Glory to Allah Who did take His servant on a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) to the Mosque of Al-Aqsa (in Jerusalem). Whose precincts We did bless. That We may show him some of Our signs. Indeed He alone is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.

(Al-Isra', 17:1)

You have indeed in the Apostle of Allah a beautiful example (conduct) for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day and who engages much in the praise of Allah.

(Al-Ahzab, 33:21)
O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and make not vain your deeds.

(Muhammad, 47:33)

'Umar ibn al-Khattab reported that the Prophet said, "The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get rewarded according to what he has intended..."

Sahih al-Bukhari

Ibn Mas'ud reported that the Prophet said, "Allah brightens a man who hears what I say, gets it memorised, retains it and passes it on to others".

Tirmidhi
Introduction

Of all the symbols of Islam, the most neglected in our time is Masjid al-Aqsa, in Jerusalem. For various reasons, ranging from political compromise to appeasement, the Ummah has ignored not only the virtues but also the plight of this Holy Site.

It is with the intention to rekindle the love, affection and devotion of Muslims to Masjid al-Aqsa that I have compiled this small booklet of 40 ahadith. Since the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ showed such great concern for it and inculcated into the Companions the need to liberate Masjid al-Aqsa and Jerusalem I hope we can adorn the teachings of our Noble Prophet ﷺ and take the urgent practical step required to safeguard Masjid al-Aqsa.

Masjid al-Aqsa is no ordinary Masjid; it forms the basis of our history and is the cornerstone of mankind’s foundation. The Noble Prophet ﷺ dedicated a great deal of his life nurturing the Companions to appreciate the excellent qualities of Masjid al-Aqsa and prepared them to embark on an expedition to liberate Jerusalem which at the time was in the hands of the mighty Roman empire.

Some of the reasons why Masjid al-Aqsa should form an important aspect of a believer’s dedication, and the reason why many pious individuals have given their wealth and lives, include the fact that Masjid al-Aqsa is:

1. the first qiblah for Muslims;
2. the station of al-Isra' and al-Mi'raj;
3. the second house of Allah built on earth;
4. the place where hundreds of Messengers of Allah ﷺ are buried;
5. the place where many Companions are buried;
6. a place where miracles were shown by Allah's will;
7. a place which Allah ﷺ Himself calls a 'blessed place';
8. referred to directly and indirectly, seventy times in the Holy Qur'an;
9. the place where angels have descended with Allah's message;
10. the only place on earth where all the Messengers of Allah prayed at the same time led by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ;
11. the only Masjid mentioned by name in the Holy Qur'an apart from the Ka'bah.

It is for the above reasons and many more that we need to understand our responsibilities regarding safeguarding the Masjid al-Aqsa which is in great danger of being demolished by Israeli extremists.

The revival of this aspect of sunnah is urgently needed and I pray that the Almighty Allah ﷻ gives me and all my friends and colleagues the courage to direct our effort and energy to ensure that the historical legacy of Masjid al-Aqsa which we have inherited from the efforts and sacrifices of our predecessors is passed on to the next generation.

I pray that we can all reflect on the following verses of the Holy Qur'an for our guidance, Ameen.

Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change themselves.

(al-Ra'd, 13:11)

Because Allah will never change the grace which He had bestowed on a people until they change what is in their (own) souls and verily Allah is He Who hears and knows all things.

(al-Anfal, 8:53)
The believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and have never doubted and who strive with their belongings and their persons in the Cause of Allah: such are sincere.

(al-Hujurat, 49:15)
Abu Dharr reported that he asked the Prophet, “O Messenger of Allah, which masjid was built first on earth?” The Prophet replied, “The Sacred Masjid of Makkah.” Abu Dharr again asked, “Which was next?” The Prophet said, “The Masjid al-Aqsa.” Abu Dharr further asked, “How long was the period between the building of the two masajid?” The Prophet said, “Forty years.” Apart from these, offer your prayers anywhere when it is time to pray, as excellence lies in it.” (Al-Bukhari)
Abu Hurayrah  relates that the Prophet ﷺ said, “You should not undertake a special journey to visit any place other than the following three masajid (with the expectation of receiving greater reward); the Sacred Masjid of Makkah (Ka'bah), this masjid of mine (the Prophet’s Masjid in Madinah), and Masjid al-Aqsa (of Jerusalem).” (Muslim)
The Virtues of Performing Salah in Masjid al-Aqsa

Abu Darda’  relates that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The reward of a prayer in al-Masjid al-Haram (Makkah) over other masajid is equivalent to 100,000 Salah (in reward), a prayer in my masjid (Madinah) is equivalent to 1,000 Salah and a Salah in Bayt al-Maqdis (al-Aqsa Sanctuary) is equivalent to 500 Salah.” (Al-Bayhaqi)
'Abdullah ibn 'Amr related that the Prophet said, “When Sulayman ibn Dawud constructed Bayt al-Maqdis, he asked Allah three things. He asked Allah adjudication in line with his ruling, which he was given. He asked Allah for an empire which cannot be attained by anybody after him, which he was given, and he asked Allah, when he completed the construction of Masjid al-Aqsa, that whoever comes solely to perform Salah in this masjid, He forgives his sins, leaving him like the day his mother gave birth to him.” (Al-Nasa’i)

(Al-Tabaqaat al-Kubra)
Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman reports that the Messenger of Allah said, “The most superior ḥitam (seclusion) is that of three masajid: al-Masjid al-Haram (in Makkah), the Masjid of the Prophet (in Madinah), and the Masjid of Bayt al-Maqdis (in Jerusalem).” (Al-Bayhaqi)
Maymunah relates that she said, “O Messenger of Allah, inform us about (visiting) Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem)”. He said, “It is the land of gathering (al-mahshar) and resurrection (al-manshar), visit it and pray there, as one Salah performed there is equivalent to a thousand Salahs performed elsewhere.” She further asked, “What about the one who doesn’t have the capacity to travel to Jerusalem?” He replied, “Then send some oil to be used in its lamps, as the one who sent oil to be used in its lamps will be like the one who performed Salah there.” (Ibn Majah)
Umm Salamah ⧫, the wife of the Prophet ⧫, relates that she heard the Messenger of Allah ⧫ saying, “If anyone enters into the state of Ihram for Hajj or Umrah from Masjid al-Aqsa and then proceeds to the Sacred Masjid, his former and latter sins will be forgiven” or “he is guaranteed paradise.” The narrator ‘Abdullah ⧫ was not sure which words were said.

(Abu Dawud)
Zaid ibn Thabit reported: We were with Allah’s messenger composing transcripts of the Qur’an on parchments. He said, “Blessed is al-Sham.” We asked: “Why is that so, O Messenger of Allah?” He said, “Because the angels of the Compassionate One have spread their wings over it.” *(Al-Tirmidhi)*
Abu Umamah reports that the Messenger of Allah said, “The chosen land of Allah is al-Sham. He has therein his chosen creation and servants. Most definitely, a large group from my Ummah will enter Paradise without having to give reckoning or experiencing any form of punishment.”

(Al-Tabarani)
'Abdullah ibn Hawalah reports that he said, “O Messenger of Allah, choose for me a place where I should be, for if I were to know that you are staying I would not have chosen any place over you.” He said three times, “You must go to al-Sham.” When He noticed Ibn Hawalah’s indifference towards it, he said, “Do you know what Allah says about al-Sham? Allah said, ‘O Sham! You are the quintessence of My lands (safwati min biladi) and I shall inhabit you with the chosen ones among My servants.’” (Al-Tabarani)
40 AHADITH

'A Abdullah ibn 'Amr  reported that the Prophet  said, “When fitna (great tribulations at the end of time) befalls, safety will be in al-Sham.”

(Al-Tabarani)
'Abdullah ibn Hawalah reports that the Messenger of Allah said, “At some point you will be [split into] standing armies (groups): one in al-Sham, one in Yemen and one in Iraq.” 'Abdullah ibn Hawalah asked the Prophet, “Choose for me, Messenger of Allah, in case I live to see that day.” The Prophet replied, “Go to al-Sham, for it is the chosen land of Allah in all His earth. He attracts the chosen ones among His servants by sending them there. If you do not wish to go there, then go to Yemen and drink from its water. Allah has given me a guarantee concerning al-Sham and its people.” (Abu Dawud)
Al-Bara'  narrates, “We prayed along with the Prophet ﷺ facing Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) for sixteen or seventeen months. Then Allah ordered him to turn his face towards the Ka’bah (in Makkah).”

(Al-Bukhari and Muslim)
Al-Bara’ reported that the Messenger of Allah prayed be towards the Sacred House (Ka’bah). He performed ‘Asr with a group of people. Then one of the men who had prayed with him left and passed by some people in a masjid who were bowing (in ruku’). He remarked, “I testify by Allah that I prayed with the Prophet facing Makkah.” They immediately turned towards the House. Some men had died or had been martyred before the Qiblah changed towards the Sacred House. We did not know what to say about them (and the acceptance of their prayers). Then Allah sent down, “Allah would not let your belief go to waste. Allah is All-Gentle, Most Merciful to mankind.” (2:143) (Al-Bukhari)
Abu Hurayrah ﷺ related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “On the night in which I was taken on the journey, I saw Musa ﷺ. He was slim with wavy hair. He resembled the men of Shanu’a. I saw ‘Isa ﷺ. He was a man of medium height with red complexion, as if he had stepped out of the bath. I am the closest of the children of Ibrahim ﷺ in resemblance to him. Then I was brought two vessels, one containing milk and the other wine. He said, 'Drink whichever one you wish.' I took the milk and drank it. It was said, 'You have taken the fitrah. If you had taken the wine, your Ummah would have erred.'” (Al-Bukhari)
Ibn 'Abbas said regarding the statement of Allah in the Holy Qur’an “And we did not make the vision (ascension to the heavens) we showed to you, but a test for the people” (17:60), “The sights which Allah’s Messenger was shown on the Night Journey when he was taken to Bayt al-Maqdis (i.e. Jerusalem) were actual/real sights, (not dreams). “And the Cursed Tree (mentioned) in the Qur’an.” He said, “This is the tree of Zaqqum* (itself).” (Al-Bukhari)

* A tree that will grow in Jahannum and the bitter fruit of which the dwellers of hell will eat.
Jabir ibn 'Abdullah رضي الله عنه relates that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When the people of Quraysh did not believe me (i.e. the story of my Night Journey), I stood up in al-Hijr (the Hatim) and Allah ﷻ displayed Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) in front of me, and I began describing its landmarks as if I was looking at it." (Al-Bukhari)
'Abdullah ibn Hawalah reports that the Messenger of Allah said, “I saw on the night of al-Isra’ wa al-Mi’raj (the Night Journey) a white column resembling a pearl, which the angels were carrying. I asked them, 'What are you carrying?' They replied, 'The Column of (the Book of) Islam. We have been ordered to place it in al-Sham.' Whilst in my sleep, I saw the Book being taken away from under my headrest. I began to fear lest Allah the Almighty had abandoned the people of the earth. My eyes followed the Column until it was a brilliant light in front of me. Then I saw it was placed in al-Sham. Whoever cannot (go to al-Sham), let him go to Yemen, and let him drink from its water, for Allah has assured (secured) for me al-Sham.” (Al-Tabarani)
Anas ibn Malik relates that the Prophet said, “I was brought the Buraq, a tall white beast, larger than a donkey but smaller than a mule. It could place its hooves at the farthest boundary of its gaze. I mounted it until I arrived at Bayt al-Maqdis. I tied it to the ring to which the Prophets tied it before (i.e. the Buraq Wall or Western Wall). I entered Masjid al-Aqsa Sanctuary and prayed Salah (two rak‘ah there).” (Muslim)
‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar  said that the Prophet ﷺ said to us one day, “I saw angels in my dream who had taken hold of the Column (governance) of the Book and proceeded with it to al-Sham. When the great tribulation befalls, iman (belief) will be in al-Sham.” (Fadhail al-Sham)
Dhu’l-Asabi’ reported that he asked the Prophet, “O Messenger of Allah! Where do you instruct us to go if we are unfortunate to remain behind after your passing away?” The Prophet replied, “Go to Bayt al-Maqdis. Perhaps you will have offspring who will go to that masjid day and night.”
Abdullah ibn Hawalah al-Azdi reported, the Messenger of Allah put his hand on my head and said, “Ibn Hawalah! If you see that the Caliphate has taken abode in the Holy Land then the earthquakes, chaos and great events are at hand. The Last Hour on that day will be closer to people than my hand is to your head.”  (Abu Dawud)
Saalim ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar  reports from his father that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A huge fire will emerge from Hadramawt or (he said) from the direction of the sea of Hadramawt before the Day of Resurrection which will cause a great movement of people." The Companions asked, "O Messenger of Allah what do you order us to do at that time?" He ﷺ replied, "You must go to al-Sham." (Al-Tirmidhi)
Mujammi’ ibn Jariyah reported having heard the Messenger of Allah say, “Ibn Maryam (Isa) will kill al-Dajjal (the Anti-Christ) at the door of Ludd.” (Al-Tirmidhi and Ahmad)
Junadah ibn Abi Umayyah al-Azdi said, "We visited a man from among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Madinah and said to him, 'Tell us something that you have heard directly from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Do not narrate something which you have heard from others.' We persisted in asking him. He said, 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood amongst us and said, 'I warn you of the Dajjal (Anti-Christ) who is one-eyed.' He said I think he said his left eye. He will have mountains of bread and rivers of water with him. His sign is that he will stay among you for forty days, his rule will reach every place (on the earth) apart from four masajid: Masjid al-Haram (in Makkah), the Masjid of the Messenger, al-Masjid al-Aqsa and the Masjid of Sinai. Irrespective of what happens, know that Allah ﻪ is not one-eyed.' Ibn ‘Awn said, 'I think he said that he will be given power over a man whom he will kill and then revive. He will not be given power over anybody else.'" (Ahmad)
Nahik ibn Suraym al-Sakuni relates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "You will most definitely fight the pagans until those remaining of you will fight Dajjal by the River Jordan. You will be east of it and they will be to the west of it." (Majma‘ al-Zawa‘id)
Mu‘adh ibn Jabal relates that the Messenger of Allah said, “The flourishing state of Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) will be when Yathrib is in ruins, the ruined state of Yathrib will be when the great war comes, the outbreak of the great war will be at the conquest of Constantinople and the conquest of Constantinople will be when al-Dajjal (Anti-Christ) comes forth.” He (the Prophet) struck his thigh or his shoulder with his hand and said: “This is as true as you are here or as you are sitting (meaning Mu‘adh ibn Jabal).” (Abu Dawud)
‘Awf ibn Malik ﷺ reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The rest of the world will be destroyed forty years before al-Sham is.” (Ibn ‘Asakir)
Abu Darda’ related that the Messenger of Allah said, “From al-Sham to the furthest point of Upper Mesopotamia, the inhabitants therein, along with their wives, children and servants (men and women), are in a state of ribat (guarding the Muslim frontier) in the path of Allah. Whoever occupies any land therein is in ribat. Whoever occupies any frontier therein from the many frontiers is in Jihad.” (Ibn ‘Asakir)
Al-Nawwas ibn Sam'an al-Kilabi narrates that the Messenger of Allah said, “If the Dajjal comes forth while I am amongst you then I shall dispute with him on your behalf, but if he comes after I am not with you, a man must dispute on his own behalf, and Allah will protect every Muslim. Those of you who live up to his time should recite over him the opening verses of Surah Kahf, for they are your protection from his trial.” We asked, “How long will he remain on the earth?” He replied, “Forty days, one like a year, one like a month, one like a week and the rest of his days like yours.” We asked, “Will one day’s prayer suffice us in the day which will be like a year?” He replied, “No, you must make an estimate of its extent. Then 'Isa, son of Maryam will descend at the white minaret to the east of Damascus. He will then catch al-Dajjal at the Gate of Ludd and kill him.” (Abu Dawud)
Abu Umamah al-Bahili reports that the Prophet said, “A group of my Ummah will remain on truth, they will vanquish their enemy and those who disagree with them will not be able to harm them until Allah Commands.” “Where are these people?” The companions asked. The Prophet replied, “In Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem).” (Al-Tabarani)
'Umair ibn Hani’ mentions that he heard Mu’awiyah ibn Abi Sufyān ℓ saying on this pulpit that he heard the Messenger of Allah ℓ saying, “A group from my Ummah will remain upon the truth. Those who desert them or oppose them will not be able to harm them, they will prevail over others until the decree of Allah (Qiyamah) comes.” (Mu’adh ibn Jabal ℓ said, “They are the people of al-Sham.”) (Ahmad)
Abu Hurayrah relates that the Messenger of Allah said, “A group of my Ummah will not cease to fight at the gates of Damascus and at the gates of Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) and its surroundings. The betrayal or desertion of whoever deserts them will not harm them in the least. They will remain victorious, until the Final Hour comes.” (Al-Tabarani)
Masjid al-Aqsa – The Best Place of Residence

[35]

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr reports that the Messenger of Allah said, “There will be migration upon migration. The best of the inhabitants of the earth will reside where Prophet Ibrahim migrated (around Bayt al-Maqdis)…”

(Al-Mustadrak)
Abu Hurayrah reports that the Prophet said, "The angel of death was sent to Musa. When he came to Musa, Musa slapped him. The angel returned to Allah and said, 'You have sent me to a servant who does not want to die.' Allah ordered the angel, 'Return to him and tell him to put his hand on the back of an ox and for every hair that will come under it, he will be granted one year of life.' Musa asked, 'O Lord! What will happen after that?' Allah replied, 'Then death.' Musa decided, 'Let it be now.' Musa then requested Allah to let him die close to the Holy (Sacred) Land (near Masjid al-Aqsa) so much so that he would be at a distance of a stone’s throw from it." Abu Hurayrah added, the Messenger of Allah said, "If I were there, I would show you his grave below the red sand hill on the side of the road." (Al-Bukhari)
‘Awf ibn Malik relates, “I went to the Prophet during the Battle of Tabuk while he was sitting in a leather tent. He said, ‘Count six signs between now and the approach of the Hour (Qiyamah/Doomsday): my death; the conquest of Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem); a plague that will afflict you (and kill you in great numbers) as the plague that afflicts sheep; the increase of wealth to such an extent that even if one is given one hundred dinars he will not be satisfied; then an affliction which no Arab house will escape; and then a truce between you and Banu al-Asfar (i.e. the Byzantines) who will betray you and attack you under eighty flags. Under each flag will be twelve thousand soldiers.” (Al-Bukhari)
The Glad Tidings of the Conquest of al-Sham and Bayt al-Maqdis

[38]

Shaddad ibn Aws relates that he was with the Messenger of Allah who was feeling better (on the Prophet’s deathbed). The Prophet asked, “What is wrong with you Shaddad?” Shaddad answered by saying, “The world is closing in on me.” The Prophet then said, “Do not worry, al-Sham will be conquered and Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) will be conquered and you and your sons will be imams there, if Allah wills.”

(Al-Tabarani)
Abu Umamah  reports that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Prophethood descended upon me in three places: Makkah, Madinah and al-Sham.” (Al-Mustadrak)
'Aishah related, “The Messenger of Allah would continue fasting until we would begin to think he will not have a break. He would continue not fasting until we would begin to think he does not want to fast anymore. He would recite Surah Bani Isra’il and al-Zumar every night.” (Ahmad)
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