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## The History of Masjid Al Aqsa and Palestine

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allaah the most Kind the most Merciful

The following is an excerpt taken from a Friday sermon by **Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen** (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)<sup>1</sup> entitled:

### What occurred during the history of Masjid Al Aqsa

It is the Masjid in the holy blessed land, the residence of the father of the Prophets Ibraaheem Al Khaleel, and the residence of his sons with the exception of Ismaa'eel. It is the residence of Ishaaq and Yaqoob, until Yaqoob and his sons left and went to Egypt to his son Yoosuf. They remained there (Egypt) until they became a nation alongside the Copts, meaning the Pharaohs; those who severely punished them. This was until Moosa (عليه السلام)<sup>2</sup> him took them out fleeing from the people of Pharaoh.

And Allaah (سبحانه)<sup>3</sup> mentioned the children of Israaeel with this great blessing. He said:

وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يُدَبُّونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ وَفِي ذَلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ

[And (remember) when We delivered you from Pharaoh's people, who were afflicting you with a horrible torment, killing your sons and sparing your women, and therein was a mighty trial from your Lord.]<sup>4</sup>

And their prophet Moosa (عليه السلام) reminded them as Allaah narrates from him in the statement of the Exalted:

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ وَجَعَلَكُمْ مُلُوكًا وَآتَاكُمْ مَا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

[And [mention, O Muhammad], when Moosa said to his people, "O my people, remember the favour of Allaah upon you when He appointed among you prophets and made you kings and gave you that which He had not given anyone among the worlds.]<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

<sup>2</sup> (عليه السلام) ('alaihi-salaam) Peace be upon him

<sup>3</sup> (سبحانه) (Subhanahu) The Exalted

<sup>4</sup> سورة البقرة – Soorah al-Baqarah [2:49]

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This means during their era. And he commanded them to fight the tyrants who had seized the holy land and he gave them glad tidings of victory when Moosa (عليه السلام) said to them, as his Lord informed us in His statement:

يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتُدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ

**["O my people! Enter the holy land (Palestine) which Allaah has assigned to you, and turn not back (in flight) for then you will be returned as losers."]<sup>6</sup>**

Allaah only assigned it for them because during that time they were the most deserving people of it; as they were the people of 'Eemaan, rectification and an upright legislation.

Allaah (سبحانه) said:

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِن بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ (105) إِنَّ فِي هَذَا لَبَلَاغًا لِّقَوْمٍ عَابِدِينَ

**[And We have already written in the Psalms after the [previous] mention, that the land is inherited by My righteous servants. Verily, in this (the Qur'aan) there is a plain Message for people who worship Allaah.]<sup>7</sup>**

But the children of Israaeel cowardly decline to make Jihaad and they said to Moosa (عليه السلام) —as Allaah has informed us:

قَالُوا يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَنُذْخِلُهَا حَتَّىٰ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دَاخِلُونَ

**[They said: "O Moosa (Moses)! In it (this holy land) are a people of great strength, and we shall never enter it, till they leave it; when they leave, then we will enter."]<sup>8</sup>**

And Allaah (سبحانه) informed us that they said to Moosa (عليه السلام):

اذهب أنت وربك فقاتلا إنا هاهنا

**[So go you and your Lord and fight you two, we are sitting right here.]<sup>9</sup>**

They cowardly refused Jihaad and facing their enemy and they dismissed their Messenger with this evil speech.

When they did this Allaah made the holy land forbidden for them<sup>10</sup> thus they wandered throughout the land between Egypt and Sham for forty years not being guided to a right

<sup>5</sup> سورة المائدة - Soorah Al Maa'idah [5:20]

<sup>6</sup> سورة المائدة - Soorah Al Maa'idah [5:21]

<sup>7</sup> سورة الأنبياء - Soorah al-Anbeeyaa [21:105-106]

<sup>8</sup> سورة المائدة - Soorah Al Maa'idah [5:22]

<sup>9</sup> سورة المائدة - Soorah Al Maa'idah [5:24]

<sup>10</sup> Then indeed, it is forbidden to them for forty years [in which] they will wander throughout the land. (Soorah Al Maa'idah 5:26)

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path until most of them or all of them died except those born in the wilderness. And then Haaron and Moosa (عليهم السلام)<sup>11</sup>, died in the wilderness.

After them came Yoosha, among those who remained from the new generation of the children of Israaeel. And Allaah opened for them the holy land and they remained there until the affair was passed down to Daawood and Sulaymaan (عليهم السلام). Consequently Baitul Muqaddas was rebuilt, and Yaqoob had built it before that.

When the children of Israaeel insolently disobeyed the command of their Lord and disobeyed their Messengers, Allaah sent against them a king from Persia called Nebuchadnezzar. He destroyed their land and spread amongst them killing, enslavement, and displacement. And he destroyed Baitul Muqaddas for the first time.

Then by the wisdom of Allaah (سبحانه), after His retaliation upon the children of Israaeel, He decreed for them to return to the holy land and bring about a new generation.

As Allaah (سبحانه) said:

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَا لَكُمُ الْكُرَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَمْدَدْنَاكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ أَكْثَرَ نَفِيرًا

**[Then We gave you once again, a return of victory over them. And We helped you with wealth and children and made you more numerous in manpower.]<sup>12</sup>**

Then they forgot what they had gone through and they disbelieved in Allaah and His Messengers. Allaah (سبحانه) said:

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَارْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ رَسُولًا كُلَّمَا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُهُمْ فَرِيقًا كَذَّبُوا  
وَفَرِيقًا يَقْتُلُونَ

**[Verily, We took the covenant of the Children of Israaeel and sent them Messengers. Whenever there came to them a Messenger with what they themselves desired not - a group of them they called liars, and others among them they killed.]<sup>13</sup>**

Therefore Allaah sent against them some kings from Persia or Rome for a second time, thus they occupied their land and tormented them and destroyed Baitul Muqaddas. As Allaah (سبحانه) said:

فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ الْآخِرَةِ لِيَسُوءُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا الْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا دَخَلُوهُ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَلِيُتَبِّرُوا مَا عَلَوْا تَتْبِيرًا  
**[Then, when the second promise came to pass, (We permitted your enemies) to make your faces sorrowful and to enter the mosque (of Jerusalem) as they had entered it before, and to destroy with utter destruction all that fell in their hands.]<sup>14</sup>**

<sup>11</sup> (عليهم السلام) Peace be upon them

<sup>12</sup> سورة الإسراء – Soorah al-Israa [17:6]

<sup>13</sup> سورة المائدة - Soorah Al Maa'idah [5:70]

<sup>14</sup> سورة الإسراء – Soorah al-Israa [17:7]

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All of this was the result of the sins they committed and their disbelief in Allaah (سبحانه) and disbelief in His Messengers. Allaah (سبحانه) said:

وَكَذَلِكَ نُؤَلِّي بَعْضَ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

**[And thus will We make some of the wrongdoers allies of others for what they used to earn.]<sup>15</sup>**

Then Masjid Al Aqsa remained in the hands of the Christians and Rome before the advent of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)<sup>16</sup>—for about three hundred years. This was until Allaah (سبحانه) rescued it from their hands by the Islaamic conquest at the hand of the rightly guided Khaleefah Umar ibn Al Khattaab (رضي الله عنه)<sup>17</sup> in the fifteenth after the migration.

Thus Masjid Al Aqsa was placed in the hands of those rightly deserving of it, the rightly inheritors, and they are the Muslims. As Allaah (سبحانه) said:

وَعَدَ اللهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

**[Allaah has promised those who have believed among you and done righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession [to authority] upon the earth just as He granted it to those before them and that He will surely establish for them [therein] their religion which He has preferred for them and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security, [for] they worship Me, not associating anything with Me. But whoever disbelieves after that - then those are the defiantly disobedient.]<sup>18</sup>**

It remained in the hands of the Muslims until it was seized by the Christians from amongst the Europeans during the days of the Christian Crusades on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of Sha'ban 492H. They entered the holy land with about one million fighters and they killed the Muslims, rather they killed around sixty thousand Muslims. And they entered the Masjid and seized everything in it from the gold and silver, and it was a difficult day upon the Muslims. The Christians displayed their rituals in Masjid Al Aqsa, hanging up the cross, and striking the church bell. And in the Masjid they proselytized the Aqeedah that Allaah is the third of the trinity, and the Aqeedah that Allaah is the Messiah the son of Mary and the Aqeedah that the Messiah is the son of Allaah. By Allaah this was the greatest tribulation.

The Christians occupied Masjid Al Aqsa for more than ninety years until Allaah (سبحانه) saved it at the hands of Salaah ad-Deen al-Ayyoobee Yoosuf ibn Ayyoob (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) during the 27<sup>th</sup> of Rajab in the year 583H. It was a manifest victory and a memorable great day. This day the

<sup>15</sup> سورة الأنعام - Soorah al-An'aam [6:129]

<sup>16</sup> (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

<sup>17</sup> (رضي الله عنه) (rad iyallaahu `anhu) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with him

<sup>18</sup> سورة النور - Soorah an-Noor [24:55]

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honour was returned to Masjid Al Aqsa, the crosses were broken, and the worship of one religion was proclaimed.

Then the Christians tried again against the Muslims by exerting pressure against Al-Maalik al-Kamil the nephew of Salaah ad-Deen. Consequently he made an agreement with them to return to them Baitul Muqaddas while they would vacate the country between them and the other country. And that was in Rabi' al-Thanee in the year 626H. So the crusader states return to Masjid Al Aqsa another time and the Christians remained therein. As Allaah (سبحانه) said:

وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا

[And the Commandment of Allaah is always executed.]<sup>19</sup>

This was until it was recovered from them by Al Malik as-Saalih Ayyoob in the year 644H and it remained in the hands of the Muslims.

And during Rabi' al-Thanee in the year 1378H the Jews—the enemies of Allaah and His Messenger—occupied Baitul Muqaddas with the help of their enemies the Christians. And it continues to be in their hands and beneath their rule; and it will not be taken away from them except by a real Islaamic conquest.

According to what was relayed to us the head of state during that time said: *'It may be possible for Israaeel to relinquish Tel Aviv, but it is not possible to relinquish Jerusalem.'*

Yes, the Jews will not relinquish Jerusalem except by force, and there is no force except by the aid of Allaah (سبحانه). And there is no help from Allaah unless we help His cause. Allaah (سبحانه) said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ

[O you who believe! If you help (in the cause of) Allaah, He will help you, and make your foothold firm.]<sup>20</sup>

The victory is not by glossy boastful speech and rhetoric which turn the issue into a political issue and a material territorial defeat. Victory is not possible except if we establish the religion of Allaah in the manner in which He is pleased for us; such that we rule by the legislation of Allaah, and we enjoin the good and from forbid the evil as Allaah (سبحانه) has commanded us in His statement:

الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَكَتَاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاللَّهُ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ

[[And they are] those who, if We give them authority in the land, establish prayer and give zakah and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. And to Allaah belongs the outcome of [all] matters.]<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> سورة النساء - Soorah an-Nisaa [4:47]

<sup>20</sup> سورة محمد - Soorah Muhammad [47:7]

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We ask Allaah (سبحانه) in this place, that He return the Muslims to their Lord with the best possible return, and that they judge by the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ); and that they fight to make the statement of Allaah the highest, not to aid nationalism, or to aid territorial claims; but rather to make the statement of Allaah the highest.

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<sup>21</sup> سورة الحج - Soorah al-Hajj [22:41]