



ISRAEL AND UNITED STATES' CLAIM ON AL-QUDS!!!

The name Al-Quds meaning “The Holy One” is another name for the city of Jerusalem, a city in the Middle East and one of the oldest cities in the world and is considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Israelis and Palestinians are the two disputing sides over this city, where Israel maintains its primary governmental institutions and Palestine ultimately foresees it as its seat of power. Due to the weak political and military position of the Palestinians, Israel and its allies (particularly the United States of America) are attempting through various means to claim Al-Quds to belong to the Zionists.

The former U.S. President, Donald Trump, declared Jerusalem (Al-Quds) to be the capital of Israel

on December 6, 2017. The OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) strongly responded to Trump's statement and scheduled an emergency meeting in Turkey in which a recommendation was made to take the United States claim against Jerusalem (Al-Quds) to the United Nations. This has tamed the United States and Israel efforts against Al-Quds, the majority of United Nations member states in the General Assembly have objected to the claim and recommended efforts to ease the tensions caused by such unilateral claims.

History of Al-Quds from Judaism, Christianity and Islam Perspective

The history of Al-Quds requires a comprehensive discussion, mainly

from the perspective of Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). The scriptures of the three religions have recorded their respective stories, including the story of Al-Quds in which there are three holy sites of the three religions. The city has a number of places of religious significance including the Temple Mount and its Western Wall for Jews, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher for Christians, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock for Muslims. Currently, there are 204 synagogues, 158 churches, and 73 mosques in Jerusalem. This confirms that a glance at the perspective of all three religions is necessary for a comprehensive discussion.

History of Al-Quds from Judaism

Perspective

The Jews believe that the migration to their so-called holy land began when Prophet Abraham came out of Babylon with his followers in 1900 BC to avoid undesirable things from King Nimrud. The Jews believe that when Abraham returned from defeating Chedorlaomer and his allied kings, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh, which is the Valley of the King. And King Melchizedek of Salem (Jerusalem) brought out bread and wine; he was a priest of God, the Most High. He blessed him by saying, "Blessed be Abraham of God, the Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God, the Most High, who has delivered your foes into your hand".

According to biblical history, Zion was said to be impregnable and David captured it and renamed the place as 'The city of David'. It was a small place of some 15 acres but significant in terms of its location. The appearance of the word 'Zion' was first in the Old Testament when King David established his kingdom in 1000-969 BC. The word 'Zion' is mentioned 152 times in the Old Testament, all pointing to the city of Jerusalem.

Jews first entered the Jerusalem area in the time of David. Earlier the initiation of the state of Israel was started by Saul (Talut) in 1025 BC. He gathered the tribes of all the Jews to fight against the king of Jalut (Goliath). One of Saul's troops was a young man named David who would lead the people of Israel after the Talut. He is also regarded as the founder of the realm of the Israelites in Palestine territory. David and his successors enhanced

Jerusalem's credentials even further by transforming the city into the most important national and religious site for Jews.

After the leadership of David and Solomon who ruled the Palestinian territories for about 80 years, Solomon's kingdom was split into two states in 923 BC. The Kingdom of Jehuza (Judah) in the South with its capital Jerusalem (Al-Quds) was ruled by Solomon's son, Rehoboam. He was supported by two tribes of the Israelites; Jehuza and Benjamin, who lived in the South and around Jerusalem. But ten other tribes refused to pledge to him and instead chose to be ruled by Jeroboam from the tribe of Ephraim (one of the tribes of Israel) forming the second kingdom of Israel in the north.

The books of Kings and Samuel (and Deuteronomy, which is closely related to their outlook) place enormous significance on the establishment of Jerusalem as the Jewish ritual center. According to the views promoted by these books, sacrifice is not legitimate in any other location, even if intended for the God of Israel. A prayer is quoted at the dedication of the Temple, which cites the words of God: "Since the day that I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city in any tribe of Israel to have a temple built that my Name might be therein; but I have chosen David to rule my people Israel" (Kings, 8:16).

History of Al-Quds from Christianity Perspective

Al-Quds (Jerusalem) in Christianity's doctrine is quite famous. As in the Old Testament and the New Tes-

tament, there are many prophetic stories that are not very different from those believed by the Jews. It is narrated that Jesus, the son of Mary, was a Jew and the founder of the Messianic movement in Judaism and proclaimed the kingdom of God that would mark the beginning of his missionary activities. His journey to Jerusalem for Easter was probably because he expected the kingdom to begin in Jerusalem. But once in Jerusalem, he was later crucified by the Roman. The followers of Jesus consider this city (Jerusalem) to be the site of the marvelous miracle of his resurrection, and as the place of his promised return in the gospel. It was also in that the first apostles proclaimed in their Gospels the good news of the coming kingdom of the son of God who was crucified and resurrected as the Messiah. When the Roman Emperor Constantine embraced Christianity in 325 AD he built the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Al-Quds (Jerusalem).

Based on the above explanation it can be understood Al-Quds (Jerusalem) is a holy place to the Christians, who believe it was where Jesus, the redeemer of the sins, was crucified and resurrected. However, the conflict between Judaism and Christianity occurred during the rule of the Roman empire, when a Roman Emperor embraced Christianity and established churches to mark Jerusalem as his territory.

History of Al-Quds from Islam Perspective

Al-Quds is believed to be the place from where Prophet Muhammad's Mi'raj began; the second

part of a night trip from the Mecca to the Aqsa Mosque and Mi'raj (ascent to the heavens). The story of Isra' and Mi'raj and the message from Allah to perform prayers there made the Aqsa Mosque located in Al-Quds became the first qiblah for Muslims.

Interestingly, as the last of Abrahamic religions Islam recognizes the existence and story of previous Prophets many of whom were sent to the Israelites. Thus, Muslims do believe in the sites of historical heritage located in the area of Jerusalem; one example of which is the tomb of Prophet David in an ancient cemetery on Mount Zion.

According to historical records, Umar bin Khattab, the second caliph after the Prophet (pbuh) signed an agreement with Christian Patriarch Monophysite Sophronius to convince him that the holy sites and Christians of Jerusalem will be protected under Muslim rule. The city was, thus, peacefully surrendered to Muslims while Christians continued to follow their own rules and regulations, although under the rule of the Muslim governor for the city. After being under the rule of Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties, it came to the target of the crusaders, until it finally came to be ruled by the Ottoman Turks.

The controversy surrounding the status of Jerusalem as a capital city for Muslims or Jews has been the subject of a number of United Nations resolutions.

The seriousness of the issue of Al-Quds reached its peak when Donald Trump declared Al-Quds (Jerusalem) as the capital city of Israel on December 6, 2017. Israel, as expected, welcomed the

US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Meanwhile, the member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) strongly responds to and condemned the statement made by Trump. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called an extraordinary summit of the OIC on December 13, 2017, to review the situation. During the meeting in Istanbul, the 57-member group denounced Trump's move as "null and void" and called on the United Nations to "end the Israeli occupation" of Palestine. Muslim leaders warned that Trump's administration will be liable for "all the consequences of not retracting from this illegal decision".

Turkey's Hurriyet newspaper reported that Erdogan launch initiatives at the United Nations to have Washington's "disgraceful" decision annulled. He stated: "As a country, we are determined to do our bit on this issue. We will wash the dirty laundry of those who breach international law". He

also stated, "We will work to annul this unlawful decision, first in the Security Council and then in the UN General Assembly". He further added that Ankara will encourage other countries to recognize the Palestinian state. Presently, 137 countries in the world recognize the Palestinian state. God willing, this number will further increase with our efforts".

Pressure from OIC member states succeeded in bringing the issue of U.S. claim to the United Nations meeting so that an emergency session was held. The UN General Assembly has decisively backed a resolution effectively calling on the US to withdraw its recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. The text says that any decisions regarding the status of the city are "null and void" and must be canceled. The non-binding resolution was approved by 128 states, with 35 abstaining and nine others voting against on 21 December 2017. The nine who voted against the resolution were the U.S., Israel, Guatemala, Honduras, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, and Togo. Among the 35 abstaining were Canada and Mexico. Those voting in favor included the other four permanent members of the UN Security Council (China, France, Russia, and the UK) as well as key US allies in the Muslim world. There were 21 countries that did not turn up for the vote.

The above explanation shows that the U.S. and Israeli claim over Jerusalem is a matter of great concern to the international community. This shows Israel's efforts and crimes against the Palestinians to seize control of the Palestinian

► **The controversy surrounding the status of Jerusalem as a capital city for Muslims or Jews has been the subject of a number of United Nations resolutions.**