be cordoned off from its surroundings. Trees, which had been prohibited on the Jewish Temple Mount, are encouraged in a Muslim sanctuary; the mosques can be full of light; birds can fly around during the Friday prayers. The world is to be invited into the mosque, not left outside. These principles of Makkah and Madinah would also become apparent in Jerusalem, the third-holiest place in the Islamic world.

Even though the Muslim armies did not conquer Jerusalem until 638 of the Common Era, some six years after the Prophet's death, Jerusalem had been holy to the Muslims from the very beginning, since it had been the first *qiblah*, the first direction of prayer. When Muhammad had started to preach in Makkah, one of the first things he had taught his small band of converts was to pray facing Jerusalem. He was teaching them a new orientation. The Muslims were to turn their backs on the old pagan traditions of Arabia, represented at this point by the Kabah, and reach out towards the God of the Jews and

Christians, whom they were now going to worship. Jerusalem had thus marked an important symbolic stage in the painful journey, which would require Muslims to sever their links with the beloved traditions of the past. They would even - later - be forced to reject the sacred tie of blood, when the Muslims left their tribe during the *hijrah* or migration to Madinah to form a new ideologically-based community. Later still, in Madinah, Muhammad would make the Muslims pray facing Makkah once again, but Muslims never forgot the role that Jerusalem had played in this struggle to join the monotheistic family.

It was indeed a great struggle. Muhammad's triumphant achievement should not disguise from us the pain and danger of the Islamic enterprise. The Muslims were persecuted by the pagan establishment in Makkah and for eight years in Madinah faced the prospect of war and extermination. Further, Muhammad was working alone, without any support from the already-established faiths. Yet from this enforced isolation, he fought through to the heart of monotheistic experience and theology in a mere 23 years. It was a phenomenal but lonely achievement, as I think we see in the story of Muhammad's Night Journey to Jerusalem and his Ascent to Heaven. The first account we have of this supreme mystical experience is found in the biography by Muhammad ibn Ishaq, written in the middle of the eighth century of the Common Era, though, of course, it is based on the Qur'anic verse in Sura 17. The story relates how Muhammad was miraculously conveyed from Makkah to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem with Gabriel, the angel of revelation, in the year 620, some two years before the migration to Madinah. This Night Flight was probably a purely spiritual journey: Ibn Ishaq cites the Prophet's wife Aisha, who said that the Prophet did not leave his bed all night. When he arrived at the Temple Mount, he was greeted by all the great prophets of the past, who welcomed him into their midst, and Muhammad preached to them. Then he began his ascent to the divine presence through the seven heavens; at each stage, he met and conversed with some of the prophets: with Jesus and John the

Baptist, Moses and Aaron, Enoch, and, at the threshold of the divine sphere, he met Abraham⁶.

By the time that Ibn Ishaq was writing, in the second century after the *hijrah*, Muslims were beginning to see their Prophet as the Perfect Man. He had not been divine, of course, but his career had been an *ayah*, a symbol of God's activity in the world and of the perfect human surrender to Allah. His mystical flight from Makkah to Jerusalem had, as it were, conveyed the primal sanctity of Makkah to the Distant Mosque in Jerusalem, fusing the two cities forever in the Muslim imagination. This motif would constantly surface in Muslim reflection about Jerusalem. Some of these traditions in praise of Jerusalem would be frowned upon by purists, such as Ibn Taymiyyah. But they reflected that vision of *tawhid* by which all holy places derive their sanctity from the primal sacred space of Makkah. Thus the scholar al-Wasiti, who published the first anthology of traditions in praise of Jerusalem in 1017 of the Common Era, attributed this maxim to the Prophet:

Makkah is the city that Allah exalted and sanctified and surrounded by angels one thousand years before creating anything else on earth. Then he joined it with Madinah and united Madinah to Jerusalem and only one thousand years later he created [the rest of the world] in a single act.⁷

On the Last Day, we read in this same anthology, paradise would be established in Jerusalem like a bride, and the Kabah and the Black Stone would also come from Makkah to Jerusalem, which was the ultimate destination of the whole of humanity⁸. Muslims believed, in common with the Jews and Christians, that Jerusalem would be the site of the Last Judgement.

Indeed, in the local lore of Palestine, the two cities of Makkah and Jerusalem were already physically connected. During the month of the *hajj* to Makkah, it was said, on the night when the pilgrims stood in vigil on the plain of Arafat, the water from the holy well of Zamzam near the Kabah came underground to the Pool of Siloam in Jerusalem. On that night, the Muslims of

Jerusalem held a special festival there. This legend was a picturesque way of expressing the belief that the holiness of Jerusalem was derived from the primal sanctity of Makkah, a process that would become clear at the End of Time when the holiness of Makkah would be fused with that of Jerusalem for all eternity. When that final integration took place, human history would reach its fulfilment and there would be paradise on earth. The local people of Palestine certainly felt that Makkah and Jerusalem shared the same sanctity. It was probably during the early 11th century of the Common Era that Muslims who could not make the *hajj* to Makkah would gather in Jerusalem during the days of pilgrimage. On the night when the *hajjis* stood in vigil on the plain of Arafat, just outside Makkah, crowds of country people and Jerusalemites would gather on the platform of the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem, again as if they were in Makkah. Some *hajjis* liked to combine their pilgrimage with a pious visit to Jerusalem, putting on there the special white robes traditionally worn for the *hajj* and entering the required state of ritual purity⁹. When people object - as they often do today - that Jerusalem is not nearly as holy to Muslims as is Makkah, they are missing the point. The two holy cities are deeply fused in the Muslim imagination, since the unity of Islam insists that there cannot be two or even three "holinesses" but one great sanctity expressed in several cities.

What strikes the modern reader about the story of Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascent to Heaven is its generous pluralism. Muhammad did not arrive on the Temple Mount as a solitary worshipper but was warmly welcomed by all his great prophetic predecessors. Unlike the Jewish and Christian experience of sacred space, the Islamic vision of Jerusalem was not exclusive and divisive. Instead, it was warmly affirmative of other traditions - as is the Qur'an, which repeatedly states that the revelation to Muhammad does not cancel out the revelations made to other prophets in the past but is simply a continuation of a universal religious quest. Muhammad's Night Vision is a vision of harmony, as he and his fellow prophets affirm one another's

insights. The dramatic story of the journey of the Prophet from Makkah to Jerusalem also shows Muhammad's yearning to bring the Arabs from far-off Arabia, which hitherto had seemed off the map of revelation, into the very heart of the monotheistic tradition. It is the same longing that was expressed in his choice of Jerusalem as the first *qiblah*. We know that before the coming of Islam, Jews and Christians used to taunt the Arabs because God had not sent them a prophet or scripture in their own language¹⁰. They felt left out of God's plan. By reaching out to Jerusalem, Muhammad and the first Muslims were seeking to end their lonely isolation and join the monotheistic family, certain of receiving a welcome. It is ironic to look back on this from the perspective of today, when instead of being a city of unity and inclusiveness, Jerusalem has become the most bloody contested and sectarian city in the world.

When Caliph Umar conquered Jerusalem from the Byzantines in 638, he was faithful to this inclusive vision. Unlike the Jews and Christians, Muslims did not attempt to exclude others from Jerusalem's holiness. Umar was careful to ensure that the Christians' holy places remained in their possession. While he was in the Holy Sepulchre Church on the day of the conquest, the time for Muslim prayer came around. Patriarch Sophronius invited him to pray beside the tomb of Jesus, but Umar refused and went outside the Church to pray in the public street. Had he not done this, he explained, Muslims would have erected a mosque on the site of the first Islamic prayer in Jerusalem and it was essential that the Christians retained secure possession of their great church¹¹. Then Umar invited the Jews, who had been forbidden to reside permanently in Jerusalem for over 500 years, to return to their holy city. Seventy Jewish families came from Tiberias. They established a Quarter at the foot of the Temple Mount¹², which now became the Haram al-Sharif, the Most Noble Sanctuary, leaving the Christians in undisturbed possession of the Western Hill in the healthiest part of town. Muslims made no attempt to build mosques in the Christian part of Jerusalem and showed no desire to create facts on the ground

there until after the Crusades, which permanently damaged relations between the three religions of Abraham in Jerusalem. But until the Crusades, Jerusalem remained a predominantly Christian city and Muslims remained in a minority¹³.

It is often said that Muslims never bothered to make Jerusalem the capital of their empire or even the administrative capital of Palestine and that this is a sign of their fundamental indifference to the holy city. But this is not the case. In fact, it seems that the Umayyad Caliphs did consider the possibility of making Jerusalem their capital instead of Damascus¹⁴. It is ironic that one of the first finds to be unearthed by Israeli archaeologists in Jerusalem after 1967 was the great Umayyad palace and administrative centre adjoining the southern wall of the Haram. But the project was abandoned. Holy cities are seldom capital cities in the Islamic world. There was no thought of making Makkah the capital instead of Madinah in the early days, despite its superior sanctity. But in the case of Jerusalem, it would clearly also have been difficult to make a city in which Muslims formed only a minority the capital of either a country or a province. And the Christian and Jewish majority in Jerusalem was not the result of Muslim indifference to Jerusalem but of Muslim tolerance.

In these first years, the Muslim name for Jerusalem was Bayt al-Maqdis, City of the Temple. The Qur'an speaks of the great mosque built by Solomon and the Muslims were horrified when Patriarch Sophronius escorted them to the Temple Mount to see the state of this holy site, which had been left in ruins for nearly 600 years, was piled high with charred and fallen masonry and stinking garbage. Immediately Umar began to collect the debris in his cloak and hurl it over the parapet into the Valley of Hinnom below. His companions followed suit and they cleared and purified this sacred space¹⁵. Umar erected a simple wooden mosque at the southern end of the platform, on the site now occupied by the Aqsa Mosque. It is again ironic, in the light of the present conflict, that this project of building and reclamation was greeted by Jews with acclaim: some even hailed the Muslims

as the precursors of the Messiah¹⁶. At first the Muslims seemed to have paid little attention to the great Rock protruding above the Haram platform, but later, of course, the Umayyads enclosed it in the Dome of the Rock, which was completed, with the help of Byzantine architects, by Caliph Abd al-Malik in 691, the first major building in the Islamic world. Again, unlike the aggressive building projects in Jerusalem today, this early construction work on the Haram was characterised by an attempt to heal the wounds and desecrations of the past; the dome of the Rock shows the Muslim desire for continuity, proudly rooted as it is in the ancient sanctities of the older faith. It was a project characterised too by co-operation and even by friendship between the three faiths.

There is no reference to Muhammad's Night Journey in the splendid calligraphy adorning the Dome of the Rock and scholars have suggested that it was only at a later date that the Rock was seen as the place of Muhammad's Ascension to Heaven and the "Distant Mosque" of Qur'an 17:1 was identified with Jerusalem¹⁷. However that may be, the Dome of the Rock became the archetype of all future Muslim shrines and an emblem of the spiritual ascent that all must take to return to their divine Source. It also, as befits the vision of *tawhid*, harks back to the symbolism of Makkah, the primal sacred space. In Makkah, the square shrine of the Kabah seems to have represented the earth: it leads to the circle of the *tawaf*, the circumnambulations made by worshippers around the shrine. In almost all cultures, the circle is a symbol of eternity and wholeness. The architecture of Makkah thus reflects the journey we must all take from earth to eternity and our final completion. The same kind of symbolism can be seen in the Dome of the Rock, which may express the new metaphysics of the Sufis, the mystics of Islam. The Rock and the cave beneath it can be seen to symbolise the earth, the origin and starting point of the quest. The Rock is surrounded by the octagon of the shrine, the octagon, in Muslim thought, being the first step away from the fixity of the square. It thus marks the beginning of the ascent towards wholeness, perfection and

eternity, replicated by the perfect circle of the Dome. The Dome itself, which would become such a feature of Muslim architecture, is a powerful symbol of the soaring ascent to heaven. But it also reflects the perfect balance of *tawhid*. Its exterior, which reaches towards the infinity of the sky, is a perfect replica of its internal dimension. It illustrates the way the divine and the human, the inner and outer worlds fit and complement one another as two halves of a single whole. The very colours of the shrine also have a message. In Islamic art, blue, the colour of the sky, suggests infinity, while gold is the colour of knowledge, which in the Qur'an is the faculty which brings Muslims an apprehension of God¹⁸.

Speaking so eloquently of the Islamic religious experience, it is no wonder that the Dome of the Rock has become so dear to Muslims. Nor is it surprising that during the eighth century of the Common Era, the Rock and the Haram became associated with Muhammad's Ascension to heaven. During the 8th and 9th centuries - we are not sure exactly when - a number of small shrines and oratories began to appear on the Haram commemorating that momentous night: the Dome of the Prophet and the Station of Gabriel, where Muhammad and the angel prayed with the other prophets; the Dome of the Miraj, where the Prophet began his ascent to the Divine Throne; the Gate of the Prophet at the southern end of the platform, where Muhammad had entered Jerusalem with Gabriel walking ahead of him, illuminating the darkness with a light as strong as the sun. Muslim pilgrims liked to process from one shrine to another, following their Prophet step by step during the most important personal religious experience of his life¹⁹. Muhammad's ascension to heaven is seen as his most perfect act of **Islam**, of surrender to the divine. It is the archetypal image of the return that all human beings must make to the Source of existence. By following in the Prophet's physical footsteps, pilgrims are making a symbolic interior journey, hoping that they will also acquire his attitude of perfect submission to God. Just a stone's throw away, on the Via Dolorosa, Christian pilgrims are following in Jesus's

footsteps as they make the Stations of the Cross, tracing his last journey to Calvary where he would make his most perfect act of submission and obedience to God, his Father.

But true to the inclusive nature of Muslim sacred space, other shrines of the Haram recalled the presence of other prophets. Instead of excluding their religious predecessors in Jerusalem, Muslims were being taught to venerate them in the third-holiest place of the Islamic world. There is the Dome of the Chain, where King David is thought to have judged the children of Israel; the Chair of Solomon, where the King had prayed when he had finished building the Temple; the Gate where the Israelites had prayed for forgiveness on Yom Kippur. Jesus is also crucial to the Muslim devotion to Jerusalem: Muslim visitors could pray at two shrines in the vaults under the Haram platform: the Oratory of Mary and the Cradle of Jesus, where he had lain as an infant and spoken miraculously. From the Haram, Muslims could also see the Dome of the Ascension Church on the Mount of Olives, where the Prophet Jesus had made his ascent to heaven, just like their own prophet.

We have much to learn about the Muslim veneration of Jerusalem and the Islamic notion of sacred space. I welcome this 1997 inaugural International Academic Conference, which marks the start of a new scholarly attempt to explore Islamic Jerusalem, at a time when it seems in jeopardy. In times of crisis, it is often healing to look back to our roots and discover from the wisdom of past resources that will enable us to find comfort and strength in the present. One of the great tragedies is that Jerusalem, the city of peace, should so often have been a city of war, atrocity and injustice, as it is today. Far from replicating the harmony of the earthly paradise, as a holy city should do, Jerusalem is daily becoming an inferno of hatred and sectarian violence. That is why the Muslim celebration of Jerusalem's sanctity, as it was originally conceived, is so important. From the first, Muslims showed that the veneration of sacred space did not have to mean conflict, enmity, killing, possessiveness, terrorism, suicide bombing, jealousy and exclusion of others, who are seen not as

family but as rivals. From the very earliest days, possibly even before King David conquered the city from the Jebusites, the holiness of Jerusalem was regarded as a summons to social justice and to a recognition of the sacred rights of others. From the start, the Muslims developed an inclusive vision of Jerusalem which did not deny the presence and devotion of others, but respected their rights and celebrated plurality and coexistence. This inclusive vision of holiness is sorely needed by the people of Jerusalem today.

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¹ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, trans. Willard J. Trask (New York, 1959); *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Stead (London, 1958), pp. 1 - 37; 387 - 88.

² Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, pp. 382 - 85.

³ Psalms 72:4 ; 9:10, 16 ; 48:8 ; Isaiah I. See also Norman Cohn, *Cosmos, Chaos and the World to Come: The Ancient Roots of Apocalyptic Faith*, (New Haven and London, 1993), pp. 88 - 9.

⁴ Karen Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem, One City, Three Faiths*, (New York and London, 1996), pp.132 - 36.

⁵ Clinton Bennett, "Islam" in Jean Holm with John Bowker (eds.), *Sacred Place*, (London, 1994), pp. 88 - 9.

⁶ Muhammad ibn Ishaq, *Sirat Rasul Allah*, in A. Guillaume (trans. & ed.), *The Life of Muhammad*, (London 1955), p. 186. cf. also Qur'an 17:1; 53:13 - 18.

- 7 Isaac Hasson, "Muslim Literature in Praise of Jerusalem" in L. I. Levine, *The Jerusalem Cathedra: Studies in the History, Geography and Ethnography of the Land of Israel*, 3 vols, (Jerusalem, 1981 - 82), I, p. 182.
- 8 Guy Le Strange, *Palestine Under the Moslems: A Description of Syria and the Holy Land from AD 650 to 1500*, (London, 1890), pp. 164 -65.
- 9 Hasson, "Muslim Literature in Praise of Jerusalem", p. 183; Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem*, pp. 261 - 62.
- 10 Ibn Ishaq, *Sira*, p. 93.
- 11 Eutyches, *Annals* 16 - 17.
- 12 Moshe Gil, *A History of Palestine, 634 - 1099*, trans. Ethel Broido (Cambridge, 1992) 70 - 72, 636 - 38.
- 13 Muqaddasi, *Description of Syria, Including Palestine*, trans. & ed. Guy Le Strange (London, 1896, New York 1971), p.37.
- 14 Mujir ad-Din, *Histoire de Jérusalem et d'Hébron, Fragments of the Chronicle of Mujir ad-Din*, trans. & ed. Henry Sanvaire (Paris, 1876), p. 41.
- 15 Quoted in Le Strange, *Palestine Under the Moslems*, p.141 ; see also accounts by Muthir al-Ghiram, Shams ad-Din Suyuti, Walid ibn Muslim in *ibid*, 139 - 143.
- 16 Bernard Lewis, "An Apocalyptic Vision of Islamic History", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 13 (1950).
- 17 Oleg Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem", *Ars Orientalis* 3 : 33 (1959); *The Formation of Islamic Art*, (New Haven and London, 1973), 49 - 74 ; F. E. Peters, *The Distant Shrine, The Islamic Centuries in Jerusalem*, (New York, 1993), p. 60.
- 18 Clinton Bennett, "Islam", pp. 93 -94.
- 19 Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem*, pp. 247 -251.