

**THE PREPARATION AND STRATEGIC PLAN  
OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD FOR  
ISLAMICJERUSALEM**

**A CRITICAL STUDY OF MUSLIM SOURCES**

**A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the  
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((رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ))

اللَّهُ هُوَ

تَقَبَّلْ

## Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the strategic plan of the Prophet Muhammad for IslamicJerusalem and the preparations that led to the first Muslim *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem, which took place after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Indeed, the relationship of the Prophet Muhammad with IslamicJerusalem has been subject to significant disagreement among scholars, and was generally limited to the study of the virtues of that region according to the *ahādīth* (traditions) of the Prophet Muhammad. Yet this thesis concentrates on the actual role of the Prophet Muhammad in paving the way for the Muslims to take over that region after his death. However, the thesis deals with the Prophet Muhammad, according to the Muslim sources, as a Prophet, and therefore, the relationship of the divinely revelation with these preparations and this plan is not neglected, especially that Prophethood was the main character of the Prophet Muhammad that has been neglected in studying his acts and movements in this context.

The stages of the strategic plan for the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem can be divided into three stages: First, the divinely preparation and mobilisation of the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims for the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem, which was through Qur'ānic concentration on the importance of IslamicJerusalem, and manifest this relationship through praying towards IslamicJerusalem. Second, the turning point that led the Prophet Muhammad to realise the centrality of IslamicJerusalem, and this was through the Night Journey. Third, the practical steps taken by the Prophet Muhammad, supported by divinely revelation, toward paving the way for the Muslims to initiate the campaigns that led to the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem after his death, and this manifested in studying the Prophet Muhammad's military movements on the route of IslamicJerusalem, in addition to key documents granted or sent by the Prophet Muhammad to numerous parties in or around IslamicJerusalem.

This thesis presents a new reading of the *sīrah* (biography) of the Prophet Muhammad, and presents a new understanding of the Muslim awareness of the importance of IslamicJerusalem, and the central role of the Prophet Muhammad in shaping the history of IslamicJerusalem after his death.

# Declaration

I hereby declare that:

- This thesis has been composed by me
- It has not been accepted in any previous application for a degree
- The work has been done by me
- All quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information specifically acknowledged

Abdallah Ma'rouf Omar

## Acknowledgments

First of all, all praise and thank be to Almighty God, the Lord of the universe, who created me from nothing, blessed me with life and mind, have always poured His graces over me, guided me throughout my life with His Mercy and *Barakah*, and sent His Messenger Muhammad (PBUH) as a mercy for all the livings. I ask Almighty God to accept this effort for His sake.

As my beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) taught us: whoever does not thank the people, does not thank God. Thus, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al-Maktoum for his generosity and support. I would like to also express my great gratitude and appreciation to my lead supervisors: Prof. Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, Prof. Malory Nye, and my second supervisor Dr. Khalid El-Awaisi, for their valuable comments and guidance throughout my studies. Many thanks also to Dr. Alhaji Drammeh and Dr. Maher Abu-Munshar at the Al-Maktoum Institute for their kind support. Thanks to all the staff of the Al-Maktoum Institute and all my colleagues at the institute for their continuous assistance and support.

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## System of Transliteration

| Arabic  | Transcription |
|---------|---------------|
| ء       | '             |
| ا       | a             |
| ب       | b             |
| ت       | t             |
| ث       | th            |
| ج       | j             |
| ح       | ḥ             |
| خ       | kh            |
| د       | d             |
| ذ       | dh            |
| ر       | r             |
| ز       | z             |
| س       | s             |
| ش       | sh            |
| ص       | ṣ             |
| ض       | ḍ             |
| ط       | ṭ             |
| ظ       | ẓ             |
| ع       | '             |
| غ       | gh            |
| ف       | f             |
| ق       | q             |
| ك       | k             |
| ل       | l             |
| م       | m             |
| ن       | n             |
| هـ      | h             |
| و       | w             |
| ي       | y             |
| آ long  | ā             |
| ؤ long  | ū             |
| ي long  | ī             |
| َ short | A             |
| ِ short | I             |
| ُ short | U             |

## Abbreviations

- AB      After *Bi'thah*: after the first revelation to Muhammad that marked the start of his Prophethood.
- BH      Before *Hijrah*: before the migration of the Prophet Muhammad to Madīnah.
- AH      After *Hijrah*: after the migration of the Prophet Muhammad to Madīnah.
- CE      Common Era: the Gregorian calendar.
- Chr. P.   Chronicon Paschale: historical chronicles written in the 7<sup>th</sup> century in Constantinople by a committee of historians; Chronicon Paschale means The Chronicles of Easter.

## Gregorian – *Hijrī* Calendars Conversion System

The researcher relied on the following website for the conversion of the *Hijrī* (Lunar) and Gregorian (Solar) calendars:

<http://www.islamonline.net/calculator/arabic/hijrigregoriancalculator.asp>



## Referencing System

The researcher will use the scientific system of Al-Maktoum Institute for the referencing throughout this thesis. References will be quoted in the text, while any notes will be stated as footnotes. The referencing within the text will be by stating the surname of the author, followed by the date of publishing, the volume between brackets, and the number of pages.

*Example:* Ibn Ishāq (2004: 123), al-Wāqidī (2004: (1) 123)

When a volume contains two parts, the researcher will add the number of the part after the volume number.

*Example:* Ibn Kathīr (1997: (1/3) 123)

If a book contains only one volume that contains more than one part, the researcher will place the number of the part between brackets, inserting (pt.) before it.

*Example:* Ibn Hishām (2005: (pt.3) 123)



---

## ***INTRODUCTION***

# Introduction

Most people attribute the first Muslim *Fath*<sup>1</sup> of the region of Islamicjerusalem<sup>2</sup> in the 7<sup>th</sup> century to the second Muslim Caliph, ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Others attribute the beginning of this *Fath* to the first Muslim Caliph, Abū Bakr, and claim that ‘Umar simply followed the directions of Abū Bakr. Yet the role of the Prophet Muhammad and his plan for this *Fath* are rarely mentioned, although his influence was clear in the events that led to the *Fath* of that vital region.

This thesis looks into the role of the Prophet Muhammad in shaping the first Muslim *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem. This role was very crucial that it could be argued that the Prophet Muhammad shaped the strategic plan that led to the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem. This *Fath* was a major turning point, and could not have been initiated all of a sudden in such a short period of time. Islamicjerusalem was in fact under one of the main powers of the time (Byzantium), and its *Fath* would have needed a long process of preparation and planning to be successfully accomplished.

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<sup>1</sup> The researcher will use the terminology *Fath* throughout this research rather than the term ‘conquest’ when referring to the Muslim ‘conquest’ of Islamicjerusalem. This is since the Muslim sources use the term فتح *Fath*, which has a different meaning in the Arabic language to the term ‘conquest’. The term ‘conquest’ has a negative impact and meaning, and ‘*Fath*’ in Arabic does not necessarily refer to war or military action. The *Fath* might be a peace treaty, such as the description of the treaty of *al-Hudaybiyah* described in the Qur’ān as *Fath*, although there was no war (Qur’ān 48:1). The researcher decided to use the term *Fath*, as it is in the Arabic Language, to refer to the Muslim ‘conquest’ of Islamicjerusalem, as a result of a discussion that took place during the 8<sup>th</sup> Academic Conference on Islamicjerusalem, on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2006 in Dundee, the UK. This conference was entitled ‘Challenges of Islamicjerusalem’ and the researcher presented a paper titled ‘Islamicjerusalem and Prophet Muhammad: Challenging Understanding’. The discussion was raised by a respected politician, namely Ernie Ross, a former MP for Dundee West in Scotland. Ross highlighted the misconception that might be caused if the term ‘conquest’ were to be used to refer to this matter. Therefore, the researcher decided to use the transliterated Arabic term *Fath*. *Fath* literally means ‘Opening’ (see Baalbaki 2001: 814), and is used to give the impression of victory, whether in war, when achieving peace, or when solving a problem.

<sup>2</sup> The explanation of the terminology “Islamicjerusalem” will follow in the first chapter of this thesis.

## **Background**

The start of the Muslim era in Islamic Jerusalem has inspired numerous scholars and researchers to investigate the different aspects of that era, namely the taking over of the region at the time of the second caliph ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Yet a very crucial element has been absent from research into that era, namely the influence of the Prophet Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam and the founder of the first Muslim State, on the events that took place in Islamic Jerusalem and led to the Muslim *Fath*. What these studies have neglected was a thorough examination of the first steps taken towards this region, which paved the way for Abū Bakr and then ‘Umar to take over the region. Indeed, setting up foundations and drawing plans were very crucial as they led to the final steps crowned by the *Fath* of the region by ‘Umar.

Many questions are raised in this context: What was the motivation of the Muslim conquest? What was the influence of the Prophet Muhammad on these events? Did the Prophet Muhammad prepare the ground for the actual *Fath* or did he pay no attention to that region?

These preliminary questions and many more need to be answered, in order to get a clearer picture of what happened in Islamic Jerusalem during the first Muslim *Fath*. This research takes the issue back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad, and studies his role and influence on the historical change that occurred in Islamic Jerusalem after his death and mainly the Prophet’s strategic plan for this *Fath*.

## **Significance of the Research**

The study of the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic Jerusalem has mostly been limited to the *aḥādīth* of the virtues of Islamic Jerusalem and al-Aqṣā

Mosque, in addition to the Night Journey. Even the Night Journey has been studied with concentration mainly on the Ascension to Heaven. This has limited the study of the Night Journey into only showing the virtues of IslamicJerusalem, as being the place of the gathering of the Prophets and so on.

However, Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi (2006), in his monograph '*Introducing IslamicJerusalem*', made a very interesting hypothesis, namely, that the Prophet Muhammad actually drew a strategic plan for the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem yet he died before applying this plan. While studying the Night Journey (2006: 50), he argues:

Following this important turning point [i.e. the Night Journey]; a new agenda was born which led to the establishment of a strategic plan to conquer IslamicJerusalem.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, all the Muslim military campaigns, towards the *Fath* of that region, were in fact an application of this plan. Not only this, El-Awaisi also argues that the plan started to be formed as a result of the Night Journey. The researcher argues that, if this was the case, then it would give the Night Journey a new and very important role in Muslim History.

On the other hand, a number of scholars, such as 'Athāminah (2000: 88), Shurrāb (1994:74), Baydūn (1997: 8), Gil (1997: 21), Abū al-Rub (2002: 96), Al-Ashqar (2006:23) and others state quite similar arguments, namely, that the Prophet Muhammad made preliminary steps towards the *Fath* of that region. Yet they had different views about the aims of these steps as it will be discussed later in this thesis,

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<sup>3</sup> This hypothesis was published for the first time in the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the monograph '*Introducing IslamicJerusalem*' in 2005.

and how and when they started. El-Awaisi and ‘Athāminah seem to be the only scholars to take this hypothesis to a level of forming a plan for the *Fath*. However, El-Awaisi was clearer in describing this plan as “strategic” (El-Awaisi: 2006:50) and claimed the plan was detailed. Other sources, such as those of Lazarus-Yafeh (1990: 35), S. D. Goitein (1986: (5) 323), and Ofer Livne-Kafri (2005: 216), argue the opposite. IslamicJerusalem, according to these opinions, had no clear significance in the early stages of Islam, mainly during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad; thus, the claim that the Prophet Muhammad planned the *Fath* of that region is not valid.

Therefore, the researcher decided to take the hypothesis of the plan of the Prophet for the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem, particularly that of El-Awaisi, and examine it, hoping to reach a better understanding of the attitude of the Prophet Muhammad and his relationship with IslamicJerusalem. This thesis will thus re-examine many aspects of the *sīrah* (Biography) of the Prophet Muhammad from a different angle, in an attempt to re-read the *sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad in relation to IslamicJerusalem.

### **Aims and Objectives of the Research**

The research’s main aim is to examine the hypothesis of the strategic plan of the Prophet Muhammad for IslamicJerusalem, which was presented by El-Awaisi, in comparison with other arguments. This helps in reaching a conclusion as to whether or not it can be argued that the Prophet Muhammad formed a strategic plan for the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem, in addition to explaining the aspects and details of the strategic plan.

The researcher has set a number of aims and objectives that he also hopes to achieve throughout this research. These aims and objectives can be summarised as following:

- 1- To study the practical religious relationship between Islamicjerusalem and the Prophet Muhammad, and thus also the Muslims. This is clear in cases such as the practical obligations of Islam, mainly Prayer.
- 2- To explore further understandings of the Night Journey and study its influence on the nature of Islamicjerusalem in the Prophet Muhammad's life.
- 3- To study the political attitude of the Prophet Muhammad in Madīnah, particularly his diplomatic movements manifested in his political documents and treaties with other powers in the region, with special reference to powers that ruled Islamicjerusalem and the region around it.
- 4- To understand the motivations, reasons and aims of the military steps towards Islamicjerusalem taken by the Prophet Muhammad.

### **Research Methodology**

As this research deals with a historical issue that is related mainly to the Prophet Muhammad, the researcher mainly employs the historical methodology. In addition, the researcher analyses texts from the Islamic core sources, which means that other methodologies are utilised, particularly the *ḥadīth* and *Tafsīr* methodologies. As for the historical methodology, the researcher collects texts and information on the events from the various historical sources that deal with the life of the Prophet Muhammad (as outlined in the next section), and then critically analyses and

compares them, in order to find out the most acceptable understanding. Then, these analysed data can be linked in order to come to a formation of historical events that took place during that period in the shade of the main hypothesis, i.e. the plan of the Prophet Muhammad for the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem

As this research deals mainly with the life of the Prophet Muhammad, there will be clear use of the *ahādīth* of the Prophet. This leads the researcher to employ the *ḥadīth* methodology, which deals mainly and strictly with the use of the *ahādīth* of the Prophet Muhammad and their authenticity. In addition, it deals with the evaluation of the narrator wherever such an evaluation is needed in the study. However, the researcher mainly deals with authentic *ahādīth* collections (such as those of al-Bukhārī and Muslim). Thus, the *ḥadīth* methodology is only employed when evaluating less authentic *ahādīth*, whenever needed.

As part of using the *ḥadīth* methodology interchangeably with the historical methodology, if a *ḥadīth* is mentioned as the only reference to any event, its authenticity is examined and evaluated; if it is weak, it is used as a historical text. This means that the *ḥadīth* is compared with other historical texts and examined on this basis. Thus, if a very weak *ḥadīth* or narration contradicts another historical text, it is dealt with through the application of the historical methodology. Indeed, an authentic *ḥadīth* is more accurate than a historical account, yet a weak *ḥadīth* is of the same level or stronger than a historical narration, due to the rigorousness of the *ḥadīth* methodology on identifying authentic *ahādīth*.

With regard to the historical methodology, the researcher applies this when dealing with historical sources, such as books of history and the *sīrah* (Biography of the

Prophet Muhammad) (see next section). This methodology is also used to evaluate and critically study the different historical documents used in the research. When dealing with these documents and texts, the researcher examines them internally by analysing the language of the documents and the ideas within their texts.

The researcher also needs to deal in some cases with the interpretation of the Qur'ānic text and the sources of *Tafsīr* (Exegesis). He critically deals with the study of the *Tafsīr* sources as historical texts. The researcher needs here to attempt to interpret some of the texts of the Qur'ān by using the *Tafsīr* methodology. In this case, he uses the school of *Ra'y*<sup>4</sup> as a tool to understand the Qur'ānic text. This school enables the researcher to examine the Qur'ānic text in the light of his new findings and insight into other historical texts and events, which helps in understanding the Qur'ānic text. However, the researcher notes that in using the *Ra'y* School of *Tafsīr* this does not mean that he will not refer to the other main schools. He will take the other school of *Tafsīr*, namely the *Ma'thūr* school, into consideration and will critically analyse the opinions of the exegetes of this school. This helps the researcher to identify the most acceptable opinion or to state his own opinion in the interpretation of the Qur'ānic text depending on the evidences available.

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<sup>4</sup> There are two main schools of *Tafsīr*. First is the school of *al-Tafsīr Bil-Ma'thūr*, which means explaining the Qur'ān according to the narrations of the scholars before the exegete. The most well-known scholars of this school are al-Ṭabarī, Ibn Kathīr and others. The second school is the school of *al-Tafsīr Bil-Ra'y*, which means explaining the Qur'ānic text according to the insight and opinion of the exegete himself without relying on other exegete opinions; it is represented by many scholars such as al-Rāzī, al-Qurṭubī, al-Baydāwī, al-Alūsī and others. There are other lesser schools of *Tafsīr*, such as the school of *al-Tafsīr al-Ishārī*, *al-Tafsīr al-Mawḍū'ī*. The researcher argues that these schools can be considered as parts of the *Ra'y* school, since they depend on the insight and the opinion of the exegete (see al-Dhahabī 2000: (1) 344-347).

## Sources of the Research

The researcher deals with different types of sources, both primary and secondary. He concentrates his research on the primary and original sources, especially the earliest. The main sources to be used in this research are the books of *Sīrah*, *Ḥadīth*, *Tafsīr*, and History. As the researcher is dealing mainly with the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the events that occurred during his Prophethood, the main sources to be used are the books of *sīrah*. The main primary source, in this category, is the *sīrah* of Ibn Ishāq (2004), which is the earliest known book of the *sīrah*. The *sīrah* of Ibn Hishām (2005) is also used, although it relies heavily on the *sīrah* of Ibn Ishāq; however, the researcher uses this source mainly when it elaborates on the *sīrah* of Ibn Ishāq. One of the most important sources of the *sīrah* is *al-Maghāzī* by al-Wāqidi (2004), which is considered one of the earliest and most comprehensive sources to deal with the military actions of the Prophet Muhammad. In addition, Ibn Sa‘d’s *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* (1997) is used, mainly the first parts of this book, since here it gathers and classifies different aspects of the life-time of the Prophet Muhammad, such as the letters, the assurances and treaties, the military actions, etc.

Some of the later but unique sources of the *sīrah* can also be relied on. The *sīrah* of Ibn Kathīr (1966), which was written in the 8<sup>th</sup> century AH, will be one of the sources used in analysing and studying the reasons and the elaborations of some events in the life-time of the Prophet Muhammad. In addition, one of the contemporary and very important sources in this field is *al-Raḥīq al-Makhtūm* by al-Mubarakpuri (1996). This book is one of the most important sources of the study of the *sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad. This is due to the efforts of its author in his elaboration of events and their causes, and studying the dates of the events, in addition to thoroughly studying the numbers of the armies and military expeditions.

Al-Mubarakpuri's analyses of the events of the *sīrah* are very important; they assist the researcher throughout this research.

The nature of this research also needs to refer to the main and primary sources of *ḥadīth*. The researcher relies on the two most authentic sources of *ḥadīth*, namely, the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī (2000) and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim (2000). However, there is sometimes a need to also rely on the other major sources of *ḥadīth*, such as those of Abū Dawūd (n.d), Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (1995), al-Nasā'ī (2000) and Ibn Mājah (2000); these are the most authentic known sources. The researcher also studies the narrations of other sources of *ḥadīth* when necessary, such as *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, by al-Ṭabarānī (1985), and others. Dealing with the *ḥadīth* has led the researcher, in some cases, to consult the books of evaluation of narrators such as the book of Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (1952) for example.

When dealing with the Qur'ānic text, the researcher deals with the sources of *Tafsīr*. He uses the sources of the two main schools of *Tafsīr*, namely, the *Ma'thūr* and the *Ra'y* schools. The earliest and most important primary source of the *Ma'thūr* school is the *Tafsīr* of al-Ṭabarī (1999); this book can be considered a main source of the different narrations and opinions on the interpretations of the Qur'ānic text and, as such, is heavily relied on. In addition, the researcher uses other sources from the same school when needed, such as those of al-Suyūṭī (2000), Ibn Kathīr (1994), al-Shawkānī (2000), and others. On the other side, one of the most important sources for the *Ra'y* school of *Tafsīr* is al-Fakhr al-Rāzī (1990), one of the earliest sources of this school. The researcher deals mainly with al-Rāzī when referring to this school. In addition, other sources of the same school, such as those of al-Alūsī (1994), al-Qurṭubī (1998), and al-Zamakhsharī (1995), whose work is one of the best linguistic

sources of *Tafsīr*, are studied. Other contemporary books of *Tafsīr* are studied also, such as those of al-Zuḥaylī (2001) and Sayyid Quṭb (1996); these are consulted when necessary.

Some of the sources of history are studied also depending on the relevant era. In the case of sources of Muslim history, the researcher deals mainly with the history of al-Ṭabarī (1998), one of the earliest and most comprehensive sources. Yet these sources are not used heavily since the core of this research is the *sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad, which is covered by the books of *sīrah*, as the researcher mentioned earlier. However, the researcher needs to study historical issues related to political powers outside Arabia, namely, those concerning the Byzantines and the Persians. This leads to dealing with some of the main non-Muslim historical sources. Two of the most important among these sources are *the Chronicon Paschale* (1989) and *the Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor* (1997). It should be noted that the first was written by numerous individuals at Constantinople in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, which makes it one of the earliest sources in this context. The latter was written by Theophanes in the 9<sup>th</sup> century; the author gathered numerous narrations from different sources and ordered them chronologically, which makes it an important source. Also, the historical account of Strategos on the Persian invasion of Islamic Jerusalem (1910) is studied, as this person was an eye-witness of this invasion in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and wrote his testimony soon after. His account has been translated from numerous languages into English by F. Conybear, and was published in 1910 CE. The Arabic version of this account has been translated into the Spanish language by José Martínez Delgado and is now available electronically. Strategos' account is indeed a very important source on this event in particular. In addition, some important

contemporary historical sources are elaborated and studied, such as the writings of Wilkinson (1990) Watt (1962) and Gil (1996).

In the case of the Prophetic Documents in particular, the researcher deals with Muhammad Ḥamīdullāh (1987), who gathered different documents dating back to the Prophet Muhammad's era into one source, namely *Majmū'at al-Wathā'iq al-Siyāsiyyah Lil-'Ahd al-Nabawī wa al-Khilāfah al-Rāshidah* (The collection of the political documents of the Prophet's era and the guided caliphate). This is used in studying the various versions of the documents and identifying their sources.

Finally, the researcher uses other sources as and when needed, for example dictionaries, such as those of Ibn Manẓūr (1999) and al-Fayrūz'ābādī (1991), atlases and geographical sources, such as Abū Khalīl's Atlas (2002), Qur'ānic and *Ḥadīth* Sciences sources, such as those of al-Zarkashī (1998), al-Qaṭṭān (2000) and 'Itir (1997). The researcher also uses encyclopaedias, in addition to a number of academic journal articles, unpublished materials, and electronic sources, as needed for elaboration and analysis.

### **Literature Review**

A number of sources have dealt with this issue and tried to identify the shape of the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. These are mainly contemporary sources in which the authors have attempted to examine the *sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad and mark the Prophet's steps towards the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem.

One of the main sources to thoroughly study this issue is *'Introducing Islamicjerusalem'* by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, first published in 2005. El-Awaisi is the founder of the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies. This is the main source to state clearly that the Prophet Muhammad formed a strategic plan for the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem. The author identifies the starting point for this plan as the Night Journey. He goes on to analyse a number of events that took place in the Prophet Muhammad's life and interprets these as being elements of this plan. El-Awaisi sets the scope of the study of this hypothesis. Yet the nature of his book has not resulted in any further analysis of historical events, not even other events directly related to this topic. Thus, the researcher covers the missing points in El-Awaisi's book, in order to reach a clearer picture of the historical events related to this topic.

Another source that deals with this issue is Muhammad Ḥasan Shurrāb in his book *'Bayt al-Maqdis wa al-Masjid al-Aqṣā'*, which was published in 1994. Shurrāb is a researcher who has written various books on Palestine and Jerusalem. This book is very clear in stating that the Prophet Muhammad made a number of steps towards the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem. Yet he does not analyse these steps in depth and does not expand his analysis or go deeply into events. He also does not study some of the main key issues in relation to the topic, such as the documents of the Prophet Muhammad and other issues. The researcher analyses these events and texts in depth.

One of the sources studied for this topic was Moshe Gil (1992) in his book *'A History of Palestine 634-1099'*, first published in the Hebrew Language in 1983. It was translated into English and published as such for the first time in 1992. Gil is very detailed in studying some events in the *sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad and their relationship with the *Fath*. His book concentrates on Palestine's 7<sup>th</sup> century

boundaries. However, his analysis of the causes and motivations for his whole hypothesis depends only on an analysis of military events. And, in another article, 'The Political History of Jerusalem', he claims that "It seems unlikely that the sacred status of Jerusalem was one of the motivations which led Muhammad to mount military campaigns against the Byzantine frontier not long before his death" (Gil 1996: 4). Thus he attributes the actions of the Prophet Muhammad towards the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem to commercial and political reasons. Gil does not seriously deal with Islamic Primary sources in his analysis. This causes his analysis to neglect the first and most important aspects that identify these aims, namely, the Qur'ān and the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad. Perhaps this was due to a lack of interest in his dealing with these sources. However, the researcher deals with the various sources and does not neglect the influence of the Qur'ān on the life of the Prophet Muhammad and his attitude towards Islamic Jerusalem.

Another important contemporary writer to tackle this issue is Ibrāhīm Bayḍūn (1997) in his book '*Tārīkh Bilād al-Shām*'. Bayḍūn is a historian who is interested in the Umayyad caliphate history. He is also interested in the history of al-Shām as a whole. This is why he tackles both the military and political movements of the Prophet Muhammad and argues that the aim of these movements was the *Fath* of al-Shām region in general. He does not relate this to Islamic Jerusalem in any way. It is obvious to the researcher that Bayḍūn neglects the status of Islamic Jerusalem in this context, and its role in stimulating the Prophet to form such a strategy and a plan. In this context, the researcher pays significant attention to the motivations of the Prophet, and thus attempts to reach the reasons for his actions.

Another source discussing the issue is '*Filistīn fī Khamsat Qurūn*', by Khalīl 'Athāminah (2000). 'Athāminah is a historian who is specialised in Arab Muslim history in general. He is interested in the history of al-Shām in the Muslim era. In this book, 'Athāminah studies what he calls the 'Early *Fatḥ* Plan in the Prophetic era' (2000: 88). He discusses this topic from a political angle only, arguing that the Prophet Muhammad drew a plan towards the *Fatḥ* of Palestine during the last years of his life. The researcher argues that 'Athāminah limits his study to Palestine in its contemporary boundaries only. Also, he neglects many aspects that shaped the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic Jerusalem from the early stage of his Prophethood. He limits his study to the military steps taken by the Prophet Muhammad in the last years of his life. This is because he studies the Prophet Muhammad as a political leader only and not as a Prophet. Therefore, he neglects the main point of reference of the Prophet Muhammad, which would reveal the real motivations for him to draw up such a plan. This leads 'Athāminah to refer these military steps to only political and commercial reasons. Which neglects the main historical character of the Prophet Muhammad, i.e. that of being a Prophet. The researcher concentrates on the Prophet Muhammad as Prophet, which helps him identify the point of reference for the Prophet's plan; thus, he would be able to identify the aims and different aspects of this plan.

Another scholar to touch on this issue is Hānī Abū al-Rub, in his book '*Tārīkh Filistīn fī Ṣadr al-Islām*' (2002). This book was originally a Ph.D. thesis that Abū al-Rub submitted for his Ph.D. Degree in Muslim History at the University of Baghdad, in Iraq, in 1998. In his book, Abū al-Rub identifies *Filistīn* (Palestine) as the historical 7<sup>th</sup> century Palestine, which was close to the boundaries of Islamic Jerusalem in general. However, he only touches on the relationship between

the Prophet Muhammad and that region in about 10 pages, combining the Prophet Muhammad's military actions with those of Abū Bakr and considering them as only the preparatory steps for campaigns. The researcher goes beyond the military actions of the Prophet Muhammad to investigate the main root of these actions, i.e. their real motivations.

One of the most recent published sources to deal with this topic is a book titled '*Futūḥ Filisṭīn*' by Usāmah al-Ashqar (2006). Al-Ashqar is specialised in the literature, particularly poetry, on the first Muslim *Fath* of al-Shām and Islamic Jerusalem. In this book, al-Ashqar dates back the preliminary steps of the first Muslim *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem to the time of the Prophet Muhammad. He discusses the Prophet Muhammad's strategy to prepare for the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. Nevertheless, al-Ashqar concentrates only on the military and diplomatic approach of the Prophet without further discussion of the motivations of such a strategy. In addition, he concentrates mainly on Palestine in its contemporary boundaries.

As well as the above-mentioned authors tackling this issue in detail, Amnon Cohen, in his book '*al-Quds, Dirāsāt fī Tārīkh al-Madīnah*' (1990) touches upon the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic Jerusalem. He argues that there is no doubt that the Prophet Muhammad had the city of Jerusalem in mind and planned its *Fath*. Yet Cohen attributes this to what he claims to be the influence of the status of Jerusalem in Judaism and Christianity on the Prophet Muhammad. Also he goes no further in studying the Prophet's plan; yet he extends his analysis of this Jewish-Christian influence on the Prophet Muhammad that led him to form a strategy that would have meant becoming closer to the Jews and Christian, and giving him

authenticity in their eyes. The researcher argues that Cohen neglects the most important aspect in identifying the Prophet Muhammad's relationship with that region, namely, the Qur'ān.

The researcher bridges the gaps in these analyses and studies. He studies the practical, religious and political relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and IslamicJerusalem. This begins from the first and most important element to influence the Prophet Muhammad and draw his attention to IslamicJerusalem, namely, the Qur'ān. In addition, the Night Journey and the practical obligations of Islam, mainly Prayer, need to be examined and studied in this context. These elements assist the researcher in identifying the actual manifestations of the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and IslamicJerusalem. Then the actual diplomatic and political movements of the Prophet Muhammad towards the direction of that region are studied, in order to be able to identify the presence or absence of such a plan, and the indications of this plan if it were found to be true.

### **Limitations of the Research**

Most of the sources discuss the events that took place in the life of the Prophet Muhammad individually and speculate the reasons behind them. None of these sources look at the macro-picture and discuss the events collectively. This may have been arisen since it is not recorded that the Prophet Muhammad explicitly mentioned his motives or plans towards IslamicJerusalem. However, the researcher argues that studying the acts and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, with regard to IslamicJerusalem and its *Fath*, and linking them together, by looking at the micro-picture, is the main element that helps to interpret the plans that the Prophet Muhammad put in his lifetime for the *Fath*.

Another problem that faced the researcher is the lack of classical literature on this subject in the English Language. The main and major primary sources that dealt with the life of the Prophet Muhammad were written in the Arabic language. This leads the researcher into translating the various texts as accurately as possible. Yet the researcher does not neglect the English literature dealing with the life of the Prophet Muhammad, mainly the contemporary sources. These are used in discussion and argument. It is important to mention that all translations of Arabic texts, in this thesis, are done by the researcher unless otherwise stated. In addition, other important sources, such as that of Theophanes Confessor (1997), were written in languages that are unknown to the researcher, such as Latin, Greek and other languages. Here the researcher had to limit the research to the books that were translated into the English language, and the secondary sources that studied and explained these sources in the English language.

One of the limitations was gaining access to manuscripts of some documents. There are varying documents to be studied in this research, and getting access to some of the original manuscripts of these is a significant challenge. The documents are preserved in places around the world, and the researcher was not able to access all of them, particularly the letter of the Prophet Muhammad to Heraclius, claimed to be in Jordan, and the Endowment of Tamīm al-Dārī, claimed to be in Turkey. The researcher wanted to access these documents in order to externally examine them, which would have helped in the process of authenticating them, but was unable to gain access to them despite his many attempts. Thus, the researcher examined and authenticated these documents internally, through studying their texts and comparing their versions mentioned in the historical sources.

## **Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of five main chapters besides the Introduction and the Conclusion. The first chapter gives a historical background, where the researcher reviews the political situation in IslamicJerusalem during the beginning of the Prophet Muhammad's Prophethood. This leads to study some of the early verses of the Qur'ān that were revealed in relation to the political situation and the events that occurred in IslamicJerusalem during that period, which drew the attention of the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims to this region and its centrality.

The second chapter deals with the first physical link between the Prophet Muhammad and IslamicJerusalem, namely the Night Journey. The researcher reviews the Prophet Muhammad's situation in Makkah prior to this journey. He briefly reviews its events, and then goes further to discuss the impact of the Night Journey on the Prophet Muhammad, and its significance in identifying the shape of the future relationship between the Prophet and IslamicJerusalem.

The third chapter deals with one of the most important issues that characterised the status of IslamicJerusalem in Islam in general, and in the Prophet Muhammad's eyes in particular, namely, praying towards IslamicJerusalem. This includes studying the start of the prayer towards IslamicJerusalem and its duration, As well as the change of the direction of the Prayer towards Makkah after the Prophet's migration to Madīnah. The researcher concentrates on the role of this prayer in stating the importance of IslamicJerusalem in the Prophet's eyes and its influence on his vision towards IslamicJerusalem, which would then help to identify whether or not this influence could have resulted in forming a plan for the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem.

The fourth chapter is concerned with the political and diplomatic documents of the Prophet Muhammad during his rule in Madīnah. The researcher limits this chapter to the documents that have a direct relation to Islamicjerusalem, which could reveal the nature of his strategy towards that region. This includes studying three types of document, namely letters to rulers, endowments (*waqf*), and assurances. The researcher gathers the relevant documents and studies each one. This includes identifying the authenticity of the document and the most authentic text of it, and then analysing the text of the document and its significance and importance within the scope of this research.

The fifth and final chapter deals with the military action that took place in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad. The researcher restricts his study to the military events that were directed towards the route of Islamicjerusalem, in particular in order to retain the focus of this thesis. This includes studying the sequence of these events and actions, and their significance and importance, especially to the actual campaign towards the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem after the Prophet's death. The researcher attempts to discover the actual motivations and reasons for these military expeditions and discuss their results for and their influence on the future of Islamicjerusalem after the Prophet's death.



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### ***HISTORICAL BACKGROUND***

# Chapter One

## Historical Background

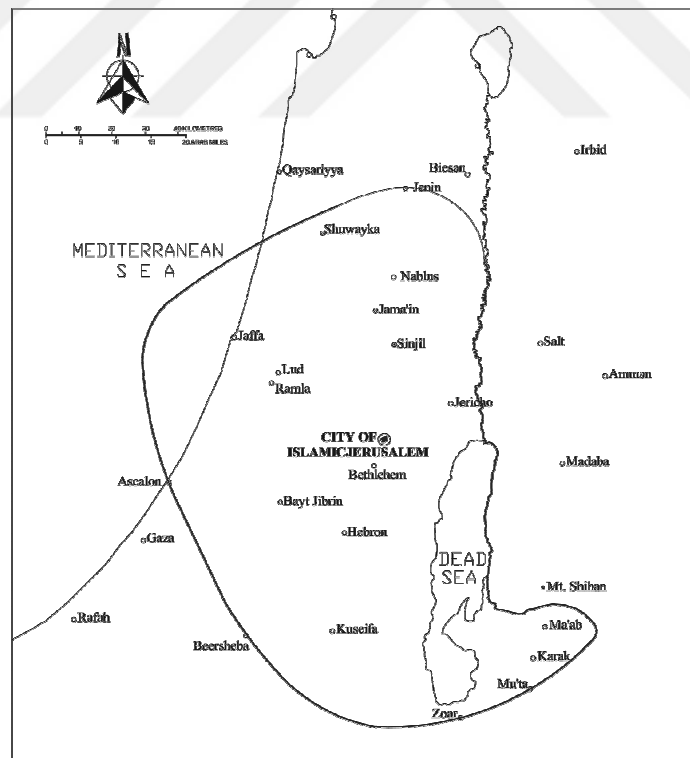
### Introduction

This chapter aims to set a background for the hypothesis of the plan of the Prophet Muhammad for the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. This will enable the researcher to understand the potential reasons that led to developing such a plan. The historical background of IslamicJerusalem, prior to and at the beginning of the Prophethood of Muhammad, will present a clearer picture of the situation in the region at that time. In addition, in studying the early Qur'ānic texts dealing with that region, it is necessary to understand the origin of the interest in that region.

This chapter will also study one of the main events that occurred prior to the Night Journey of the Prophet Muhammad to IslamicJerusalem, namely, the Persian conquest of IslamicJerusalem, and then the Byzantine re-conquest of the region. This requires a detailed examination of chapter 30 of the Qur'ān, *al-Rūm*, since this chapter deals with this event; there is a wide debate amongst scholars regarding the exact dates of the event. This will, hopefully, enable the researcher to establish a background to the situation in IslamicJerusalem at that time in order to understand the causes of the events that later took place.

## Islamicjerusalem

Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi (2006: 14) defined Islamicjerusalem as “a unique region laden with a rich historical background, religious significances, cultural attachments, competing political and religious claims, international interests and various aspects that affect the rest of the world in both historical and contemporary contexts. It has a central frame of reference and a vital nature with three principal intertwined elements: its geographical location (land and boundaries), its people (population), and its unique and creative inclusive vision, to administrate that land and its people, as a model for multiculturalism”. It seems clear from this definition that Islamicjerusalem is a region, not only a city.<sup>5</sup> Khalid El-Awaisi (2007) did a detailed research on the boundaries of Islamicjerusalem and identified these boundaries in this map:



**Map (1):** The boundaries of the Islamicjerusalem region  
**Source:** Khalid El-Awaisi (2007: 274)

<sup>5</sup> Throughout this thesis, the researcher refers to the region as “Islamicjerusalem”, and refers to the city as “Jerusalem” as this is the present wide-spread name of the city in the English language.

## **The status of Islamic Jerusalem in Islam**

The importance of Islamic Jerusalem to Muslims has been clearly visible from the early years of Islam in Makkah as it will be studied further. A Malaysian scholar, M. R. Nor, did a research on the significance of Islamic Jerusalem in Islam from Qur'ānic and *Ḥadīth* perspectives in 2006. Nor (2006: 299) argues that:

Islamic Jerusalem is indeed firmly established in the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* as well as in the Muslims' history, and thus occupies the highest status in every Muslim's belief, mind and heart.

The researcher agrees with Nor; when studying the general status of Islamic Jerusalem in Islam, one can easily conclude that Islamic Jerusalem occupies a very important status in the Muslim mind. This can be understood when studying the verses of the Qur'ān and the *aḥādīth* that deal with the significance of Islamic Jerusalem<sup>6</sup>.

‘Abd al-Ḥalīm ‘Uways (2002: 27) argues that “Muslims, throughout fourteen centuries, looked at Islamic Jerusalem [*Bayt al-Maqdis*] in holiness, and considered it as a centre of great religious legacy that must be protected, they strongly connect al-Ḥarām Mosque in Makkah with al-Aqṣā Mosque in Jerusalem”. ‘Uways adds “Even when the Muslims all over the world direct their prayer towards al-Ḥarām Mosque, they never forget that their Prophet, Muhammad, and his companions prayed towards al-Aqṣā Mosque, the first *Qiblah* (Direction of Prayer in Islam), before the revelation of the Qur'ānic verses that ordered to change the *Qiblah*, until today, there is a mosque in Madīnah that is called: ‘the Mosque of the two *Qiblah*’, and it is considered as a living witness to the religious connection between Makkah and

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<sup>6</sup> The researcher will not go into details on this issue because first, it has been studied thoroughly by Nor, and second, in order to keep the focus of the research.

IslamicJerusalem”. The researcher agrees with ‘Uways, and adds that the rich Muslim narrations on the importance of IslamicJerusalem reflect the huge importance of IslamicJerusalem and its very high status in Islam.

However, Lazarus-Yafeh (1990: 41-42) claims that the holiness of that region in Islam was developed by time and was faced with resistance, and she depended on some *aḥādīth* by the Prophet Muhammad that mention the holiness of Makkah and Madīnah and neglect IslamicJerusalem. Lazarus-Yafeh claims that this resistance was begun by numerous Muslim figures and scholars such as Ibn Taymiyah (d. 728 AH / 1328 CE). The same is also argued by Livne-Kafri (2005: 216), who claims that the Umayyads had a very important role in developing this status in Islam through their building activities in the city of Jerusalem. However, the researcher argues that these claims are not accurate since the status of IslamicJerusalem is very clear in many of the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet Muhammad and by many Muslim scholars and historians. Ibn Taymiyah, for example, mentions that visiting al-Aqṣā Mosque for prayer is *Mustaḥab* (Preferable) (1997: (pt.26) 83), and he also discusses the high and important status of that region (see Ibn Taymiyah 1997: (pt.27) 7-8).

In fact, the Qur’ān referred to IslamicJerusalem since early stages of its revelation. For example, Chapter 95 in the Qur’ān starts:

By the fig and the olive, by Mount Sinai, and by this City of Security.  
(95:1-3)<sup>7</sup>

This chapter is one of the early revealed chapters of the Qur’ān as al-Zarkashī (d. 794 AH / 1392 CE) (1998: (1) 193) and others mention.

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<sup>7</sup> والتين والزيتون، وطور سينين، وهذا البلد الأمين

Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 H / 1372 CE), of the *Ma'thūr* school of exegesis, reflects on these verses saying (1994: (4) 681):

These are three sites where God sent one of the major Messengers who brought the Laws. The first place is that of the fig and the olive, which is *Bayt al-Maqdis*, where God sent Jesus the Son of Mary. The second place is *Ṭūr Sīnīn*, i.e. Mount Sinai, where God spoke to Moses the son of Omran. The third place is Makkah, and it is the city of security, where whoever enters is safe, and it is the place where God sent Muhammad.<sup>8</sup>

However, al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 H / 922 CE) of the same school, and al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 H / 1273 CE) of the *Ra'y* school of exegesis, argue that the fig and olive in these verses are the well-known fruit, not IslamicJerusalem (see al-Tabarī 1999: (12) 633, al-Qurṭubī 1998: (20) 99). Al-Rāzī (1990: (16/32) 9-11) of the *Ra'y* school does not state his opinion, whereas al-Zamakhsharī (1995: (4) 763) of the same school argues that what is meant is the land (i.e. IslamicJerusalem), and al-Qurṭubī (1998: (10/20) 99) argues that it is the fruit.

The researcher argues that the Qur'ānic context in these verses seems most likely to refer to land and not to fruit, and this is what Quṭb (1996: (6) 3933) also says. It should be noted that the text equates the presence of the fig and olive with the presence of Mount Sinai and Makkah. This means that what is meant by the fig and the olive is most likely the land of figs and olives. Thus, the researcher agrees with Ibn Kathīr in his opinion that it is a metaphorical reference to this land.

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<sup>8</sup> هذه محال ثلاثة بعث الله في كل واحد منها نبيا مرسلًا من أولي العزم أصحاب الشرائع الكبار. فالأول محلة التين والزيتون وهي بيت المقدس التي بعث الله فيها عيسى ابن مريم عليه السلام، والثاني طور سينين وهو طور سيناء الذي كلم الله عليه موسى بن عمران، والثالث مكة وهو البلد الأمين الذي من دخله كان آمناً وهو الذي أرسل فيه محمداً صلى الله عليه وسلم

Also, it should be noted that the verses of the Qur’ān that mention the land of *Barakah*<sup>9</sup>, which is the terminology usually used to refer to either IslamicJerusalem or the lands around it, were all revealed in the Makkan period. Four verses mention the Land of *Barakah*. All were revealed in Makkah, which is significant in showing the importance the Qur’ān gave to that region from an early stage.

Moreover, one can find numerous *aḥādīth* that mention the importance of IslamicJerusalem in Islam. For example: Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (1995: (13) 99) narrates from the companion Dhū al-Aṣābi‘:

I asked: O Messenger of God, if we were tested by staying alive after your death, where do you order us to go? The Prophet said: “Go to *Bayt al-Maqdis*, so you might bring up descendents who go to that Mosque by day and night.”<sup>10</sup>

This *ḥadīth* shows the great importance that the Prophet Muhammad gave to IslamicJerusalem. It should also be noted that the Prophet spoke this *ḥadīth* during his lifetime, i.e. before the actual Muslim *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. The status of IslamicJerusalem in Islam could have justified the Prophet Muhammad’s interest in that region.

It seems that the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and IslamicJerusalem was based on a strong religious basis. However, it should be noted also that the Prophet Muhammad was familiar with the nature of the region of al-Shām in general even before his Prophethood. It is known that Muhammad had been visiting al-Shām

<sup>9</sup> On the meaning and the use of the terminology *Barakah*, the researcher refers to Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi’s book “Introducing IslamicJerusalem” (2006: 28-29)

<sup>10</sup> عن ذي الأصابع أنه قال: قلت: يا رسول الله، إن ابتلينا بالبقاء بعدك أين تأمرنا؟ قال: عليك ببيت المقدس، فلعله أن ينشأ لك ذرية يغدون إلى ذلك المسجد ويروحون.

several times as a merchant from his early years (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 122 and 128). This could have helped him, at a later time, develop his understanding of the region and its importance on different levels, religious, political, economical, etc.

### **The Political situation in IslamicJerusalem before Muhammad's Prophethood**

The Romans, under the leadership of Pompey, seized IslamicJerusalem and established their rule over the city of Jerusalem in September 63 BCE (Wilkinson 1990: 75). There are no clear records on the nature of the relationship between the population of IslamicJerusalem and the Romans. Yet it seems that the situation in IslamicJerusalem was frequently changing according to circumstances, but worsened at a later period of this rule.

With the emergence of Jesus Christ, a new monotheistic religion was born in IslamicJerusalem besides Judaism, namely Christianity. The majority of the Jewish community did not accept the new faith, and this could be one of the reasons why the Christians were persecuted. However, the Roman Emperor Hadrian destroyed a Jewish revolution and developed a new region, Aelia; he established a new city, Aelia Capitolina. The Jews were persecuted and expelled from the region after the Revolution of Bar Kokhba broke up in 132 CE (see Goldhill 2005: 81). Wilkinson (1990: 88) argues that there were many Syrians and Arabs among the exempted people allowed to reside in the region of IslamicJerusalem after the expulsion of the Jews. Othman al-Tel (2003: 216-218) and Fatimatuzzahra' Abdrahman (2005: 141-142) agree with Wilkinson.

## **Romans become “Byzantines”**

Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity and was baptised before his death in 337 CE; this caused a drastic transformation of the whole Roman Empire, which became a Christian Empire (see McHenry 1993: (2) 699). However, a very important event occurred following this conversion; this was the division of the Roman Empire: one section in Eastern Europe and the Asian parts of the Roman Empire, namely the Byzantine Empire, and the other in Western Europe, namely the Holy Roman Empire (see McHenry 1993: (2) 699). The western part, i.e. the Holy Roman Empire, had its capital in Rome, and the eastern part, i.e. the Byzantine Empire, had its capital in Byzantium<sup>11</sup>, lately Constantinople.

During the early time of the Prophet Muhammad, before his Prophethood, Islamic Jerusalem was ruled by the Byzantines, who were considered to be Eastern Christians (see Jones 2005: (10) 6912), now known as the Orthodox Christians. Unlike the Catholic Church, which had a single bishop at its head, namely the Pope of Rome, the Orthodox Eastern Church had several. Since the 4<sup>th</sup> century there had been four major centres of the Orthodox Church: Antioch, Jerusalem, Constantinople, and Alexandria (see Jones 2005: (4) 2581).

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<sup>11</sup> The term “Byzantine” originally comes from the name “Byzantium” which can be found in the Modern Encyclopaedia Illustrated (Gorell 1962: (2) 442) as:

‘A city founded on the shore of the Bosphorus (early 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE) by Greek colonists from Megara, occupied a position of strategic and commercial importance by reason of its command over the entrance of the Black Sea. Taken by the Roman Septimus Severus (AD 196), it was re-founded as Constantinople, the metropolis of the Eastern Roman Empire, by Constantine in AD 330’

This shows that the city of Constantinople was originally called Byzantium, but was re-founded by Emperor Constantine and became the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire; thus the Empire was named ‘the Byzantine Empire’ after the original name of Constantinople.

## **The Political situation in Islamic Jerusalem at the beginning of Muhammad's Prophethood**

In order to gain more understanding of this era, the researcher will focus on those historians who were interested in the events that took place between the Persians and Byzantines generally and in Islamic Jerusalem particularly. The researcher will focus on three main sources, namely, the *Chronicon Paschale* (Chr. P.) in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the *Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor* (d. 818 CE)<sup>12</sup> who lived and wrote his book in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, and the account of Antiochus Strategos who lived in the city of Jerusalem at that period and witnessed the Persian invasion of the region and the city. The first two sources mention this period in detail, while the third mentions only a specific event, namely the Persian conquest of Islamic Jerusalem. However, whereas the Chr. P. was written at that time, Theophanes transmitted many of the events from other historians and endeavoured to be accurate; thus his book can be considered an important source. Strategos only mentions one event that took place throughout a short period.

Muhammad became Prophet, as many historical accounts state, in the year 610 CE (see al-Mubarakpuri 1996: 68). In that period, the Byzantine and the Persian Empires were experiencing a strong and long clash. The war between the two empires had begun some time before that of the Prophethood of Muhammad. Wilkinson (1990:

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<sup>12</sup> The researcher investigated some of the historical sources that were written at that period or slightly later. He found that the only three sources that dealt with that period (and can be found in English) were those of Theophanes, the Chr. P., and Strategos. The latter was written after the Persian invasion of Islamic Jerusalem in the 7<sup>th</sup> century; Chr. P. was written in Constantinople also in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, whereas the first lived about 200 years after and depended on different sources in his *Chronicle*. The researcher did his best to find other sources dealing with this period as good as these three sources but unfortunately he could not. Most of the sources he found were in Greek or Latin. Therefore, the researcher will deal with these three sources in particular as the main non-Muslim historical sources of that era and, when needed, he will mention other sources depending on the translations of the editors of the above-mentioned sources. It is worth noting that the researcher consulted numerous secondary sources such as that of Wilkinson (1990), Gil (1996) and the commentaries of the editors of the accounts of Chr. P. and Theophanes. These sources are used if needed during discussing the main translated texts of Chr. P., Theophanes and Strategos.

100) argues that attacks of the Parthians<sup>13</sup> on Rome had been taking place since 41 BCE, and continued after the creation of the Sasanid Persian Empire with some times of peace such as the fifty-year peace treaty Justinian made with the Persians. One of the most important turning points in the war between the two empires was when Chosroes invaded the Byzantine territories in 602 CE, i.e. only eight years before the Prophethood of Muhammad. This is also what Theophanes states in his Chronicle (see Theophanes 1997: 418-420).

Theophanes argues that the war started in Edessa<sup>14</sup> when a Byzantine general, Narses, seized the city and instigated a rebellion against the new Byzantine emperor Phokas; he refused to accept the way Phokas had declared himself emperor and was against his assassination of some of the main Byzantine leaders and generals along with their families, Theophanes says that Narses sent to the Persian emperor Chosroes asking for help to defeat the Byzantine emperor. Chosroes sent his army and declared war against the Byzantines in 602 CE.

Interestingly, the Chr. P. does not mention the Persian role in this chaos, although the authors of this source had witnessed that period and lived in Constantinople (see Chr. P. 1989: 142-145). The researcher argues that the Chr. P. could have been more interested in the events taking place in Constantinople itself, being the capital of the empire, or may have had no clear idea of what was happening in Edessa at that time.

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<sup>13</sup> According to Wilkinson (1990: 100), the Parthians were the rulers of Persia before Ardashir created the Sasanis Persian Empire in 224 CE.

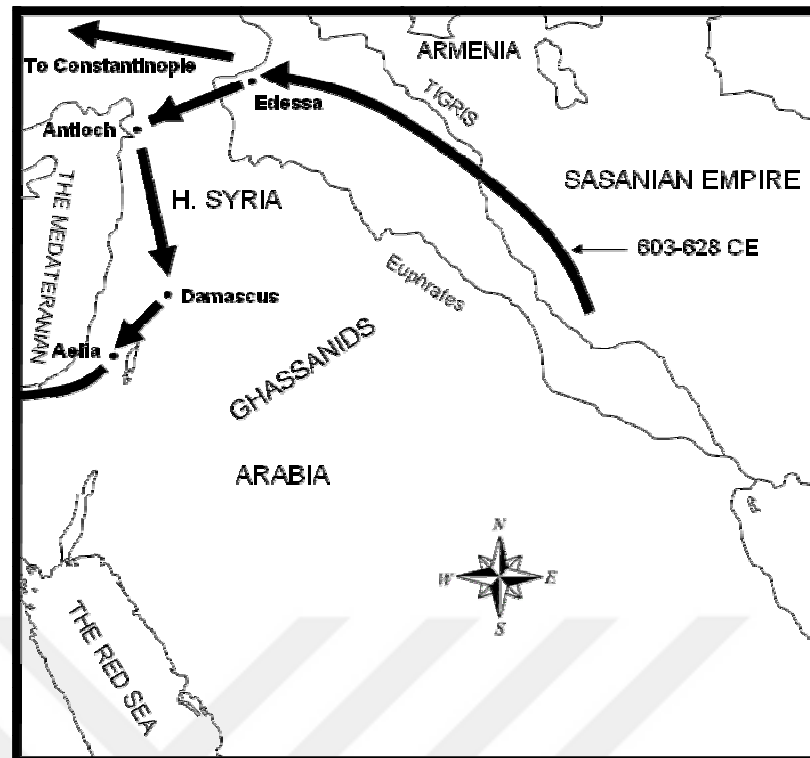
<sup>14</sup> Edessa is in Asia Minor, and today is called Şanlıurfa (also known as Urfa). It was named 'Edessa' for the first time by Alexander the Great, and is now located in the South Eastern part of Turkey, about 950 km to the south-east of Istanbul. (see: '*Republic of Turkey, ministry of culture and tourism*', date consulted: 17-5-2006, <http://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN/BelgeGoster.aspx?17A16AE30572D313404F9755767D76FF89326D2B69E01EEB>)

By analysing the historical sequence, it could be argued that the Persians were in fact trying to seize more lands and get closer to the Byzantine capital, i.e. Constantinople, since Edessa was only about 950 km South East of Constantinople. This would have helped them to gain the upper hand over the Byzantines, and could have been considered a golden chance to destroy the Byzantine Empire or, at least, weaken it and put it into a great danger.

It has been noted that the Persians, according to Theophanes, did not attack al-Shām region directly, which means that they might have not meant to attack Islamic Jerusalem for religious reasons. The main aim could have been political. However, it could be argued that the Persians were aiming to seize the south-eastern territories of the Byzantine Empire starting at Edessa, since this was considered the chief barrier between the main Byzantine lands, i.e. Asia Minor, and the non-Byzantine ones,<sup>15</sup> namely al-Shām and Egypt. This can be proved by many historical accounts such as those of Theophanes and by the Chr. P., which show the line taken by the Persian troops after the attack on Edessa and the area around it (see Theophanes 1997: 422-424).

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<sup>15</sup> This means those regions that were resided in by other races than the original Byzantines, such as the Arabs, Copts (who are considered as a race different than the Arabs), etc.



**Map (2):** The Persian invasion and the cities taken from Byzantium in the 7<sup>th</sup> century  
**Based on:** Compareti (2002)<sup>16</sup>

This understanding might contradict the hypothesis that the Persians may have thought to destroy the whole Byzantine Empire and attack Constantinople. However, it could be understood that the Persians may have been aiming to conquer the regions that were some distance from the centre of Byzantine power, i.e. Constantinople. In this way, they would have secured their backs during their final attack on the main Byzantine region. Thus, they attacked Edessa and by so doing isolated the Byzantine troops located in al-Shām and separated the Byzantine capital from many of the main territories under their power in the South; also, by attacking al-Shām and Egypt, the Persians would have had an important entrance to the Mediterranean, which would have helped them in any future movements against Constantinople and Asia Minor.

<sup>16</sup> Matteo Compareti, 2002, *The Sasanians in Africa*, Transoxiana (4), date consulted: 13-3-2008, <http://www.salvador.edu.ar/transox/0104/sasanians.html>.

This shows that the political situation of IslamicJerusalem, as a reflection of the whole situation of al-Shām, was unstable and, of course, not peaceful. During this time Muhammad became a Prophet and received the revelation from God, according to the Muslim belief, in 610 CE (see al-Mubarakpuri 1996: 68). It seems, from the various accounts of the early stages of the *sīrah* (biography) of the Prophet Muhammad, that after his Prophethood, the situation in al-Shām and IslamicJerusalem in particular remained almost calm for a while. This can be concluded by studying the general accounts about the caravans of Quraysh<sup>17</sup> to al-Shām as mentioned in an early stage in the Qur’ān (106: 1-4) (see al-Zarkashī 1998: (1) 193); there are no reports that these caravans were stopped during that time, despite the war between the Persians and the Byzantines. Such an event, i.e. preventing the caravans of Quraysh from entering that region, would have been a huge change and one that would have been reported. This shows that the situation in that region was still calm generally. This fragile situation in IslamicJerusalem remained until what can be considered the explosion in the region caused by the Persian invasion of IslamicJerusalem.

### **The Persian invasion of IslamicJerusalem**

The Persians attacked the whole region of al-Shām including IslamicJerusalem within a short time; this can be noted in many historical accounts to tackle this issue such as the Chr. P. which was written soon after this war in Constantinople. However, Strategos’ account of this era can be considered the most important, since he witnessed the war and mentioned the conquest of IslamicJerusalem in particular in the year 614 CE. To study the various accounts on this invasion, the researcher will start with the Chr. P. that says (1989: 156):

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<sup>17</sup> Quraysh was the name of the Prophet Muhammad’s tribe.

In this year in about the month of June, we suffered a calamity which deserves unceasing lamentations. For, together with many cities of the east, Jerusalem too was captured by the Persians.

This account from the Chr. P. shows that many cities fell under Persian conquest at around the same time, although none of these cities and regions is named except for Jerusalem. Theophanes mentions the regions that were occupied along with the city of Jerusalem; he mentions (1997: 431) the region of “the Jordan, Palestine, and the Holy City”. This shows that he meant the area within Islamic Jerusalem or very close to it, not the whole al-Shām region, since he mentions, for example, that the Persians occupied Damascus in the year 613 CE (see Theophanes 1997: 430).

However, when it comes to Strategos, he concentrates on the city of Jerusalem (Aelia) yet he describes first the route the Persians took on their way to the city of Jerusalem after they occupied the northern areas of al-Shām. He also mentions some of the places and cities occupied by the Persians on their way to Jerusalem. He says:

And they reached Palestine and its borders, and they arrived at Caesarea, which is the metropolis. But there they begged for a truce, and bowed their necks in submission. After that the enemy advanced to Sarapeon, and captured it, as well as all the seaboard cities together with their hamlets... Next they reached Judea; and came to a large and famous city, a Christian city, which is Jerusalem. (Conybeare 1910: 503)

This description shows that the Persian movement was from North to South East. Linking this with Theophanes’s account on the Persian occupation of Damascus in 613 CE, it seems that the Persian army moved from Damascus to Adhri‘āt, then towards the Palestinian seaboard passing through the Northern part of the Jordan

valley towards Caesarea and then South to Sarapeon (Arsūf)<sup>18</sup>; they then arrived at Jerusalem from the North West.

Although Theophanes lived in the ninth century and the Chr. P. was written in the seventh, the researcher argues that Theophanes was the more accurate in recording some of these events; this could be due to his dependence on other different sources, unlike the Chr. P., which depends on the authors' own experiences in Constantinople in the year 630 CE (see Chr. P. 1989: back page). This caused the Chr. P. to be abbreviated in many parts since its writers were situated generally in Constantinople. However, Strategos was more detailed than Theophanes and the Ch. P. since he witnessed the whole event and thus his description is that of an eyewitness. Yet Strategos was not aware of the movement of the Persians before they reached Palestine. This could have been because of the unstable situation within Islamic Jerusalem or due to Strategos' lack of interest. The Persian conquest of Islamic Jerusalem is also mentioned in Muslim sources, especially those of the *Tafsīr*. This is noted in a chapter of the Qur'ān, namely Chapter entitled *al-Rūm*<sup>19</sup> (The Romans).

### **Chapter 30 of the Qur'ān '*al-Rūm*'**

One of the main events discussed in chapter 30 of the Qur'ān is the defeat of the Byzantines by the Persians. According to many exegetes and scholars of the Qur'ānic

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<sup>18</sup> Sarapeon is the city of Arsūf on the Palestinian seaboard (see Delgado (n.d): <http://www.biblioteca-tercer-milenio.com/sala-de-lectura/Bizancio-Vasiliev/docs/DestrucciondeJerusalen.htm>, date consulted: 07-01-2008); it is located South of Caesarea and North of Jaffa to the North West of Jerusalem.

<sup>19</sup> The word '*al-Rūm*' in the Qur'ān and in the Muslim core sources usually refers to the Byzantines

sciences, this event is mentioned in the first five verses of this chapter. The verses are<sup>20</sup>:

(1) Alif Lām Mīm, (2) the *Rūm* have been defeated, (3) in *Adnā al-Ard*, and after their defeat they will gain victory, (4) within a few years. To God belongs the whole decision before and after, and on that day the believers will rejoice, (5) by the victory (granted by) God, He grants victory to whomever he wills, and he is the Almighty, the Merciful<sup>21</sup>. (Qur'ān 30:1-5)

These verses note the defeat of the Byzantines. The researcher argues that mentioning this event in the Qur'ān shows how important it was considered by Muslims in relationship to the region where the clash took place. The so also important in defining the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic Jerusalem, which afterwards resulted in the *Fath*; because of this, they should be subject to analysis.

### Place of Revelation

The majority of the scholars of the sciences of the Qur'ān such as al-Suyūṭī (d. 911 AH / 1505 CE) (n.d: (pt.1) 10)<sup>22</sup> and al-Zarqānī (d. 1367 AH / 1947 CE) (1998: (1)

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<sup>20</sup> The researcher will mention his own translation of the verses of the Qur'ān during this study, as was mentioned in the introduction of this thesis; after checking many translations of the meanings of the Qur'ān, such as Yūsuf 'Alī's (2003), Abdel Haleem's (2004), Thomas Cleary's (2004), Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley's (1999), Khan and al-Hilali's (1996), and Muhammad Asad's (2003), he could not find a fully accurate and convincing translation. Therefore, he will state his own understanding of the translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān, unless there is need for any of the other translations.

<sup>21</sup> (1) ألم، (2) غلبت الروم، (3) في أدنى الأرض وهم من بعد غلبهم سيغلبون، (4) في بضع سنين، الله الأمر من قبل ومن بعد ويومئذ يفرح المؤمنون (5) بنصر الله، ينصر من يشاء وهو العزيز الرحيم.

Since the way of reciting these verses is very important as will follow, the researcher finds it useful to mention the whole transliteration of the verses as they are recited in Arabic:

(1) *Alif Lām Mīm*, (2) *Ghulibat al-Rūm*, (3) *Fī Adnā al-Ard*, *wa hum min ba'd ghalabihim sayaghlibūn*, (4) *Fī Biḍ' sinīn*, *Lillāh al-Amr min qabl wa min ba'd*, *wa yawma'idhin yafraḥ al-Mu'minūn*, (5) *binasrillāh*, *Yanṣur man yashā' wa huwa al-'Azīz al-Raḥīm*.

<sup>22</sup> The researcher will use two different books by al-Suyūṭī that have no date of publishing; this book, namely *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, which contains two parts, and *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī Asbāb al-Nuzūl* which is only one volume. In order to differentiate between the two books in the referencing, whenever the book *al-Itqān* is used there will be mentioning of the part (pt.), and if there was no mentioning of parts then the book used is *Lubāb al-Nuqūl*.

168) agree that this chapter is considered to be a Makkan chapter.<sup>23</sup> The only verse in this chapter that has disagreement is verse 17.<sup>24</sup>

The presence of the separate letters in the beginning of this chapter shows clearly that it was revealed in Makkah. According to many scholars of the sciences of the Qurʾān such as al-Qaṭṭān (d. 1420 AH / 1999 CE) (2000: 63) and al-Zarqānī (1998: (1) 167), all the chapters that start with separate letters, such as *Alif Lām Mīm* ألم, are considered Makkan except Chapters 2 (*al-Baqarah*) and 3 (*Āl ʿImrān*).<sup>25</sup> However, it should be mentioned that knowing the type of chapter, whether Makkan or Madanian, helps in understanding the reasons and the time of revelation since it is related to a historical event.

### **The *Qirāʾah* (recitation)<sup>26</sup> and the reason for revelation**

The majority of exegetes connected chapter 30 with the war between the Persians and the Byzantines and, in particular, the Persian conquest of al-Shām including Islamic Jerusalem. When dealing with the reasons for the revelation of this chapter, it may be noticed, however, that there is much disagreement among scholars in identifying the exact times of the event for which the verses were revealed. Although

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<sup>23</sup> The Makkan chapters are the chapters of the Qurʾān that were revealed before the Prophet's migration to Madīnah, even if they were revealed outside Makkah. The chapters that were revealed after the migration are the Madanian chapters, even if they were revealed in Makkah; this is what al-Suyūṭī decides in his book *al-Itqān* (see al-Suyūṭī (n.d): (1) 9).

<sup>24</sup> Al-Alūsī (d. 1270 AH / 1853 CE) narrated, in his book *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī* (1994: (11) 18), that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110 AH / 728 CE) mentions that only verse 17 of this chapter is Madanian. Yet al-Alūsī argues that this opinion of al-Ḥasan contradicts that of the majority of scholars, so it cannot be accepted. The researcher, however, argues that al-Ḥasan's opinion does not make any difference, since the core of this study concentrates only on the first five verses of this chapter.

<sup>25</sup> Richard Bell (1939: (2) 392) claims that this chapter dates back to a later period, i.e. in Madīnah. He claims that the Qurʾānic expression "To God belongs the whole decision" is not used in the early stages of the Qurʾān, and it was thus used in Madīnah. However, the researcher argues that Bell depends in his claim on using the *Qirāʾah* (recitation) of "*Ghalabat al-Rūm*" (the Byzantines gained victory). He depends on this *Qirāʾah* to claim that this chapter was actually revealed later when the Byzantines gained victory over the Persians. However, this *Qirāʾah* in itself is inaccurate as the researcher will explain later. Therefore, this opinion cannot be accepted.

<sup>26</sup> *Qirāʾah* is the way of reading and reciting the Qurʾān, there are ten standard ways of recitation.

the majority relate these verses to the war between the Persians and the Byzantines, the main disagreement is on the time and the circumstances of the war.

One of the main causes for this disagreement is in the *Qirā'ah* (way of recitation) of the verses, especially the words غلبت (gh-l-b-t) and سيغلبون (s-y-gh-l-b-ū-n). The pronunciation of these two can change according to the vowels, which completely changes the meaning. The majority of scholars recite these two words *Ghulibat* (defeated) and *Sayaghlibūn* (will gain victory); this is the main *Qirā'ah* of these two words as it has been narrated in all the ten major *Qirā'āt*<sup>27</sup> sources. For example, Ibn al-Jazarī (d. 883 AH / 1478 CE) in his book *al-Nashr* (n.d: (2) 345) notes all the disagreements among the ten *Qirā'āt* in every single chapter of the Qur'ān, and when he explains chapter 30 he mentions that the disagreement among the ten *Qirā'āt* starts from verse 10. This means that all of them agree on the *Qirā'ah* of the first 9 verses as they are mentioned. In addition, al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH / 922 CE) argues in his *Tafsīr* (1999: (10) 162) that:

In our opinion, the accurate *Qirā'ah*, other than which nothing is accepted, is 'Alif Lām Mīm, **Ghulibat** al-Rūm', this is due to the consensus of the most authentic *Qurrā'* on it<sup>28</sup>.

The other *Qirā'ah* mentioned by some of the narrators is to recite the two words as *Ghalabat* (gained victory) and *Sayughlabūn* (will be defeated). It is clear that this way of reciting the two words gives an opposite meaning to the verses, since this

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<sup>27</sup> The ten major *Qirā'āt* are the accepted ten ways of reciting the Qur'ān; all were narrated by ten main *Qurrā'* (scholars of the recitation of the Qur'ān) through authentic narrations from Prophet Muhammad. The ten *Qurrā'* are: 'Āṣim, Ibn 'Amr, al-Kisā'ī, Ḥamzah, Ibn 'Āmir, Ibn Kathīr, Nāfi', Abū Ja'far al-Madanī, Ya'qūb al-Ḥaḍramī, and Khalaf Ibn Hishām (see al-Qaṭṭān 2000: 173). The first seven of the above-mentioned *Qurrā'* are the most authentic, but many scholars mention the other three as accepted *Qirā'āt* since their narrations are authentic.

<sup>28</sup> والصواب من القراءة في ذلك عندنا الذي لا يجوز غيره: (ألم \* غَلِبَتِ الروم) بضم الغين، لإجماع الحجة من القراءة عليه.

shows that the Byzantines had gained victory over the Persians, and that they would be defeated in a few years.

According to Ibn ‘Aṭiyyah (d. 546 AH / 1151 CE) (2001: (4) 327), a number of the companions of Prophet Muhammad such as ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 40 AH / 661 CE), Ibn ‘Umar (d. 73 AH / 692 CE), Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī (d. 74 AH / 693 CE), and the *Tābi’ūn* (successors of the companions) such as Mu‘āwiyah Ibn Qurrah (d. 113 AH / 731 CE), recited the two words *Ghalabat* and *Sayughlabūn*. Al-Alūsī (1994: (11) 21) adds to them as do Ibn ‘Abbās (d. 68 AH / 688 CE) and al-Ḥasan (d. 110 AH / 728 CE). In addition, Al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 AH / 892 CE) states that Naṣr Ibn ‘Alī (d. 250 AH / 864 CE) recited this verse as *Ghalabat* (see al-Tirmidhī 2000: (2) 815). The researcher doubts these accounts since the ten most authentic *Qirā’āt* are in general narrated from most of these names by authentic narrations in the opposite way, namely, as *Ghulibat* and *Sayaghlibūn*.

This disagreement reflects the issue of the relationship between this chapter and the events that took place between the Byzantines and the Persians in Islamic Jerusalem and the region around it; some of the sources mention that these verses were revealed after the Persians defeated the Byzantines in al-Shām. Al-Wāḥidī (d. 468 AH / 1076 CE) says in his book *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* (n.d: 194-195):

The exegetes said: Chosroes sent an army to the Byzantines, and he commanded a person named Shahrīran, he attacked the Byzantines along with the Persian army, gained victory over them, destroyed their cities and cut their olives.... This news arrived to the Prophet and his companions in Makkah, which was hard on them, since the Prophet disliked that the illiterate [meaning that they did not have any revealed scripture] Zoroastrians would gain victory over the Byzantines who were among the People of the Scripture. The disbelievers in Makkah became happy and gloated over the companions of the Prophet’s

sadness saying: “You are people of a scripture and the Christians are the same, and we are illiterate, our illiterate brothers in Persia gained victory over your brothers. Therefore, if you fight us we will gain victory over you”, So God revealed “*Alif Lām Mīm...* The verses”.... Narrated by Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī: The Byzantines gained victory over the Persians in the day of Badr, so the believers rejoiced in the victory of the Byzantines over the Persians<sup>29</sup>.

This statement by al-Wāḥidī summarises the narrations that are noted by many of the exegetes; also, al-Ṭabarī mentions many narrations of the story behind the revelation of these verses (see al-Ṭabarī 1999: (10) 162-167). A comprehensive study of the exegetical literature of this chapter has been done by Nadia El Cheikh (1998: 358-363). The researcher argues that, after reviewing the various literatures on the reasons for the revelation of this chapter, it can be summarised by two main opinions:

The first opinion is what al-Wāḥidī says in his *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, discussed above. This opinion also occurs in *Lubāb al-Nuqūl* by al-Suyūṭī (n.d: 338-339), and in many other *Tafsīr* sources such as al-Biqā‘ī (d. 885 AH / 1480 CE) (1995: (5) 583), Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH / 1373 CE) (1994: (3) 560-561), al-Rāzī (d. 604 AH / 1208 CE) (1990: (13) 84), Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 AH / 1201 CE) (1987: (6) 186-187), al-Alūsī (1994: (11) 20), al-Shawkānī (d. 1250 AH / 1835 CE) (2000: 1356-1357), al-Suyūṭī (2000: (5) 289-290), and al-Marāghī (d. 1964 CE) (1974: (7) 27)<sup>30</sup>. Al-Suyūṭī also mentions the second opinion, narrating it from al-Tirmidhī. The narration of al-Tirmidhī (2000: (2) 815) states:

<sup>29</sup> قال المفسرون: بعث كسرى جيشاً إلى الروم واستعمل عليهم رجلاً يسمى شهريار فسار إلى الروم بأهل فارس وظهر عليهم وخرب مدائنهم وقطع زيتونهم... وبلغ ذلك النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وأصحابه بمكة فشق ذلك عليهم وكان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يكره أن يظهر الأميون من أهل المجوس على أهل الكتب من الروم وفرح كفار مكة وشتموا فلقوا أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقالوا: إنكم أهل كتاب والنصارى أهل كتاب ونحن أميون، وقد ظهر إخواننا من أهل فارس على إخوانكم من الروم، وإنكم إن قاتلتمونا لنظهرن عليكم. فأنزل الله تعالى (ألم غلبت الروم في أدنى الأرض) إلى آخر الآيات... عن أبي سعيد الخدري قال: لما كان يوم بدر ظهرت الروم على فارس فأعجب المؤمنون بظهور الروم على فارس.

<sup>30</sup> These scholars are of the two major schools of *Tafsīr*, namely the *Ma'thūr* and the *Ra'y*.

Narrated by Abū Sa‘īd: On the Day of Badr<sup>31</sup>, the Byzantines gained victory over the Persians, and the believers rejoiced in this. The verses: “*Alif Lām Mīm, Ghalabat al-Rūm* [the Byzantines gained victory]” were revealed, to the verse: “and on that day the believers will rejoice”. He [al-Tirmidhī] said: the believers rejoiced in the victory of the Byzantines over the Persians. He [al-Tirmidhī] said: This is a sound *ḥadīth*, but it is strange from this side, this is how Naṣr Ibn ‘Alī recited: “*Ghalabat al-Rūm*”<sup>32</sup>.

This opinion is mentioned by al-Zuḥaylī (2001: (3) 1983).<sup>33</sup> The researcher argues that al-Zuḥaylī’s opinion is very controversial since he agrees with those scholars who state that the term used in the chapter is *Gulibat*. Yet he states the same story of Badr (which depends on the *Ghalabat* recitation) as being the reason for revealing this chapter. The researcher argues that al-Zuḥaylī’s opinion can only be understood if he means that the statement of the Qur’ān came about on that occasion in order to let the Muslims know that the Byzantines would be defeated in the future. The Qur’ān, on this occasion, expresses the defeat in the past as a confirmation that it will

<sup>31</sup> Meaning the day of the Battle of Badr between the Muslims and the Polytheists of Makkah. This battle took place in Badr, between Makkah and Madīnah, in the year 2 AH (624 CE), and it is considered the first big clash between the Muslims and the people of Makkah (see al-‘Alī 2002: 218).

<sup>32</sup> عن أبي سعيد قال لما كان يوم بدر ظهرت الروم على فارس فأعجب ذلك المؤمنين فنزلت (الم غلبت الروم) إلى قوله: (يفرح المؤمنون بنصر الله)، قال: ففرح المؤمنون بظهور الروم على فارس، قال: هذا حديث حسن غريب من هذا الوجه، كذا قرأ نصر بن In fact, this narration is very problematic, al-Albānī (d. 1999 CE) (2002: (3) 299) considers as *Ṣaḥīḥ bimā ba‘dah* (authentic by linking it to those after it). The narration coming after this one in al-Tirmidhī’s book does not mention the battle of Badr at all, and it is considered authentic in itself as al-Albānī argues (2003: (3) 299-300). The meaning of the statement of al-Albānī “*Ṣaḥīḥ bimā ba‘dah*” means that the first narration is *Ḥasan* (sound), but it can be considered authentic because it is similar to some extent to the authentic narration that follows it. The researcher argues that this is not true. It seems that al-Albānī built up his argument after he misread the text of the first narration. He read it as “...and the believers rejoiced in this, the verses: “*Alif Lām Mīm, Ghulibat al-Rūm* (the Byzantines were defeated)”. This is how this narration is mentioned in al-Albānī’s above-mentioned book. There is a very big difference between *Ghulibat* and *Ghalabat*. The original narration in al-Tirmidhī’s book says *Ghalabat*. The researcher consulted different copies of these sources and found the same result. It seems that al-Albānī misread this narration, and thus depended only on analysing the *Sanad* (chain of narrators), which does not reach authentic status, and did not analyse the *Matn* (text) of the narration. Had he analysed this text, he would have probably found it to be problematic since it is totally different from the authentic narration that follows. It is problematic also since it depends on a rejected *Qirā’ah* (recitation) of the word غلبت, as the researcher mentioned earlier, when studying the recitation of chapter *al-Rūm*. In addition, it contradicts the consensus of the scholars of the sciences of the Qur’ān, in that the first verses of chapter *al-Rūm* are considered Makkan, and were not re-revealed in Madīnah.

<sup>33</sup> El-Cheikh (1998: 361) adds al-Zamakhsharī (d. 528 AH / 1134 CE) to the scholars who state that the recitation of this verse is *Ghalabat*. However, the researcher disagrees with el-Cheikh, since al-Zamakhsharī mentions the two opinions of the recitation *without* deciding which is accepted (see al-Zamakhsharī 1995: (3) 451-452).

happen; in other words, as if it has already happened, and on that day the Muslims should really rejoice. The researcher argues, on the one hand, that the construction of al-Zuhaylī's argument is not acceptable. It is inaccurate to claim that the Muslims heard the news of the Byzantines' victory over the Persians, when the Qur'ān, at the same time, says that the Byzantines were defeated. On the other hand, even if the researcher's understanding of al-Zuhaylī's argument was right, the argument still cannot be accepted, since it takes the meaning of the text too far away from the actual text. The text is clear; it speaks about an event that historically happened in reality. It speaks about the event, its place, and its time. Therefore, changing the sequence of the Qur'ānic text without clear evidence is unacceptable.

However, the researcher argues that the opinion that depends on the story of the Battle of Badr is problematic; it actually contradicts the first issue that all the scholars of *Tafsīr* and the Qur'ānic Sciences agreed upon, namely, that this chapter is Makkan. The only disagreement among the scholars on this matter was on one verse of this chapter, namely verse 17, not these verses, as the researcher clarified earlier.

Its being a Makkan chapter excludes the possibility of considering the story that al-Tirmidhī mentions as being the reason for the revelation of the chapter. At the same time, al-Tirmidhī also notes other narrations stating that this chapter was revealed in relation to the victory of the Byzantines over the Persians without stating the Battle of Badr (see al-Tirmidhī, 2000 (2) 815-817). This shows that to consider the story of Badr as the reason for revelation is not acceptable. It reflects on the recitation of the verse, that is, to recite the verse as *Ghulibat* not as *Ghalabat*. The researcher finds it very strange that al-Tirmidhī also mentions the same narration of Badr, i.e. the narration of *Ghalabat*, in another chapter of his *Sunan*, namely, *Kitāb al-Qirā'āt*

(The Book of Ways of Recitations of the Qur’ān). This recitation is not acceptable in any of the ten most authentic *Qurṛā’*, as was mentioned earlier.

### **The Place of the victory of the Persians (*Adnā al-Arḍ*)**

The Qur’ān identifies the place where the Persians defeated the Byzantines as being *Adnā al-Arḍ*, the term *al-Arḍ* meaning ‘the land’. However, there are different meanings of the term *Adnā*, depending on the understanding of its root in the Arabic language. Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711 AH / 1312 CE) mentions two different roots for the same term, the first one is *Dana’a* (meaning ‘lower’) (1999: (4) 415-416), and the second is *Danā* (meaning ‘closer’) (1999: (4) 419-420).

The researcher notes that Ibn Manẓūr used a term from the Qur’ān identical to the one in Chapter 30 as an example of the first meaning; this example was in verse 61 of chapter 2 of the Qur’ān (Are you exchanging the better for the lower?).<sup>34</sup> The term used in this verse is *Adnā* meaning the lower. Interestingly, Ibn Manẓūr used the same verse as an example of the other meaning also; he says (1999 (4) 415):

Al-Zajjāj said: the meaning of the verse (Are you exchanging the better for the lower) without a *hamzah*<sup>35</sup> is closer, and the meaning of ‘closer’ is ‘less value’.

This shows that the term *Adnā* in the verse can be used for both meanings, i.e. ‘closer’ and ‘lower’, but it must be noted that Ibn Manẓūr quotes al-Zajjāj, in that the term ‘closer’ in the above-mentioned verse means ‘less value’. However, the researcher argues that the terminology ‘less value’ is closer to the term ‘lower’ than the term ‘closer’. It seems that Ibn Manẓūr’s own opinion was different from al-

<sup>34</sup> أُنْزِلَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ (Atastabdilūn al-Ladhī huwa *Adnā* biladhī huwa Khayr) (2: 61)

<sup>35</sup> Means that it is أدنى *Adnā* not أدنا *Adna*, where ( ) refers to the *Hamzah* (ء) in Arabic.

Zajjāj's, i.e. that the term *Adnā* here means 'lower'. It should be noted that Ibn Manzūr did not state the opinion of 'closer' in this example as being his own opinion, but as a narration from another scholar.

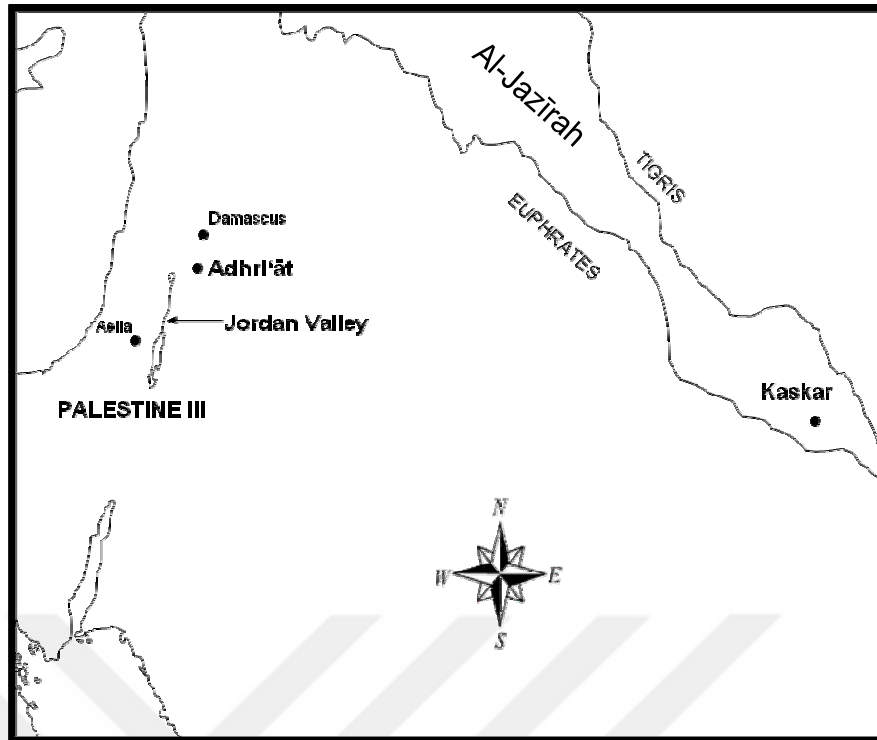
The majority of the exegetes, from the two schools of *Tafsīr*, state that the meaning of *Adnā al-Arḍ* in this verse is 'The closest of the land' (see for example: al-Ṭabarī (1999: (10) 167), al-Biqā'ī (1995: (5) 583) and Ibn al-Jawzī (1987: (6) 288)). However, they disagree on deciding which land is closer to what. Some scholars such as al-Shawkānī (2000: 1357) and al-Qurṭubī (1998: (14) 6) do not specify a place but mention different opinions of which there are mainly three: Adhri'āt<sup>36</sup>, al-Jazīrah<sup>37</sup>, Kaskar<sup>38</sup> (this name is mentioned only by al-Qurṭubī), and Jordan and Palestine (see Map (3)).

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<sup>36</sup> Adhri'āt is noted by al-Ḥamawī (d. 626 AH / 1229 CE) to be a town on the boundaries of al-Shām near Amman and al-Balqā' (which is in Jordan today) (1990: (1) 158). It is well-known today as Dar'ā in Syria near the Jordanian-Syrian borders, as is mentioned in the Encyclopaedia of Islam (see Elisséeff 1986: (1) 194).

<sup>37</sup> Al-Jazīrah was the common name for the region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to the North East of al-Shām (see al-Ḥamawī 1990: (2) 156).

<sup>38</sup> Kaskar is a province in Southern Iraq, its capital was Wāṣiṭ between al-Kūfah and al-Baṣrah (see al-Ḥamawī 1990: (4) 523).



**Map (3):** Locations of the different opinions of scholars on *Adnā al-Ard*

Al-Ṭabarī (1999: (10) 162-167) notes different opinions but all generalise with al-Shām or sometimes *Aṭraf* (the limits) of al-Shām. Ibn ‘Aṭīyyah (2001: (4) 327) notes two opinions: Jordan and al-Jazīrah. Others such as Ibn al-Jawzī (1987: (6) 288) and al-Qāsimī (2003: (7) 588) decide that the place is *Aṭrāf* al-Shām, and both Ibn Kathīr (1994: (3) 562) and al-Alūsī (1994: (11) 19) state that the place is Adhri‘āt, whereas al-Zuhaylī (2001: (3) 1983) specifies al-Jazīrah between Iraq and al-Shām as being the place. Al-Marāghī (1964: (7) 28) specifies clearly that the place was between Jordan and Palestine.

An Egyptian geologist, Zaghlūl al-Najjār, has done some very interesting research on the issue depending on the word *Adnā*. He argues that the terminology *Adnā al-Ard* in this verse means ‘the lowest part of the Earth’ which, in his opinion, specifies the

place as the Jordan valley between today's Jordan and Palestine, depending on the fact that the Jordan valley is the lowest part of the Earth<sup>39</sup>.

It is noted that the Chr. P. (1989: 156) and Theophanes (1997: 430-432) do not specifically mention such a battle between the Byzantines and the Persians in that area in particular. They only note the Persian conquest of the whole region at that time without mentioning specific battles. This makes the site of any battle that took place in that region hard to decide. It is even harder to prove that there was a specific battle in this land, or even that Islamic Jerusalem was the region meant in Chapter 30 of the Qur'ān, since there are no historical accounts that specify Islamic Jerusalem in particular.

However, as has been mentioned historically, the Persians actually did attack Edessa and all the areas around it first; then they started moving south (see Theophanes 1997: 418-421). This all began in the year 604 CE i.e. before the Prophethood of Muhammad. The war between the Persians and the Byzantines was still taking place during the beginning of Muhammad's Prophethood and throughout the Makkan period of his Prophethood. At the same time, it is noted that chapter 30 of the Qur'ān was the first revelation to mention this war. This indicates that the revelation of these verses, commenting on the defeat of the Byzantines at this stage in particular, means that this event, i.e. the defeat of the Byzantines in Adnā al-Ard, was considered important. This is since the Qur'ān, from a Muslim perspective, does not comment on small event that has no spectacular effect on Muslims' lives.

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<sup>39</sup> See 'Dr. Zaghāl al-Najjār Official Website', date consulted: 26-6-2006, [http://www.elnaggarzr.com/Test\\_fre/Index.asp?Prv=2&Data=535&id=1](http://www.elnaggarzr.com/Test_fre/Index.asp?Prv=2&Data=535&id=1)

The researcher argues that this understanding of the sequence of the events shows that the reason for the revelation of these verses was not merely to note the defeat of the Byzantines, but was also because of the importance of this defeat for the Muslims. This effect cannot be fully understood unless it is related to Islamic Jerusalem as being the most important part of that region (al-Shām) to the Muslims.

Therefore, it seems that the Persian victory was considered very important due to the significance of the region where it occurred. The spiritual importance of Islamic Jerusalem to the Christians led to mentioning this event in Christian sources. In addition, its importance to the Muslims led to substantial accounts of it in Muslim sources.

This raises a question about the real place where the events that the Qurʾān mentions took place. It is to be noted that Theophanes (1997: 430) mentions that Damascus was invaded by the Persians in 613 CE. This occurred before the invasion of Islamic Jerusalem, which took place, according to both Theophanes (1997:431) and the Chr. P. (1989: 156) in 614 CE.<sup>40</sup> However, there is no record in the Qurʾān about the occupation of Damascus. This can be concluded when the exegetes' opinions on the place of the battle to witness the defeat of the Byzantines are studied. The majority of these opinions specify regions and towns located south of Damascus, except for al-Jazīrah towards the North East of Damascus. By analysing the Persian movement from north to south, one can conclude that the battle mentioned by the

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<sup>40</sup> Strategos did not mention the year in his account of the Persian invasion of Islamic Jerusalem. He mentions the date and month. This could be due to his interest in registering the information that he thought was more important, i.e. the date and month, and how the invasion took place, assuming that the year of this event would have been known by the reader because of its importance.

majority of the Muslim scholars took place actually south of Damascus, i.e. after the year 613 CE.

The Qur'ān was revealed to comment on one specific battle that led to a dramatic change in the region. It is to be noted that the available Christian sources mention the Persian conquest of Islamic Jerusalem in particular as being of great importance. Although al-Jazīrah was considered a very important strategic region, yet the Qur'ānic interest in these events shows that the battle took place in a place with a significant religious status. This can be noted also in the Christian sources that express high interest in the Persian invasion of Jerusalem more than in any other city or region. Thus, the researcher argues that this shows that al-Jazīrah was most likely not the place of interest mentioned in the Qur'ān. Also it would have been already conquered well before the revelation of these verses. Moreover, it is unlikely that the Qur'ān would have commented on a battle in al-Jazīrah region and left out a location that has much more religious importance, i.e. Islamic Jerusalem. It should be noted that the invasion of Islamic Jerusalem marked the most crucial point in the history of the Persian-Byzantine war according to the Christian sources.

The Persians occupied Egypt the following year (615 CE) according to Theophanes (1997: 432), which shows that the movement of the Persian army at that time was towards the South West. This leaves one possibility for the area of the battle mentioned in the Qur'ān, namely, the area between Adhri'āt, the Jordan River and Palestine, i.e. towards the south west of al-Shām.

It should also be mentioned that there is no clear material evidence that the region of Adhri'āt, Jordan and Palestine was the place of the event that the Qur'ān mentions.

Nevertheless, the only element in giving preponderance to one of the opinions may be acceptable depending on the historical events that followed, i.e. the Persian occupation of Egypt, in addition to the status of Islamic Jerusalem in Islam and its effect of giving importance to any events that took place within it to the extent of revealing verses from the Qur'ān to comment on these.

Strategos mentions the route that the Persians took from al-Shām into Islamic Jerusalem region; he says:

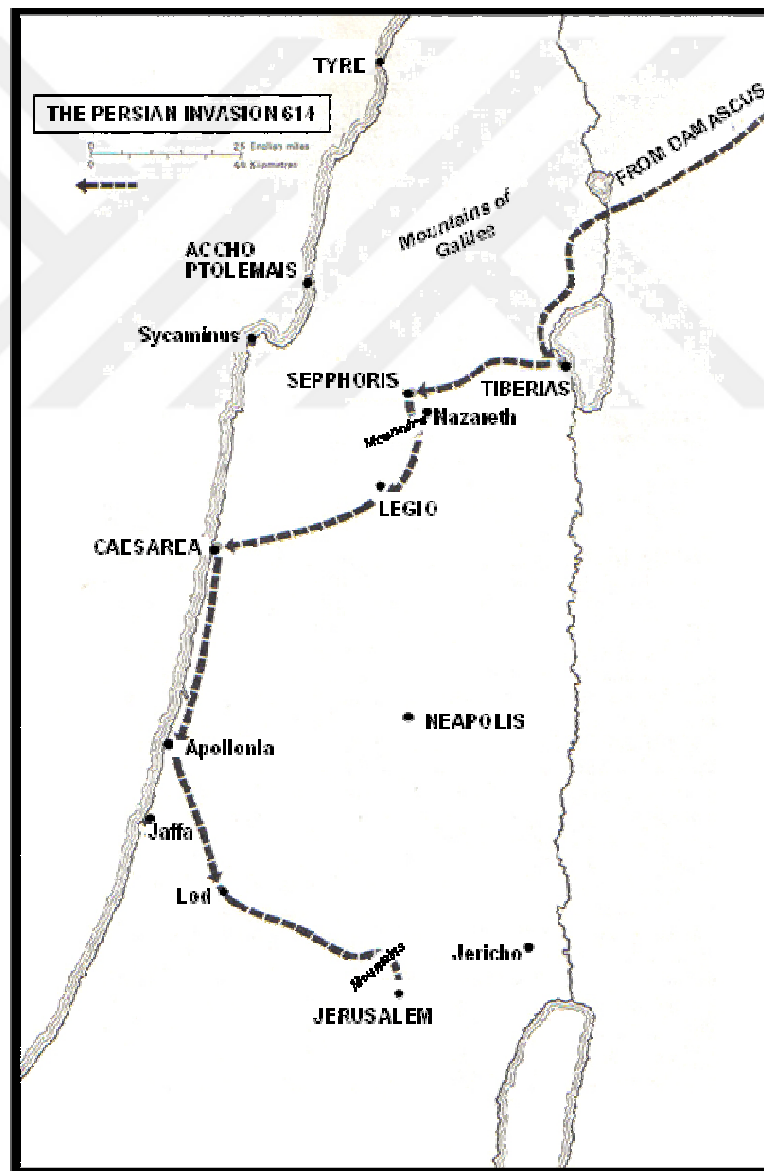
They seized all the land of Syria; they put to flight the Greek (Byzantine) detachments and forces, and sundry of them they captured, and thereafter began to enter with a swarming army and to capture every city and village. And they reached Palestine and its borders, and they arrived at Caesarea, which is the metropolis. But there they begged for a truce, and bowed their necks in submission. After that the enemy advanced to Sarapeon, and captured it, as well as all the seaboard cities together with their hamlets... Next they reached Judea; and came to a large and famous city, a Christian city, which is Jerusalem. (Conybeare 1910: 503)<sup>41</sup>

The movement of the army of the Persians was towards the South West. Strategos mentions that they entered Palestine after seizing Syria (al-Shām). It seems that by Palestine Strategos meant the region called at that time 'Palestine I' (Palestine Prima), which had almost the same boundaries as the Aelia region, as Khalid El-Awaisi clarifies (2007: 113). Although the region of 'Palestine II' (Palestine Secunda) (see Avi-Yonah 2002: 125) was on the route between Damascus and Palestine Prima through Adhri'āt, Strategos does not mean Palestine Secunda when he speaks about Palestine. He mentions Caesarea as being the first city and the metropolis of Palestine. Caesarea is located in Palestine Prima close to its North Western borders with Palestine Secunda. This shows that he is speaking mainly about Palestine Prima, i.e. the region of Aelia. The researcher argues that, according

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<sup>41</sup> The researcher is repeating this quote, which was mentioned earlier in p. 35 of this thesis due to its importance now.

to the description of Strategos, the Persians took over Damascus; they then marched on the known route to the south and passed through Adhri'āt, and then they marched towards the South West along the al-Yarmūk River down to the Northern part of the Jordan valley. Arriving at Caesarea they were unable to take it. Therefore, they moved south and took the whole seaboard with Arsūf. After that, they headed directly towards the city of Jerusalem and reached it from the North West or the West as the following map clarifies:



**Map (4):** The route of the Persian invasion towards the walled city of Jerusalem in 614 CE  
**Source:** Avi-Yonah (1976: 264)

According to this analysis, the defeat of the Byzantines occurred in either Adhri‘āt or the Northern part of the Jordan valley; the Persians were then free to move towards the seaboard and thence to the city of Jerusalem. However, the researcher argues that this cannot be accepted, since Strategos mentions that the Persians were faced with strong resistance in Caesarea, to the extent that they “begged for a truce, and bowed their necks in submission” (Conybear 1910: 503). In other words, the Byzantines at Caesarea defeated the Persians. Yet the Qur’ānic expression shows that the Persians were at the top of their victory after defeating the Byzantines in the battle that the Qur’ān mentions. This means that the opinion that the area mentioned in the Qur’ān as *Adnā al-Ard* was Adhri‘āt is not accurate.

As the researcher mentioned earlier, according to al-Najjār, the Qur’ānic expression *Adnā al-Ard* means ‘the lowest part of earth’, which indicates that the defeat of the Byzantines occurred near the Dead Sea, in or close to the city of Jericho, which is located to the North East of the city of Jerusalem. However, according to the description of Strategos, the Persians did not attack Jericho first or even come from the East, they arrived from the Western side of Jerusalem. Moreover, it seems that Jericho was not a place of interest for the Persians at all. Strategos mentions that when the Persians arrived at the city of Jerusalem and before besieging it, they negotiated with the Patriarch Zachariah of Jerusalem to reach a treaty; yet when leaders of the city received news of the negotiations they refused these and prevented the Patriarch from surrendering the city. Therefore, the Patriarch sent a man named Abba Modestus, who was the Superior of the monastery of St. Theodosius, to Jericho, ordering him to lead the Byzantine troops there and attack the Persians. This shows that Jericho at that time was not occupied by the Persians and that Byzantine

troops were present (see Conybear 1910: 504-506). The question remains: why does the Qur'ān mention the terminology *Adnā al-Arḍ* in this context?

The researcher argues that the only one, to mention a specific incident that could be considered the final engagement between the Persians and the Byzantines, before the Persians took full control of the IslamicJerusalem region, is Strategos. He mentions that Abba Modestus went to Jericho and led the Byzantine troops while the Patriarch in Jerusalem informed the Persians of the refusal of the treaty offer. Therefore, the Persians sent an army towards Jericho and attacked the Byzantines. The Byzantine army fled when they saw the great army of the Persians. The leader, Abba Modestus, was surrounded by the Persian army but was able to escape to Jericho, and the Persians then attacked the city of Jerusalem (Conybear 1910: 506).<sup>42</sup>

This event marked the final collapse of the Byzantine power in IslamicJerusalem. It led to the Persians taking total control over IslamicJerusalem and the city of Jerusalem. Strategos describes the impact of this event on the people of the city of Jerusalem; he says:

But the inhabitants of the city [Jerusalem] began to grieve when they learned of the flight of the Greeks [Byzantines], and there was found from no quarter any aid for them. Then the Persians perceived that God has forsaken the Christians, and that they had no helper. (Conybear 1910: 506)

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<sup>42</sup> Strategos does not mention the word “battle” when speaking about this event; yet he describes the scene of the field and mentions that Abba Modestus was trapped on a rock and besieged by the Persian soldiers. Yet he was able to survive this hard situation in a miraculous way and arrived at Jericho safely. This shows that there was an actual engagement between the Byzantine and the Persian forces. However, it seems that the weak spirit of the Byzantine army played a major role in their defeat in this battle. In addition, it should be noted that chapter 30 of the Qur'ān does not clearly mention the term ‘battle’ also, which means that the defeat of the Byzantines, mentioned in the Qur'ān, was close to a fled than an actual battle that needed an effort from the Persians.

Depending on this, the researcher concludes that the event noted in the Qur'ān, i.e. the defeat of the Byzantines, would be the above-mentioned event that took place between Jericho and Jerusalem. Thus, this area is most likely the one mentioned in the Qur'ān as *Adnā al-Arḍ*. For further clarification, the researcher refers again to the Qur'anic expression *Adnā* which, as has been mentioned, means both 'the closest' and 'the lowest'.

As has been noted, when the accounts of the exegetes were studied, most of them settled on only one meaning for *Adnā*, namely, 'closest', and depended on this in claiming that Adhri'āt is the place described in the Qur'ān as *Adnā al-Arḍ* based on the claim that it was the closest to the Arab Peninsula within al-Shām. The researcher argues that this may not be true, since most of the region beyond Adhri'āt, towards the south, is considered as part of al-Shām including al-Balqā' (see al-Ḥamawī: (3) 354). Thus, the researcher argues that Adhri'āt may not be considered the closest place in al-Shām to the Arab Peninsula.

Also, this opinion ignores the fact that the word *Adnā* has another strong meaning, namely 'lowest' which, if applied, does not comply with Adhri'āt but can be applied to the region near Jericho. This leads to the conclusion that the region mentioned in the Qur'ān as the place where the Persians defeated the Byzantines was, most likely, somewhere between Jericho and Jerusalem, and most likely a low place within the Jordan Valley. This is because it is the closest to Islamic Jerusalem, which was invaded on or shortly after that event, and can be considered the closest region within al-Shām to the Arab Peninsula; it is also considered the lowest region on Earth, which makes it ideal to apply the Qur'anic expression of *Adnā al-Arḍ* to both of its meanings. In addition, it is the place that witnessed the final Byzantine defeat by the

Persians before they took full control over the whole region of Islamic Jerusalem, as the account of Strategos, the only eyewitness account that survives to today, mentions.

### **The dates of the events mentioned in Chapter 30 of the Qur'ān**

The issue of the time between the defeat and the victory of the Byzantines has been a very important one in *Tafsīr* sources, since Chapter 30 has always been, according to the Muslims, considered one of the miracles of the Qur'ān in being a prophecy and in uncovering future events.

The researcher notes that most of the exegetes who speak about this chapter deal with it as a comprehensive example of a Qur'ānic prophecy that took place in reality during the life-time of the Prophet Muhammad and was seen by all the people in the Arab Peninsula<sup>43</sup>. The core of the study of this example is the Qur'ānic expression *في بضع سنين* “*Fī Biḍ‘i Sinīn*” (in a few years); the key word in this expression is being the Arabic word *Biḍ‘*, explained below.

According to al-Fayrūz’ābādī (d. 817 AH / 1414 CE) (1991: (3) 10), the *Biḍ‘* is an expression that means the amount between multipliers of the number ten, i.e. any amount from 1 up to less than 10, even 9.99, can be called *Biḍ‘*. Ibn Manẓūr (1999:

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<sup>43</sup> The researcher will not name all the exegetes who mention this issue since most give almost the same account regarding the matter. There is a *ḥadīth* narration in al-Tirmidhī’s *Sunan* where he mentions a whole story in which Abū Bakr has a bet with some persons in Makkah saying that the Byzantines will defeat the Persians within three (and in some narrations five) years, but when the Prophet knows about the bet, he asks Abū Bakr to make the bet higher and extend the duration to less than ten years. Abū Bakr wins the bet after the Byzantines defeat the Persians within the time limit that the Qur’ān mentions (see al-Tirmidhī 2000: (2) 815-816). This narration is authentic according to al-Albānī (2000 A: 232) and can be found in almost all the *Tafsīr* sources that deal with this chapter, especially the *Ma’tḥūr* ones such as Ibn Kathīr (1994: (3) 561-562) and al-Ṭabarī (1999: (10) 163-166), and also in al-Qurṭubī (1998: (14) 3-5) of the *Ra’y* school. Yet some of the narrators mention that the duration was nine years, nonetheless; the researcher argues that the narration that mentions “less than ten years” is more authentic as al-Albānī stated earlier.

(1) 426-427) agrees with al-Fayrūz'ābādī and adds many accounts by other scholars who also agree with this opinion, except for one weak opinion which is mentioned without naming the scholar who said it; here it is stated that the *Bid'* is between Three and Nine. The researcher argues that this opinion is weak as can be understood from the way how Ibn Manẓūr mentions it. He mentions this opinion in a way that weakens the argument where he says: “it was said that the *Bid'* is between Three and Nine” (Ibn Manẓūr 1999: (1) 426). This shows this to be a single weak opinion; the *aḥādīth* of al-Tirmidhī also strengthen al-Fayrūz'ābādī's opinion.<sup>44</sup> Thus, the researcher argues that the Qur'ān points that the Byzantines would defeat the Persians within a period of less than ten years.

According to Theophanes (1997: 431) and the Chr. P. (1989: 156), the Walled City of Jerusalem was conquered by the Persians in the year 614 CE, the invasion of the region taking place at the same time. The Chr. P. notes that this invasion occurred “about the month of June” (Chr. P. 1989: 156). Mango and Scott justify the Chr. P.'s opinion as being the time when the news reached Constantinople (Theophanes 1997: 431). However, Strategos mentions in detail the duration of the Persian siege of the city and the date of the fall of the city; he says:

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<sup>44</sup> The opinion that Ibn Manẓūr mentions, on the *Bid'* being from 3 to 9, could have depended on a *ḥadīth* spoken of by al-Tirmidhī (2000: (2) 815) in which the Prophet Muhammad said to Abū Bakr after he bet one of the Polytheists on the Byzantines' victory over the Persians within a few years: “You should have been more careful Abū Bakr, since the *Bid'* is between 3 and up to 9” (ألا احتطت يا أبا بكر، فإن البضع ما بين الثلاث إلى التسع). The researcher argues that this narration is weak, as al-Albānī mentions (2000: (7) 363-366). However, another *ḥadīth* is mentioned also by al-Tirmidhī (2000: (2) 815-816) where Abū Bakr bets a Polytheist and makes the bet's duration 5 years; when the five years have passed and the Byzantines have not gained a victory over the Persians Abū Bakr loses the bet and mentions this to the Prophet. The Prophet said: “Why did not you make the bet to under ten years” and one of the narrators of the *ḥadīth*, namely Sa'īd, comments: “The *Bid'* is what is under ten” فجعل أجل خمس سنين فلم يظهروا فذكروا ذلك للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: ألا جعلته إلى دون قال: أراه العشر. قال سعيد: (والبضع ما دون العشر). This narration is stronger than the previous one, and al-Albānī argues that it is authentic (2002: (3) 299-300). This makes the opinion of al-Fayrūz'ābādī more acceptable than the one mentioned by Ibn Manẓūr.

The beginning of the struggle of the Persians with the Christians of Jerusalem was on the 15<sup>th</sup> April, in the second indiction, in the fourth year of the Emperor Heraclius. They spent twenty days in the struggle. And they shot from their balistas with such violence, that on the twenty-first day they broke down the city wall. (Conybear 1910: 506)

This means that the fall of the city took place on 6<sup>th</sup> May 614 CE. This is equivalent to 18<sup>th</sup> *Rajab*<sup>45</sup> 9 BH (the 5<sup>th</sup> year after the Prophethood of Muhammad). The final engagement that Strategos mentions, which marked the final collapse of the Byzantine forces in Islamic Jerusalem, took place just before the siege of the walled city of Jerusalem, i.e. around 15<sup>th</sup> April 614 (27<sup>th</sup> *Jumādā al-Tāniyah* 9 BH) . It is clear that this was in a very early stage of the second stage of Islam, i.e. when Islam made public. The declaration of Muhammad's Prophethood publicly, after three years of secret work in Makkah, took place in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, as can be found in many *sīrah* sources, such as Ibn Hishām (d. 218 AH / 833 CE) (2005: (pt.1) 184). The researcher argues that this gives authenticity to the story of the reason for the revelation of Chapter 30, especially concerning the bet between Abū Bakr and the Polytheists in Makkah. It would not be logical to argue that this story occurred at the beginning of the Prophethood of Muhammad since his call to the people took place secretly at that time. Moreover, the researcher argues that this reveals an early interest in this region by the Qur'ān, and thus by the Prophet Muhammad; this argument will follow.

The researcher argues that, in order to confirm that Islamic Jerusalem is the region meant by the verses of Chapter 30 of the Qur'ān, one should check the date of the other events in the verses, i.e. the Byzantine victory over the Persians. The Qur'ān

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<sup>45</sup> *Rajab* is the 7<sup>th</sup> month in the lunar calendar.

notes that this victory would occur in less than 10 years, as was discussed earlier while studying the meaning of the expression *Bidʿ*.

Islamic Jerusalem was regained by the Byzantines between 626 and 627 CE (Theophanes 1997: 457) (Chr. P. 1989: 168-169).<sup>46</sup> This means that it took place 12 or 13 years after the Persian conquest of the region. Does this mean that the Qurʾān is mistaken or that the regaining of Islamic Jerusalem by the Byzantines is not what the Qurʾān means by defeating the Persians?

Almost all the exegetes writing on Chapter 30 of the Qurʾān describe it as a prophecy fulfilled within the time specified by the Qurʾān. This can also be found in the books of *sīrah* and *ḥadīth*, as was mentioned earlier. This means that Muslim scholars generally had a specific understanding of the Prophecy in these verses, which led them to believe that it would be fulfilled within a period of less than 10 years.

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<sup>46</sup> According to Wilkinson (1990: 102), the city of Jerusalem was restored by the Byzantines in 628 CE. Strategos does not specify the time between the Persian invasion and the Byzantines regaining the region. He notes some events that took place around the 15<sup>th</sup> year after the Persian occupation of the city of Jerusalem, and mentions that Emperor Heraclius entered the city in the 17<sup>th</sup> year after the Persian invasion of the city of Jerusalem. This means that the start of the movement towards re-taking the city of Jerusalem was in 629 CE, and Heraclius entered the city again in 631 CE after a peace treaty with the Persians. Theophanes also mentions peace treaty and specifies the year 626 or 627 (it is unclear in his account) as being the time when the Persians in “Edessa, Palestine, Jerusalem, and other Roman towns” were allowed “to cross the Roman territory without harm”, when they left for their own lands. Also, the Chr. P. speaks about this peace treaty without mentioning Jerusalem clearly, but the Chr. P. notes that this was in 626 CE. The researcher argues that Strategos’ opinion on this issue might not be as accurate as his account of the Persian invasion of Islamic Jerusalem. This is because he was in the city of Jerusalem at the time of the Persian invasion, but was not present in the region as an eyewitness during the time of the peace treaty between the Persians and the Byzantines. The Chr. P. was written in Constantinople, i.e. at the heart of the Byzantine capital where Heraclius was in the process of forming the peace treaty. Also, Theophanes depends in his opinions and accounts on various narrations and accounts, and this shows that more than one source agrees that the peace treaty took place during 626 or 627 CE. The researcher, therefore, will take the Chr. P. and Theophanes’ opinions into consideration rather than that of Strategos in this case.

The researcher argues that Wilkinson may have confused the Byzantine conquest of the region with the visit of the Emperor Heraclius to the city of Jerusalem that took place in 628 CE (see Theophanes 1997: 458) (see Chr. P. 1989: 182-188). This marked the crowning of the Byzantine victory.

Claiming that the victory of the Byzantines, which is mentioned in these verses, means the restoring of IslamicJerusalem is not accurate. The Byzantines regained control over IslamicJerusalem in a longer period than the *Bid' Sinīn* specified in the Qur'ān. Thus, there must be either another meaning for this victory, or it could be meant to be in a place other than IslamicJerusalem.

It is to be noted that, when studying the history of the period between 610 and 627 CE, one finds there to be three major stages in the history of the war between the Byzantines and the Persians at that time. First, the fall of IslamicJerusalem to the Persians in 614 CE, which marked one of the biggest losses of the Byzantine Empire due to the spiritual status of IslamicJerusalem for the Christians.<sup>47</sup> Second, the first battle that took place between the Persians and the Byzantines in which the Byzantines gained the victory; in other words, the first victory of the Byzantines over the Persians. Third, the restoration of IslamicJerusalem by the Byzantines in 626 CE, which remarked their final victory.

Norman Baynes (d. 1961 CE) (1904: 701) did a thorough research on the first campaign of Heraclius against the Persians, and compared the different historical accounts on this issue such as those of Theophanes, the Chr. P., and other Greek sources. In his research, he concludes that the first victory of Heraclius over the Persians was in a battle that took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 623 CE <sup>48</sup> (28<sup>th</sup> *Rajab* 1

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<sup>47</sup> By studying the general biography and acts of Heraclius as has been mentioned by many historians, particularly the Chr. P. in Constantinople, the researcher argues that it seems that Heraclius was religious and a practicing Christian. In fact, the Chr. P. notes this clearly when it describes Heraclius as "Our most pious emperor" (1989: 182). Also, Hitti (1951: 409) notes that Heraclius was "hailed deliverer of Christendom and cross to Jerusalem" after he regained power over the region, rebuilt the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and restored the Holy Cross to Jerusalem. This is also the general picture of Heraclius in the Muslim sources as El-Cheikh (1999: 7) argues.

<sup>48</sup> Baynes does not mention this date in particular, but he says that, according to the historical sources, the actual battle in which Heraclius gained his first ever major victory over the Persians took place 15

AH). This was the first major victory of the Byzantines over the Persians, and was preceded by many arrangements and steps taken by Heraclius throughout the year 622 CE<sup>49</sup>. However, the researcher argues that it is more likely that this battle took place in 624 CE, not 623 CE; Baynes built his argument on the fact that historical sources mention that this battle took place 15 days after a moon eclipse took place in the area where the battle took place. This battle took place in the region of Armenia as Theophanes clarifies (1997: 436-437). According to historical sources that Baynes studied, the lunar eclipse took place on 15<sup>th</sup> January 623 CE. However, according to NASA, there was no lunar eclipse in that region between 28<sup>th</sup> July 622 CE and 17<sup>th</sup> July 623 CE.<sup>50</sup> The closest two lunar eclipses took place in that region in January were on 1<sup>st</sup> February 622 CE, and on 11<sup>th</sup> January 624 CE.

The researcher argues that the more likely date for the moon eclipse studied by Baynes occurred on 11<sup>th</sup> January 624 CE (12<sup>th</sup> *Rajab* 2 AH).<sup>51</sup> This means that the battle took place more likely on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 624 CE (27<sup>th</sup> *Rajab* 2 AH).

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days after a moon eclipse on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 623 CE. The researcher agrees with this date, although Theophanes mentions this battle as between 621 and 622 CE, not in 623 CE, and he does not specify the date of the battle. Yet this is not correct since it contradicts many other sources such as Whitby mentions in Appendix 4 of Chr. P. (1989: 203-205), Whitby discusses this issue thoroughly also and finds that Theophanes made some mistakes in this period in particular and may have confused the dates.

<sup>49</sup> It is noted that the Chr. P. does not fully describe these events as detailed as does Theophanes. The researcher argues that this might be since the writers of the Chr. P. were located in Constantinople and were more interested in the news of the royal family; they also might not have had a full picture of the events since the book ended at the year 628 CE. This means that the writers of this book were writing about recent events that took place far away from them, which may have affected their description. However, Theophanes wrote his account more than two hundred years after these events and depended on other sources, which justifies his detailed description and analysis of those events.

<sup>50</sup> The dates, times, and types of the lunar eclipses in the 7<sup>th</sup> century are listed on NASA website. See '*NASA Javascript Lunar Eclipse Explorer for Asia*', date consulted: 13-3-2008, <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/JLEX/JLEX-AS.html>

<sup>51</sup> The researcher argues that it is unlikely that the eclipse mentioned in relation with the battle between the Byzantines and the Persians took place in February 622 CE. This is since it would have occurred before the Prophet Muhammad's migration to Madīnah, which contradicts the Muslim sources that show the huge reputation that this battle had in the Arab Peninsula. None of these sources say that this took place while the Prophet was in Makkah, but in Madīnah.

However, with regard to the place of this battle, i.e. the region of Armenia, which is very far from the Arab Peninsula, and is located towards the North East of al-Shām, some might claim that this may not be considered the first major victory since it happened far away from Arab lands and in particular from Islamic Jerusalem. To be able to discover whether this event is the one meant in the Qur’ān, the Muslim historical narrations at the time of this victory will be discussed.

Numerous Muslim scholars mention important accounts concerning the time of the victory of the Byzantines; many of the exegetes, such as al-Qurṭubī (1998: (14) 5) and al-Ṭabarī (1999: (10)163), mention two main accounts: one states that the victory of the Byzantines took place at the same time as the Battle of Badr in the year 2 AH (624 CE). The other states that this victory took place after the *al-Ḥudaybiyah* Truce between the Prophet and the Polytheists of Makkah in year 6 AH (628 CE). Al-Alūsī of the *al-Ra’y* School notes the same accounts, but it seems that he prefers the Badr’s account, whereas al-Zamakhsharī and al-Rāzī, also of *al-Ra’y* school, do not show any interest in this issue.

Al-Tirmidhī notes two narrations of a *ḥadīth* that specifies the day of Badr, i.e. 17<sup>th</sup> *Ramaḍān* 2 AH / 15<sup>th</sup> March 624 CE, clearly as being when the Byzantines defeated the Persians (2000: (2) 815-816). These two are the only narrations that most scholars depend on in favouring Badr. There are no accounts or *aḥādīth* mentioning al-Ḥudaybiyah.

When speaking about this incident, Al-Tirmidhī cites just three narrations, only one of which being considered authentic according to al-Albānī (2002: (3) 299-300). Yet this one does not mention Badr in the *ḥadīth*, not even the period between the defeat

and the victory of the Byzantines.<sup>52</sup> There are two other narrations that al-Albānī considers *Ḥasan* (sound),<sup>53</sup> one of which specifies the day of Badr as being the time of the victory of the Byzantine. Al-Albānī (2002: (3) 299) argues that the status of this narration can be considered *Ṣaḥīḥ Lighayriḥ* (can be considered authentic when linked to other more authentic narrations). Yet the researcher argues that this narration is actually not *Ḥasan* but is weak.<sup>54</sup> The other narration mentions that the victory of the Byzantines took place in the seventh year after the defeat of the Byzantines, i.e. in the year 2 BH (620-621 CE). This narration is considered *Ḥasan*, according to al-Tirmidhī himself and to al-Albānī (2002: (3) 300-301). The researcher argues that there is a problem in considering the victory as having happened in the 7<sup>th</sup> year, i.e. in the year 621 CE (2 BH) as there are no records of any battles or campaigns that the Byzantines launched against the Persians. Considering this narration as *Ḥasan* means that there is a higher risk of mistakes in its text. As it is not supported by historical events, then it could be argued that the number 7 in this narration is most likely mistaken by one or more of its narrators.

With regard to the other opinion, namely al-Ḥudaybiyah, the researcher argues that the ones who support it actually depend on the story of the message from Prophet Muhammad to Heraclius, sent to him after al-Ḥudaybiyah while Heraclius was in Aelia (see Ibn Kathīr 1994: (3) 565). However, the researcher argues that it seems that this opinion either confuses the victory of the Byzantines with the visit of Heraclius to Islamic Jerusalem after the Byzantine re-conquest of the region, or that

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<sup>52</sup> At the end of this narration, al-Tirmidhī adds a personal comment from one of the narrators, namely Sufyān, who says: “I heard that they [the Byzantines] defeated them [the Persians] on the day of Badr”. The researcher argues that this is not a part of the *ḥadīth* but a personal comment from a narrator, who, as he does not specify a source, gives it little credibility.

<sup>53</sup> Less authentic than the *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic)

<sup>54</sup> The researcher mentioned and discussed this narration earlier; see fn. 32 in this chapter (p. 42).

the scholars who mention this opinion depended on the Byzantine's re-conquest of the region disregarding the Persian conquest of the region years before.

The researcher argues that, if the period mentioned in the Qur'ān, less than 10 years, were to be counted backwards, i.e. from the time of the visit of Heraclius to IslamicJerusalem, and backwards, it would be found that the defeat of the Byzantines should have taken place, according to this counting, at most in the year 5 BH, i.e. 617-618 CE. Yet this is unacceptable since IslamicJerusalem and the whole region of al-Shām had already been under Persian rule from 614.

One might claim that the defeat of the Byzantines mentioned in the Qur'ān may have taken place in a different location other than IslamicJerusalem (as this reverse counting suggests). Yet this is also unacceptable, since both Theophanes and the Chr. P. mention the events of these two years, i.e. 617-618 CE, in which no major battles were being fought between the Byzantines and the Persians around either IslamicJerusalem, al-Shām or any other region then. The Byzantines were very busy at that time in fighting another nation, namely the 'Avars'<sup>55</sup> (see Theophanes 1997: 433-434).

This indicates that the victory of the Byzantines, mentioned in the Qur'ān, was not the re-conquest of IslamicJerusalem, which took place at the time of al-Ḥudaybiyah treaty in 626 CE. It was another major victory that may have marked the beginning of the victories of the Byzantines over the Persians until being crowned by the re-conquest of IslamicJerusalem.

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<sup>55</sup> The Avars were a people of undetermined origin and language who, playing an important role in Eastern Europe (6th–9th century), built an empire in the area between the Adriatic and the Baltic Sea and between the Elbe and Dnieper Rivers (6th–8th century). (McHenry 1993: (1) 734)

This takes the researcher back to the event that took place most likely in 624 CE, which marked the first Byzantine victory over the Persians. This battle, as the researcher mentioned earlier, took place most likely around 26<sup>th</sup> January 624 CE (27<sup>th</sup> *Rajab* 2 AH). The final battle that marked the collapse of the Byzantines near Jericho occurred, as the researcher clarified earlier, on or before 15<sup>th</sup> April 614 CE (27<sup>th</sup> *Jamādā al-Thānīyah* 9 BH). The period between the two incidents in the solar calendar is 9 years and almost 9 months, while in the lunar calendar it is 10 years and almost 1 month. It should be noted that the Qur'ān uses the term *sinīn* (years) not *a'wām* (years) in these verses. Both of the two terminologies mean years, but it is noted that the Qur'ān sometimes uses the term *sanah* (year) and sometimes the term *'ām* (year). The researcher argues that, after a thorough study of the use of the terminologies *sanah* and *'ām* in the Qur'ān, it can be concluded that the Qur'ān uses the terminology *sanah* to refer to the solar year, or to the calendar used by the non-Arabs, and uses the terminology *'ām* to refer to the Arab lunar calendar.<sup>56</sup> This means that the Qur'ān most likely refers to solar years in calculating the time between the defeat and the victory of the Byzantines. This actually meets the

<sup>56</sup> The researcher studied all the verses in which the Qur'ān mentions the two terminologies (see 'Abd al-Bāqī 1996: 451 and 607). It is interesting to note that the Qur'ān mentions the terms *'Ām*, *'Āman*, *'Āmayn* only nine times, the last time among them was in chapter 31. Whereas it mentions the terms *Sanah* and *Sinīn* nineteen times, the last time in chapter 30. The researcher argues that, when analysing the Qur'ānic texts that mention the terms *'Ām* and *Sanah* and their derivatives, it can be noted that whenever the Qur'ān speaks of the year that it related directly to the Arabs or the Arab Peninsula, such as the time of pilgrimage, it uses the term *'Ām*. The Qur'ān uses the term *sanah* and its derivatives to refer to the non-Arab years, except in three cases: the story of Uzair (Qur'ān 2: 259) where the Qur'ān uses the term *'Ām* although that person was of the Children of Israel and not Arab, and it uses both terms *'Ām* and *Sanah* in one verse in the story of the Prophet Noah, who was Arab, when mentioning Noah's age:

And We sent Noah to his people and he stayed among them one thousand *Sanah* less fifty *'Ām* (29:14) *ولقد أرسلنا نوحاً إلى قومه فلبث فيهم ألف سنة إلا خمسين عاماً*

Also, the Qur'ān uses a very interesting expression to refer to the sleeping time of *Ahl al-Kahf* (the young people who slept in a cave) in chapter 18:

And they stayed in their cave for Three Hundred *Sinīn* and added by Nine (18:25) *ولبثوا في كهفهم ثلاثمائة سنين وازدادوا تسعاً*

It is noted that every 300 solar years equal 309 lunar years. This clarifies why the Qur'ān expresses the time as being *sinīn* not *a'wām* as it was known among the Arabs at that time. The Qur'ān never uses the term *sanah* or its derivatives to refer to the Arab years, but only to the solar year.

Qur'ānic description of the period between the defeat and the victory of the Byzantines as being *Biḍ' sinīn*, i.e. less than 10 solar years. This could meet the time of the Battle of Badr, which occurred about 50 days after the battle between the Persians and the Byzantines.<sup>57</sup>

Moreover, it should be noted that the Qur'ān describes the defeat of the Byzantines as *Ghulibat* not *Huzimat*, since the latter means full and final defeat, but the Qur'ānic expression means only a remarkable defeat that could be followed by a victory or more defeats. The Qur'ān describes the victory of the Byzantines as *Sayaghlibīn* not *Sayantaṣirūn*; the latter is the word that marks the final victory, whereas the former means a remarkable but not a final victory.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, it seems that this chapter of the Qur'ān, set the start of the significant event, i.e. the defeat of the Byzantines, the end, i.e. the victory of the Byzantines, and the impact and significance of this event for the Prophet Muhammad in the future. The Qur'ān is very detailed in describing the issue of the Byzantines loss and their restoration of Islamic Jerusalem, which raises the question, why?

### **The significance of Chapter 30**

All the details about Byzantine rule over Islamic Jerusalem, and its loss and restoration, show either an early interest in Islamic Jerusalem was taken by the Prophet Muhammad or they were a direction from God for the Prophet.

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<sup>57</sup> The news would have taken around that period to reach Arabia. From Arabia to al-Shām it was about one month journey, to Armenia it would be more.

<sup>58</sup> This difference between the terms *Ghalaba* غلب and *Intasara* انتصر, and the terms *Ghuliba* غلب and *Huzima* هُزم can be understood when looking at the meanings of these terms in Arabic language dictionaries such as *Lisān al-'Arab* (see Ibn Manẓūr 1999: (10) 97-98, (14) 160-161, and (15) 90-92)

The researcher argues that the study of this interest of the Prophet Muhammad in that region, at this early stage, should not be separated from the effect of the Qur'ān on Muhammad's life and actions. These verses that comment on the events that took place in Islamic Jerusalem, during this early stage of Islam, show that the Qur'ān drew the attention of the Prophet Muhammad to this region. The reason for this is the issue that should be studied and clarified.

The researcher argues that the interest of the Qur'ān in mentioning the times of the conquests of Islamic Jerusalem, by the Persians, and then the victory of the Byzantines, shows that there might be a relation between these events and the Muslim *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. As far as dates and durations are concerned, it will be found that the Persians conquered Islamic Jerusalem in 614 CE, and the Byzantines gained their first victory over them more than 9 years later in 624 CE. They then re-captured the walled city in 626 or 627 CE as was discussed earlier. This means that the time between the loss of **the city of Jerusalem** and the Byzantine re-conquest of it was about 13 years.

On the other hand, according to al-Tel (2003: 283), the Muslim *Fath* of the region started from 13 AH (634 CE), and they took over the walled city in 16 AH (637 CE), which means that this occurred about 13 to 14 years after the first victory of the Byzantines over the Persians. This shows another dimension to the interpretation of the Qur'ānic expression in chapter 30: "and on that day the believers will rejoice"; it gave them hope to be there in that region and gain victory over the Byzantines within almost the same period that it took the Byzantines to restore the region from the Persians. This is what is reflected in varying statements by the companions of the Prophet Muhammad, such as the statement that Ibn Kathīr (1994: (3) 566) quotes:

Al-‘Alā’ Ibn al-Zubayr al-Kilābī narrated that his father said: I saw the Persians’ victory over the Byzantines. Then I saw the Byzantines’ victory over the Persians. Then I saw the Muslims victory over the Persians and the Byzantines. All of that was within fifteen years.<sup>59</sup>

This shows to what extent the event mentioned in chapter 30 of the Qur’ān was considered important and significant. The hope, which the expression “the believers will rejoice” gave to the Muslims, was very important, especially that they were suffering at the beginning of the public call to Islam.

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that IslamicJerusalem at the beginning of Muhammad’s Prophethood witnessed great hardship from the largest powers known in the world at that time, suffering as it did from conquests, massacres, and bloodshed. Yet at the same time a new religion was born, and the Qur’ān started speaking about this region early. It seems clear that this gave hope to the region for the first time as the Qur’ān started linking the Muslims to that region from early stages, and this could have meant that a new era was about to come.

IslamicJerusalem itself needed hope at that crucial time, and this was given through the early revealed chapters of the Qur’ān and Chapter 30 *al-Rūm*, which clearly confirmed that the Christians would return to IslamicJerusalem. Through connecting this return with the Muslims’ rejoice, as it was mentioned by Muslim exegetes, it also hinted that another nation would come soon to help that unstable region.

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العلاء بن الزبير الكلبي يحدث عن أبيه قال: رأيت غلبة فارس الروم، ثم رأيت غلبة الروم فارس، ثم رأيت غلبة المسلمين فارس<sup>59</sup> The fifteen years mentioned in this text are most likely an estimation, since the al-Zubayr did not specify times. He only mentions that these events happened within this period without specifying exact dates. This means that he meant to estimate the period in order to show how close the events were to each other, not to specify the exact period.

Muhammad's attention was drawn to this area by this early Qur'ānic revelation due both to its importance in Islam and the hardships that it was going through.

It can be concluded that the Qur'ān, on one hand, clearly states the time of a very important event with a strong relationship with Islamic Jerusalem, namely, the defeat of the Byzantines, which resulted in the loss of Islamic Jerusalem to the Persians. On the other hand, the Qur'ān gives a brief description of the place of this battle as being in *Adnā al-Ard*, which the researcher concludes meant a land between Jericho and the walled city of Jerusalem. Specifying of the land that would witness this event indicated the importance of the region.

Being one of the earliest chapters revealed to Muhammad, and one of the first to be revealed after the end of the secret stage of his call to Islam, Chapter 30 can be considered very important evidence concerning the early interest of the Prophet in that region. It was a challenge to his Prophethood at a time when the odds were not in his favour. It marks a new era that was about to start. The researcher concludes that this chapter was the first sign ever in the history of Islam to the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem since it gives the first hint of the *Fath*. This first spiritual contact with Islamic Jerusalem illustrated in the Qur'ān should have been followed by physical contact between the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic Jerusalem in order to establish a comprehensive understanding of the nature of this region and its importance. Here comes the role of the Night Journey to al-Aqṣā Mosque in the heart of Islamic Jerusalem, which was crucial to examine this region and taste its uniqueness, and this will be studied in the following chapter.



## CHAPTER TWO

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### *THE NIGHT JOURNEY TO AL-AQṢĀ MOSQUE*

## Chapter Two

# The Night Journey to al-Aqṣā Mosque

### Introduction

The first chapter looked into the early connection that the Qur'ān made between the Prophet and Islamic Jerusalem in the early Makkan period, especially through chapter *al-Rūm*. The starting verses of this chapter of the Qur'ān can be considered one of the first to show a political interest in Islamic Jerusalem. This connection was, however, theoretical, since it did not involve any physical connection between the Prophet and Islamic Jerusalem. This chapter will concentrate on the first direct physical contact between the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic Jerusalem following his Prophethood. This contact took place during the Night Journey and the Ascension to Heaven or, in the Arabic language, *Laylat al-Isrā' wa al-Mi'rāj*. The Night Journey can be considered one of the most important events in the life of Prophet Muhammad with regard to his relationship with Islamic Jerusalem. This is so because the Night Journey took place during one of the hardest times in Muhammad's mission.

There are many studies on the Night Journey; however, this chapter aims to examine El-Awisi's argument (2006:50) with regard to the role of this event in the plan of the Prophet Muhammad towards the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. Thus, this chapter will study the Night Journey from a different angle. The researcher will concentrate on the significance of the event itself, i.e. the time of the journey, the events that took place during that night, and the effect of the whole experience on Muhammad's life

and on his relationship with Islamic Jerusalem. This will lead to an understanding as to whether or not this Journey can be considered the starting-point of a plan drawn up by the Prophet Muhammad to the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem, as El-Awaisi argues (see El-Awaisi 2006: 48-49).

### **The Prophet's situation prior to the Night Journey**

Ibn Sa'd (1997: (1) 164-165) mentions three main incidents that took place during the Makkan period of the Prophethood of Muhammad, which led him to leave Makkah towards al-Ṭā'if, in order to ask for help. First, the Prophet, his family, tribe, and the Muslims, suffered a boycott in the valley of Abū Ṭālib, which lasted for several years. Then, the Prophet Muhammad's Uncle, Abū Ṭālib, and the Prophet's wife, Khadījah, died with only two months between their deaths (see al-Mubarakpuri 1996: 124).

Both El-Awaisi (2006: 44) and al-Mubarakpuri (1996: 124) say that Abū Ṭālib was considered to be the protector of the Prophet Muhammad, while Khadījah was considered to be the moral and financial supporter for the Prophet. Moreover, Khadījah provided the Prophet Muhammad with a warm emotional atmosphere that he needed in his house during the hard times in Makkah. Losing these two sources meant that the Prophet Muhammad was vulnerable emotionally and politically. Perhaps this is why Ibn Ishāq argues that, after this great loss, Quraysh harmed the Prophet Muhammad more than at any time before (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 270-271), and that year became known as 'the year of grief and mourning' (al-Mubarakpuri 1996:126).

This was followed by the Prophet's unsuccessful visit to al-Ṭā'if in order to invite its people to Islam and seek help from its leaders, namely Ibn 'Abd Yālīl Ibn 'Abd Kulāl, Mas'ūd Ibn 'Amr and Ḥabīb Ibn 'Amr. The leaders of al-Ṭā'if rejected the call of the Prophet Muhammad and forced him out of al-Ṭā'if, ordering people of that city to stone and humiliate him (see Ibn Hishām 2005: (pt.2) 16-17). The time before the Night Journey can be considered the hardest ever in the life of the Prophet Muhammad, as he states years later, as is recorded in the *ḥadīth* of al-Bukhārī (2000: (2) 632-633):

Narrated by 'Ā'ishah, she asked the Prophet: "Have you seen a day worse than the day of [the Battle of] Uḥud"? The Prophet said: "I have suffered from your people all of what I suffered. The hardest time that I suffered from them was the day of al-'Aqabah<sup>60</sup>, when I offered myself to [i.e. invited to Islam] Ibn 'Abd Yālīl Ibn 'Abd Kulāl.<sup>61</sup> He did not accept me. So, I went with deep sorrow and I was almost unconscious, until I found myself in Qarn al-Tha'ālib. I raised my face and I saw a cloud above me, and I found Gabriel in it. He called me and said: "God has heard your people's speech to you and what they answered you. He sent you the Angel of Mountains; you may order him of whatever you want". The Angel of Mountains called me, he greeted me and said: "O Muhammad, if you would like, I would shut *al-Akhshabayn*<sup>62</sup> over them". The Prophet said: Nay, I hope that God would bring from them who worships God alone with no partners".<sup>63</sup>

After the humiliation that the Prophet Muhammad found in al-Ṭā'if, he made a very powerful supplication to God, which shows the deep sorrow of the Prophet; this supplication was noted by Ibn Hishām (2005: (pt.2) 17) as follows:

<sup>60</sup> The terminology "al-'Aqabah" here does not refer to the pledge of al-'Aqabah which took place after the Night Journey, but to a place.

<sup>61</sup> Al-'Asqalānī (1997: (6) 379) clarifies that Ibn 'Abd Yālīl who is mentioned in this *ḥadīth* is one of the leaders of al-Ṭā'if.

<sup>62</sup> *Al-Akhshabayn* refers to the two mountains of Makkah, namely, Abū Qubays and Qu'ayqi'ān (Al-Mubarakpuri 1996: 138)

<sup>63</sup> عن عائشة قالت للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: "هل أتى عليك يوم كان أشد من يوم أحد؟" قال: "لقد لقيت من قومك ما لقيت، وكان أشد ما لقيت منهم يوم العقبة إذ عرضت نفسي على ابن عبد ياليل بن عبد كلال، فلم يجبني إلى ما أردت، فانطلقت وأنا مهموم على وجهي، فلم أستفق إلا وأنا بقرن الثعالب، فرفعت رأسي فإذا أنا بسحابة قد أظلمتني، فنظرت فإذا جبريل فناداني فقال: (إن الله قد سمع قول قومك لك وما ردوا عليك، وقد بعث إليك ملك الجبال لتأمره بما شئت فيهم) فنناداني ملك الجبال فسلم علي ثم قال: (يا محمد، فقال: ذلك فيما شئت إن شئت أن أطبق عليهم الأخشبين) فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: "بل أرجو أن يخرج الله من أصلابهم من يعبد الله وحده لا يشرك به شيئاً"

O Lord, I complain to You of the feebleness of my strength, the scantiness of my resources and the ease with which people humiliate me. O Most Merciful of the merciful, You are the Lord of the oppressed You are my Lord. To whom do You entrust me? To a distant one who glowers at me? Or to an enemy to whom You have given power over me? If You are not angry with me, I do not care, but Your strength is more generous for me. I seek refuge in the light of Your countenance for which the darkness becomes radiant, and through which the affairs of the world and the next become good, that You may not be angry with me or Your wrath descend on me. You have the right to blame me until You are satisfied, and there is no Power or Might except in You.<sup>64</sup>

The researcher argues that had the Prophet Muhammad not reached that level of depression, it is unlikely that he would have thought of leaving Makkah. He stayed there for a very long time while his protector, Abū Ṭālib, was alive. After the death of Abū Ṭālib, it seems that the Prophet Muhammad lost hope in Makkah. Perhaps he also felt that Makkah would never accept him or would not leave him to speak freely; even maybe he felt his life to be in danger. Perhaps this is why the Prophet asked for protection from one of the most powerful leaders in Makkah, Muṭ‘im Ibn ‘Adiyy, on his return from al-Ṭā’if. These very hard circumstances, surrounding the Prophet Muhammad, all came prior to the Night Journey. This is why the Night Journey can be considered compensation for the Prophet Muhammad’s complaint, as El-Awaisi (2006: 46) also argues.

### **The Night Journey: Dream or Reality?**

It should be noted that there have been arguments throughout Muslim history claiming that the Night Journey was in fact a dream and did not take place in reality.

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اللهم اني أشكو إليك ضعف قوتي، وقلة حيلتي، وهواني على الناس، يا أرحم الراحمين، إلى من تكلني؟ إلى بعيد يتجهمني؟ أم إلى عدو ملكته أمري؟ إن لم يكن بك علي غضب فلا أبالي، غير أن عافيتك هي أوسع لي. أعوذ بنور وجهك إلى أشرقت له الظلمات، وصلح عليه أمر الدنيا والآخرة، من أن ينزل بي غضبك، أو يحل علي سخطك، لك العتبي حتى ترضى، ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بك.  
The researcher has taken the translation from El-Awaisi (2006: 45)

Ibn Hishām (2005: (pt.2) 5) argues that, according to Ibn Ishāq, it could be accepted that the Night Journey was only a dream, depending on a verse of the Qur’ān that says: (We have made the vision that We showed you but an ordeal to people) (Qur’ān 17: 60)<sup>65</sup>. In addition, Ibn Hishām depends on two narrations by Ibn Ishāq, who quotes two of the Prophet’s companions; the first is the Prophet’s wife ‘Ā’ishah (d. 59 AH / 679 CE). Ibn Ishāq (2004: 309) narrates:

Some people of the family of Abū Bakr told me that ‘Ā’ishah, the wife of the Prophet, said: The Body of the Prophet was not missed out, but God made the *Isrā’* for the Prophet’s soul only.<sup>66</sup>

The other narration was narrated by Mu‘āwiyah Ibn Abū Sufyān (d. 60 AH / 680 CE), where Ibn Hishām (2005: (pt.2) 5) quotes Ibn Ishāq:

Ya‘qūb Ibn ‘Utbah Ibn al-Mughīrah Ibn al-Akhnas told me that, when Mu‘āwiyah Ibn Abū Sufyān was asked about the Night Journey, he used to reply: it was a truthful vision from God.<sup>67</sup>

The researcher argues that these two statements cannot be relied on. ‘Ā’ishah was very young and not even married to the Prophet Muhammad at that time (see Ṣalāḥ 1990: 90), and al-Kāzarūnī (d. 758 AH / 1357 CE) adds that ‘Ā’ishah was not of an age that allows her to remember details (al-Tamīmī 1716: 65 Recto). Mu‘āwiyah was not Muslim then, embracing Islam about a decade after this Journey (see Ibn Sa’d 1997: (7) 285). The researcher argues that Ibn Hishām’s opinion regarding the verse of the Qur’ān, i.e. 17:60 is very weak and has been rejected by many scholars of

<sup>65</sup> وما جعلنا الرؤيا التي أريناك إلا فتنة للناس (الإسراء: 60)

<sup>66</sup> حدثني بعض آل أبي بكر أن عائشة زوج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم كانت تقول: ما فقد جسد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، ولكن الله أسرى بروحه

<sup>67</sup> حدثني يعقوب بن عتبة بن المغيرة بن الأخنس أن معاوية بن أبي سفيان، كان إذا سئل عن مسرى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: كانت رؤيا من الله صادقة.

This narration is not mentioned in Ibn Ishāq’s published *Sīrah*. It could be lost since the original copy of Ibn Ishāq’s book is not completed. However, Ibn Hishām narrated many parts of it, including this narration.

various schools of *Tafsīr* such as al-Shawkānī (2000: 1009), Ibn Kathīr (1994: (3) 69), al-Rāzī (2002: (10) 239), and al-Alūsī (1994: (8) 100). The rejection of the exegetes for this opinion depends on a narration from Ibn ‘Abbās (d. 68 AH / 687 CE) and was mentioned by al-Bukhārī (2000 (3) 1337-1338); the narration says:

‘Ikrimah narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās said about the verse “We have made the vision that We showed you but an ordeal to people”: it was a true vision of the eye that the Messenger of God saw during the Night Journey to *Bayt al-Maqdis*.<sup>68</sup>

The researcher notes that this narration is the only explanation that has been narrated by one of the companions of the Prophet for this verse. Ibn ‘Abbās here describes this vision, which is mentioned in the verse, as a *ru’yā ‘Ayn* (true eye vision). The researcher argues that, in the absence of other narrations with regards to the meaning of this verse, there is no reason to reject it.

The researcher goes to argue that two other narrations, i.e. the narrations of ‘Ā’ishah and Mu‘āwiyah, are also mentioned by al-Ṭabarī (1999: (8) 15-16) of the *Ma’thūr Tafsīr* school. He states that these were the only two opinions to claim that the Night Journey was only a dream. It is interesting to note that al-Ṭabarī, after mentioning these two narrations, rejects this opinion and says:

There is no meaning [i.e. wisdom] in saying that the Night Journey was for his [i.e. the Prophet] soul rather than his body. If this was correct then there should have been nothing in this event that could be evidence of his Prophethood, and the ones who refused that, among the polytheists, and even any one among the humankind would not have the right to neglect a dream that someone goes

عن عكرمة عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما: (وما جعلنا الرؤيا التي أريناك إلا فتنة للناس) قال: هي رؤيا عين أريها رسول الله 68 The researcher argues that this narration could also explain the narration of Mu‘āwiyah about the Night Journey being “a truthful vision from God”. However, it should be noted that the majority of scholars understand Mu‘āwiyah’s narration as speaking about a dream and not as Ibn ‘Abbās describes in al-Bukhārī’s narration.

even beyond a one-year journey... in addition to that, God has mentioned in his book [i.e. the Qur'ān] that he took his servant on a journey by night, not his servant's soul, thus, no one has the right to go beyond that.<sup>69</sup>

Al-Rāzī (2002: (10) 149-154) of the *Ra'y* school of *Tafsīr* agrees with al-Ṭabarī. However, al-Alūsī, of the *Ra'y* School, has another opinion; he argues (1994: (8) 9) that the Night Journey actually happened twice in the life-time of Muhammad, once before his Prophethood, and the other before the migration, which is the one mentioned in chapter 17. Al-Alūsī depends here on the opinions of other exegetes such as al-Baghawī (d. 510 AH / 1116 CE) (2002: (3) 273), who depends in turn on a *ḥadīth* in al-Bukhārī (2000: (2) 702) and Muslim (2000: (1) 83) that says:

Narrated by Anas Ibn Mālik: Three individuals [i.e. angels] came to the Prophet, before his Prophethood, while he was sleeping in al-Ḥarām Mosque, the first one of them said: “who is he?” the second said: “he is the best amongst them”, the third said: “take the best amongst them”. This was it. The Prophet did not see them again until they came back another night in what he saw by his heart, since the Prophet's eyes used to sleep while his heart was awake as with all the Prophets before, so Gabriel took him and ascended him to heaven.<sup>70</sup>

The researcher argues that this *ḥadīth* does not mention that the Night Journey took place before the Prophethood of Muhammad, it only notes that the Prophet saw a dream before his Prophethood, that three individuals or angels came and spoke about him and left, and that he saw them again another night. The narration does not specify when the dream happened, and thus it could have occurred after

ولا معنى لقول من قال: أسري بروحه دون جسده، لأن ذلك لو كان كذلك لم يكن في ذلك ما يوجب أن يكون ذلك دليلاً على نبوته، ولا حجة له على رسالته، ولا كان الذين أنكروا حقيقة ذلك من أهل الشرك، وكانوا يدفعون به عن صدقه فيه، إذ لم يكن منكراً عندهم، ولا عند أحد من ذوي الفطرة الصحيحة من بني آدم أن يرى الرائي المنام ما على مسيرة سنة... وبعد، فإن الله كما أخبر في كتابه أنه أسرى بعبد، ولم يخبرنا أنه أسرى بروح عبده، وليس جائزاً لأحد أن يتعدى ما قال الله إلى غيره. أنس بن مالك يحدثنا عن ليلة أسري بالنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم من مسجد الكعبة: جاء ثلاثة نفر قيل أن يوحى إليه وهو نائم في مسجد الحرام فقال أولهم: أيهم هو؟ فقال أوسطهم: هو خيرهم. وقال آخرهم: خذوا خيرهم. فكانت تلك فلم يبرهم حتى جاؤوا ليلة أخرى فيما يرى قلبه والنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم نائمة عيناه ولا ينام قلبه وكذلك الأنبياء تنام أعينهم ولا تنام قلوبهم فتولاه جبريل ثم عرج به إلى السماء.

Muhammad's Prophethood or it could refer to the Night Journey itself. The *ḥadīth* does not even mention the Night Journey to al-Aqṣā Mosque, it only notes the Ascension to heaven, and therefore is not relevant to the study of the Night Journey to al-Aqṣā Mosque.<sup>71</sup> The researcher argues that none of the *aḥādīth* that mentions the Night Journey to al-Aqṣā Mosque actually stated that the event happened before the Prophethood; only the *aḥādīth* and narrations of the possibility of having more than one *Mi'rāj* (ascension to heaven), whether or not one was a dream, can be debatable in this context.

The researcher thus agrees with al-Ṭabarī's opinion since, if the Night Journey was only a dream, it would not have been mentioned in the Qur'ān as a miracle<sup>72</sup>. In addition, the polytheists of Makkah would not have rejected it, as is mentioned in the *ḥadīth* of al-Bukhārī (2000: (2) 956) and Muslim (2000: (1) 88), since it would have been no challenge at all.

### **The Date of the Night Journey**

There has been some disagreement among scholars and historians on the exact time of the Night Journey. Most historians and scholars of *ḥadīth* and *sīrah* argue that this event took place during the night of 27<sup>th</sup> *Rajab* 12 AB (which means it was 2 years before the Migration of the Prophet). Roslan Nor (2006: 9) has collected the various

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<sup>71</sup> The researcher argues that the Night Journey and the Ascension to heaven should be treated as two separate events in one night, since the first was a challenge to the polytheists of Makkah. Thus it is related to human beings, yet the later event, i.e. the ascension, is related to the Prophet himself since this is beyond the understanding of human beings. Therefore, the researcher will not evaluate the opinions of whether the ascension happened more than once, since it is not relevant to this research.

<sup>72</sup> The Qur'ān uses the term سبحان *Subḥān* (Glory be to Him). The researcher, after studying the times that the Qur'ān uses this term, argues that this term is usually used when speaking about something extraordinary or something that no human being can do, since one of the literal meanings of this term is (God is beyond limitation) or (God cannot be limited) (see al-Rāzī 2002: (10) 147).

opinions regarding the time of this event, depending on al-‘Asqalānī, and finds the following:

| Scholar                      | Opinion                                                      |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ibn Sa‘d                     | A year before <i>Hijrah</i>                                  |
| Al-Nawawī                    | A year before <i>Hijrah</i>                                  |
| Ibn al-Jawzī                 | 18 months before <i>Hijrah</i>                               |
| Abū Rubay‘ Ibn Salīm         | 16 months before <i>Hijrah</i>                               |
| Ibn Ḥazm                     | <i>Rajab</i> , 12 years of Prophethood ( <i>al-bi‘thah</i> ) |
| Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī             | 11 months before <i>Hijrah</i> in <i>Rabī‘ al-Ākhir</i>      |
| Ibn ‘Ab al-Barr              | A year and two months before <i>Hijrah</i>                   |
| Ibn Fāris                    | A year and 3 months before <i>Hijrah</i>                     |
| Al-Suddī                     | A year and 5 months before <i>Hijrah</i>                     |
| Ibn Qutaybah                 | 18 months before <i>Hijrah</i>                               |
| Ibn Sa‘d from Ibn Abī Šabrah | Ramadān, 18 months before <i>Hijrah</i>                      |
| ‘Iyāḍ reports from al-Zuhrī  | 5 years before <i>Hijrah</i>                                 |

**Table (1):** Varying opinions of scholars on the date of the Night Journey  
**Source:** Nor (2006: 9)

Nor (2006:16) argues that the event took place on the 27<sup>th</sup> *Rajab* in the year 12 AB, i.e. 2 BH / 621 CE, after a long calculation of the different dates and opinions. Whilst Shurrāb (1994: 70) argues that the strongest opinion is that the Night Journey took place in the year 5 AB / 614 CE, basing his argument on the fact that Khadījah, the wife of the Prophet, was alive at that time and prayed with him. On the other hand, Al-Mubarakpuri (1996: 147) argues that “as for the exact date, it is still controversial and no common consent has been reached. However, the majority of scholars are in favour of a date between 16-12 months prior to migration to Madīnah”. The

researcher argues that al-Mubarakpuri's statement is not correct since Nor (2006: 148-152) shows clearly that the majority of scholars are in favour of a time of either 12 or 18 months before the migration of the Prophet.

Shurrāb's opinion is unacceptable for numerous reasons; first, Shurrāb claims that the event should have taken place before the death of Khadījah since she prayed with the Prophet, and it is known that the five daily prayers were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad during this event (see al-Bukhārī 2000: (1) 74-75). Thus Shurrāb concludes that this event took place before her death. Yet this conclusion is inaccurate because it has been mentioned in many historical accounts that the Muslims had been used to praying from the start of Muhammad's Prophethood,<sup>73</sup> and that this was later formalised into five prayers during the Night Journey; for example, al-Albānī (2000 A: 115-116) quotes Ibn Ishāq (d. 151 AH / 768 CE) in a narrations states:

'Ufayf said: I came before Islam to Makkah, and I went to al-'Abbās Ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (as a guest). When the sun rose, i.e. after sunrise, and became high in the sky, while I was looking at the Ka'ba, a man came, and looked up to the sky, then he faced the Ka'ba, and stood up facing it, and after a while a boy came and stood to his right hand, and then a woman came and stood behind them. Then the man bowed, so the boy and woman did, then the man stood up again, and so did the boy and woman, then the man prostrated, and they prostrated with him. So I said: "O 'Abbās, This is an immense matter"! Abbās said: "an immense matter? Do you know who this is?" I said: "No", he said: "this is Muhammad Ibn Abdullāh Ibn Abd al-Muṭṭalib, my nephew, do you know who the boy is"? I said: "No", he said: "this is 'Alī Ibn Abū Ṭālib, do you know who the woman behind them is"? I said: "No", he said: "this is Khadījah bint Knuwaylid, my nephew's wife, and he (Muhammad) told me that your God, the God of the heaven and earth, ordered him to do what you see, I swear by God, I do not know on earth anyone who believes in this religion except those three."<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup> This will follow in chapter 3 of this thesis.

<sup>74</sup> عن عفيف قال: جئت زمن الجاهلية إلى مكة، فنزلت على العباس بن عبد المطلب، فلما طلعت الشمس، وحلقت في السماء – وأنا أنظر إلى الكعبة – أقبل شاب، فرمى ببصره إلى السماء، ثم استقبل الكعبة، فقام مستقبلاً، فلم يلبث حتى جاء غلام فقام عن يمينه، فلم

This statement shows that praying, in general, began at a very early stage of Islam, so this cannot be accepted as proof that the Night Journey took place during the lifetime of Khadījah. In addition to this, Surrāb's argument ignores one of the main reasons for the journey itself, namely the Year of Sorrow during which the Prophet Muhammad lost his wife, Khadījah, and his uncle, Abū Ṭālib. Therefore, Shurrāb's claim cannot be accepted.

On the other hand, the researcher argues that Nor's argument and the way he arrives at the exact date of the Night Journey, through the arguments of various scholars and through calculations, is much respected. However, it might be very hard to accept allocating a specific date for this event simply because it was not mentioned by the Prophet Muhammad himself or by any of his companions. Thus, it might not be fully accurate to specify an exact date for the event without any supporting textual evidence from the Prophet or from any of the companions. The disagreement among the traditional scholars is clearly seen, as Nor himself mentions; this is due to the lack of textual evidence from the Prophet or his companions concerning the exact date.

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يلبث حتى جئت امرأة فقامت خلفهما، فرقع الشاب، فرقع الغلام والمرأة، فرقع الغلام والمرأة، فخر الشاب ساجداً، فسجدا معه. فقلت: يا عباس! أمر عظيم! فقال: أمر عظيم! أتدري من هذا؟ فقلت: لا. قال: هذا محمد بن عبدالله بن عبدالمطلب، ابن أخي، أتدري من الغلام؟ قلت: لا. قال: هذا علي بن أبي طالب، أتدري من هذه المرأة التي خلفهما؟ قلت: لا. قال: هذه خديجة بنت خويلد زوجة ابن أخي، وهذا حدثني أن ربك رب السماء والأرض أمره بهذا الذي تراهم عليه، وأيم الله، ما أعلم على ظهر الأرض كلها أحداً على هذا الدين غير هؤلاء الثلاثة.

The researcher argues that it seems that the statement of 'Ufayf that the Prophet prayed towards the Ka'ba does not actually mean this, since Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (1995: (3) 310) mentions that the Prophet used to pray towards Islamicjerusalem putting the Ka'ba in front of him. In addition to that, the statement of al-'Abbās about not knowing anyone who believes in this religion except for the three shows that this event took place at a very early stage of Muhammad's Prophethood; perhaps Abū Bakr was Muslim at that time since he was the first man to believe in Islam, as Khadījah was the first Muslim woman, and 'Alī was the first Muslim boy.

Thus, the researcher argues that the Night Journey might have taken place 12 to 18 months before the migration to Madīnah, since it seems that the major disagreement among scholars and historians is within or around this period, and there is no strong textual evidence to help in deciding which opinion is the stronger. Looking at the date of the migration of the Prophet, i.e. 27<sup>th</sup> *Ṣafar* 1 AH (al-Muparakpuri 1996: 169, al-Manṣūrfūrī 1989: (1) 89), if 12-18 months were to be taken back from this date, this would mean that the Night Journey took place between the end of *Ṣafar* 1 BH and *Shā‘bān* 2 BH.

### **The significance of the timing of the Night Journey**

The researcher argues that, according to many scholars, the start of Muhammad’s mission was in *Ramadan* 13 BH (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 173, Ibn Hishām 2005: (pt.1) 172). The Prophet died on 12<sup>th</sup> *Rabī‘ al-Awwal* 11 AH (see Ibn Kathīr 1966 (4) 507), which means that the entire Prophethood of Muhammad lasted for about 22 years and 6 months in the lunar calendar. Half of this period is 11 years and 3 months. If this period is to be counted from the start of Muhammad’s Prophethood, then the middle of his Prophethood would fall in *Dhulḥijjah* 2 BH. This means that the Night Journey took place in almost the middle or slightly before the middle of Muhammad’s Prophethood. Ahmad Ismā‘īl Nofal argues that the Night Journey took place in the heart of the Prophet Muhammad’s Prophethood, which agrees with chapter 17 (*al-Isrā’*) of the Qur’ān that speaks about the Night Journey. This chapter, according to Nofal, is located in the heart of the Qur’ān.<sup>75</sup>

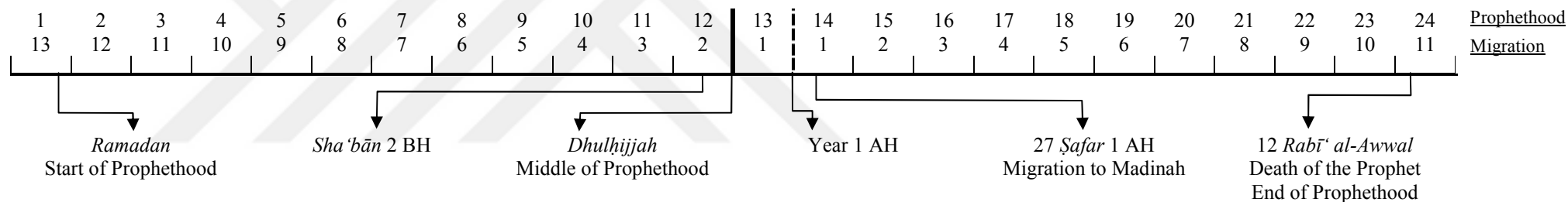
<sup>75</sup> The researcher heard this argument from Nofal for the first time in the University of Jordan in 1997. He heard it again from Nofal during a telephone call on 26/1/2008. Some authors and orientalists such as Lazarus-Yafeh (1990: 39), Peters (1995: 183) and Busse (1991: 3) claim that the terminology “al-Aqṣā Mosque” in this verse does not necessarily refer to al-Aqṣā Mosque in Islamic Jerusalem. Busse (1991: 3) even suggests that it could refer to a Mosque in al-Ji‘rānah near Makkah, or to a Mosque in Heaven. Yet the researcher argues that it should be noted that there are numerous *aḥādīth* that shows clearly that the Mosque mentioned in this verse is al-Aqṣā

The researcher argues that this chapter in the Qur'ān is at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the Qur'ān, since it represents the start of the 15<sup>th</sup> *juz* (section), out of the 30 *ajzā* (sections) of the Qur'ān. This means that the exact middle point of the Qur'ān with regard to the *ajzā* would be the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> *juz*, which is in chapter 18, namely, *al-Kahf*.<sup>76</sup> It is interesting to note that the middle point of the Qur'ān is in chapter 18, directly after chapter 17 of *al-Isrā*. This means that chapter 17, i.e. *al-Isrā*, comes slightly before the middle of the Qur'ān, which corresponds with the time of the event itself in the Prophethood era. To clarify further, the researcher summarises the relationship between the location of chapter 17 in the Qur'ān and the location of the Night Journey in Muhammad's Prophethood era in three figures: Figure (1) shows the sequence of the events that are related to this point during the Prophethood of Muhammad, Figure (2) shows the Qur'ān and the middle point of it regarding the *ajzā*, and Figure (3) shows the connections of the different events and points if the two figures were to be connected together:

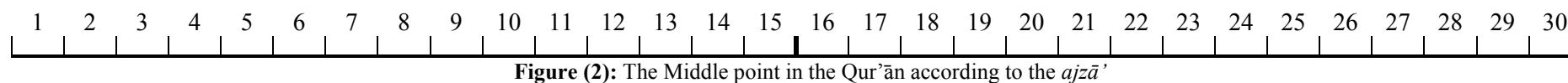
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Mosque in Islamic Jerusalem, which was referred to at that time as *Bayt al-Maqdis* (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 309). Many *aḥādīth* clearly mention *Bayt al-Maqdis* as being the place towards which the Night Journey was, such as the *ḥadīth* of Muslim (2000: (1) 88-89) for example. The researcher argues that the reason for this confusion is that these authors could be referring only to the Qur'ānic text without relating it to the *ḥadīth* text. Yet the Qur'ān and the *ḥadīth* should be taken together as the two primary sources of the Muslim narrations.

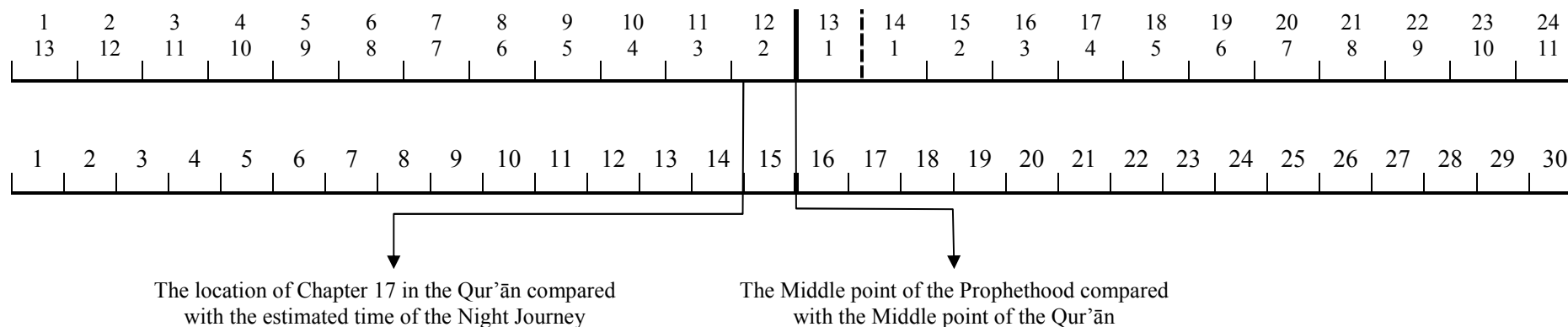
<sup>76</sup> Interestingly, the middle point in the Qur'ān with regard to the words is the word *waliyatalaṭṭaf* وليتلف in chapter 18 verse 19. This is the opinion of the majority of the exegetes (see *al-Shabakah al-Islāmiyyah*, date consulted: 1-10-2006, <http://www.islamweb.net/ver2/Fatwa/ShowFatwa.php?lang=A&Id=65007&Option=FatwaId>). The middle point of the Qur'ān with regard to the letters is the letter *nūn* ن in the word *nukran* نكر also in chapter 18, verse 74 (see Ibn 'Aṭiyyah 2001: (3) 532). According to Ibn 'Āshūr (d. 1393 AH / 1973 CE), the middle point of the Qur'ān regarding the letters is the letter *tā* ت in the word *waliyatalaṭṭaf* وليتلف in the same chapter (18:19) (see *al-Shabakah al-Islāmiyyah*, date consulted: 1-10-2006, <http://www.islamweb.net/ver2/Fatwa/ShowFatwa.php?lang=A&Id=65007&Option=FatwaId>).



**Figure (1):** The sequence of the events related to the Night Journey during Muhammad's Prophethood



**Figure (2):** The Middle point in the Qur'ān according to the *ajzā'*



**Figure (3):** The relationship between the location of Chapter 17 of the Qur'ān and the location of the Night Journey in the historical sequence of Muhammad's Prophethood

The researcher argues that there is a very interesting relationship between the location of the Night Journey in the history of Muhammad's Prophethood and the location of chapter 17, namely *al-Isrā'* in the Qur'ān. This leads to the argument that the Night Journey may have taken place around the middle of Muhammad's Prophethood as it is situated around the middle of the Qur'ān. It is also interesting to note that the first pledge of *al-'Aqabah* took place in *Dhulḥijjah* of the year 2 BH<sup>77</sup>, i.e. in the middle point of Muhammad's Prophethood (see Figure 1) and it marked the actual start of the second stage of Muhammad's Prophethood, i.e. building the first actual Muslim state. Does that mean that the Night Journey is the key to this turning point in the history of the Prophet Muhammad?

The researcher adds another element to understanding the significance of the time of this event; Baynes (1904: 694) mentions that Heraclius began his first campaign against the Persians (in which he gained his first victory over them) on 4<sup>th</sup> April 622 CE after celebrating the Easter feast.<sup>78</sup> The researcher goes back to his previous argument, i.e. that the Night Journey most likely took place 12-18 months before the migration to Madīnah, i.e. between *Ṣafar* 1 BH and *Shā'bān* 2 BH. This period in the solar calendar is between March and September 621 CE. It is most interesting to note that the first Byzantine campaign to gain the first victory over the Persians, since the Persian invasion to Islamic Jerusalem, began only a few months after the Night

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<sup>77</sup> Ibn Hishām and many other *sīrah* scholars do not mention the year 2 BH as being the year during which the first *'Aqabah* oath took place, but it is known that the Prophet migrated in the month of *Ṣafar* 1 AH, i.e. two months after the second *'Aqabah* oath, which should have taken place during the pilgrimage time of the year 1 BH. It is mentioned that the duration between the two oaths was one year, since both took place during the pilgrimage time (see Ibn Hishām 2005: (pt.2) 23) (see al-'Alī 2002: 147-151). This means that the first *'Aqabah* oath took place at the end of the year 2 BH.

<sup>78</sup> This can be found in many historical accounts such as that of Theophanes (1997: 435) and in other Greek sources. It should be noted, though, that Theophanes mentions this event as in the year 621 CE, yet Mango and Scott argues that he was mistaken here and the right year was 622 CE since Easter indeed fell on 4<sup>th</sup> April in that year (Theophanes 1997: 438 – footnote 1).

Journey took place. The researcher argues that it could be said also that the time of the Night Journey was at a new juncture in the history of Islamic Jerusalem itself, which gives this event its huge importance in the history of the region and the Muslims' connection to it.

### **The events of the Night Journey**

The sequence of the Night Journey has been mentioned in various narrations in the *ḥadīth* sources. One of the most authentic is the account of Imām Muslim (d. 261 AH / 875 CE) (2000: (1) 82), who mentions the following narration:

Narrated by Anas Ibn Mālīk: The Messenger of God said: the *Burāq* was brought to me; it is a white tall animal that is larger than a donkey but smaller than a mule, and it puts its hoof wherever its eyesight ends. He [the Prophet] said: I rode it [and started the journey] until we arrived at *Bayt al-Maqdis*. He [the Prophet] said: Then I tied it to a ring that the Prophets [used to] tie [their animals] on. He [the Prophet] said: then I entered the Mosque, and I prayed two *Ruk'ah* [i.e. two units of prayer], then I went out, so Gabriel brought me a cup of wine and a cup of milk, I chose milk, so Gabriel said: You chose the *Fiṭrah* [natural goodness, good instinct], then we were ascended to heaven....<sup>79</sup>  
etc.

There are other narrations of this *ḥadīth* but some, such as one of those of al-Bukhārī (2000: (2) 764-766), does not mention the Night Journey, but only the Ascension to heaven. The narration goes:

Narrated by Anas Ibn Mālīk: Mālīk Ibn Ṣa'sa'ah told them that the Prophet of God spoke with them about the Night when God took him

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<sup>79</sup> عن أنس بن مالك أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: أتيت بالبراق وهو دابة أبيض طويل فوق الحمار ودون البغل يضع حافره عند منتهى طرفه، قال فركبته حتى أتيت بيت المقدس قال فربطته بالحلقة التي يربط به الأنبياء، قال ثم دخلت المسجد فصليت فيه ركعتين ثم خرجت فجاءني جبريل عليه السلام بإناء من خمر وإناء من لبن فاخترت اللبن، فقال جبريل صلى الله عليه وسلم اخترت الفطرة، ثم عرج بنا إلى السماء.. إلخ.

The researcher argues that there have been many narrations for this *ḥadīth*, and they differ in some details such as the starting point of the Journey, and the way the journey went, and what occurred during it, etc. The researcher will not tackle the many differences amongst these narrations except for what is necessary for this research.

by night [i.e. the Night Journey], he [the Prophet] said: while I was sleeping in *al-Ḥaṭīm*, or he said *al-Ḥijr*, someone came to me... Then an animal was brought, which was smaller than a mule and larger than a donkey, and it was white. Al-Jārūd [the narrator] said: it is *al-Burāq* Oh Abū Ḥamzah [Anas]. Anas said: yes, it is, it puts its hoof wherever its eyesight ends. [The Prophet continues] I rode it and Gabriel took me until we reached the first heaven.... etc.<sup>80</sup>

The researcher argues that, although this narration did not mention the Night Journey to al-Aqṣā Mosque, it seems that al-Bukhārī's opinion is the event be accepted; it should be noted that al-Bukhārī has put this narration between two other *aḥādīth* that clearly state the Night Journey; one of them (al-Bukhārī 2000: (2) 764) says:

Jābir Ibn 'Abdullāh narrated that he heard the Messenger of God saying: When *Quraysh* did not believe me [i.e. when he told them about the Night Journey], I stood up in *al-Ḥijr*, so God revealed *Bayt al-Maqdis* to me, and I started telling them about its signs while I was looking at it.<sup>81</sup>

The *ḥadīth* follows the *ḥadīth* of *al-Burāq* (2000: (2) 766) says:

Ibn 'Abbās said [explaining verse 17:60]: it was a true vision of the eye that the Messenger of God saw during his Night Journey to *Bayt al-Maqdis*...etc.<sup>82</sup>

In addition, al-Bukhārī names this *Bāb* (section) of his book “the section of the Night Journey and the saying of Almighty God: ‘Glory be to Him Who took His worshipper on a journey by night from al-Ḥarām Mosque to al-Aqṣā Mosque’”. This means that al-Bukhārī understood that this narration applies to the Night Journey.

<sup>80</sup> عن أنس بن مالك عن مالك بن صعصعة رضي الله عنهما أن نبي الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حدثهم عن ليلة أسري به: بينما أنا في الحطيم وربما قال في الحجر مضطجعا إذ أتاني أت... ثم أوتيت بدابة دون البغل وفوق الحمار أبيض، فقال له الجارود: هو البراق يا أبا حمزة، قال أنس: نعم، يضع خطوه عند أقصى طرفه، فحملت عليه فانطلق بي جبريل حتى أتى السماء الدنيا... إلخ

<sup>81</sup> عن جابر بن عبد الله رضي الله عنهما أنه سمع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: لما كذبتني قريش فمت في الحجر فجلا الله لي بيت المقدس فطفقت أخبرهم عن آياته وأنا أنظر إليه.

<sup>82</sup> عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما في قوله تعالى: وما جعلنا الرؤيا التي أريناك إلا فتنة للناس (17: 60) قال هي رؤيا عين أريها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ليلة أسري به إلى بيت المقدس... إلخ.

Moreover, there are weaker narrations, some with similarities and some with slight differences from the narrations of al-Bukhārī and Muslim. These are mentioned by other scholars of *ḥadīth* such as Aḥmad (d. 241 AH / 855 CE), Abū Dawūd (d. 275 AH / 888), al-Nasā'ī (d. 303 AH / 916 CE), and Ibn Mājah (d. 273 AH / 887 CE). From these narrations, it can be seen that the duration of the visit to al-Aqṣā Mosque was very short and consisted two main events: first was the prayer of Muhammad inside al-Aqṣā Mosque, and second was the choice of milk when the Prophet was offered the wine and milk.

The researcher argues that the huge number of narrations about the Night Journey gives authenticity to the event itself. However, the many disagreements and differences amongst these narrations make it harder to decide the actual events that really took place during that night. The researcher will thus concentrate here only on the main aspect related to this topic, namely the prayer of the Prophet Muhammad inside al-Aqṣā Mosque, and try to ascertain whether or not it can be accepted that the Prophet prayed inside al-Aqṣā. This is because the prayer inside al-Aqṣā Mosque has major significance in itself; represents the main action that the Prophet took in al-Aqṣā Mosque during the Night Journey as the different *aḥādīth* of the Night Journey show. The researcher will also discuss the question whether or not the Prophet Muhammad led prayer inside the Mosque, this is also because of the significance of such an act.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> The researcher argues that the reason for not tackling some other events that took place during the journey, from Makkah to IslamicJerusalem and vice versa, is that it is not relevant to the topic and has no relationship with the effect of the Night Journey on Muhammad's life afterwards. Only praying in al-Aqṣā Mosque and leading prayer would have had clear significance in the plan of Muhammad and his intentions (if there were any) to the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem.

## Praying inside al-Aqṣā Mosque

As was mentioned in the *ḥadīth* narrated by Muslim (2000: (1) 82), the Prophet said: “then I entered the Mosque, and I prayed two *Ruk‘ah* (i.e. two units of prayer)”. This is a very clear statement by the Prophet that he prayed inside al-Aqṣā Mosque that night. However, it is noted that the only narration to contradict this is that of one of the companions of the Prophet, Ḥudhayfah Ibn al-Yamān (d. 36 AH / 656 CE). The narration of Ḥudhayfah is mentioned in different *ḥadīth* sources such as Aḥmad (1995: (16) 579):

Zirr Ibn Ḥubaysh narrated: I met Ḥudhayfah Ibn al-Yamān while he was speaking [to people] about the Night Journey, he [Ḥudhayfah] was narrating that the Prophet said: “We [the Prophet and Gabriel] started the journey until we arrived at *Bayt al-Maqdis*”. Ḥudhayfah commented: “but they did not enter it”. I [Zirr] said: “Nay, the Messenger of God entered it and prayed there”. He [Ḥudhayfah] said: “What is your name, bald-headed one? I know your face but I do not know your name”. I said: “I am Zirr Ibn Ḥubaysh”. He said: “How did you know that the Messenger of God prayed in it at that night?” I said: “the Qur’ān tells me this”. He said: “He whoever speaks by the Qur’ān is a winner, recite”. I recited the verse: ‘Glory be to Him Who took His servant on a journey by night from al-Ḥarām Mosque... etc’. Yet I could not find, in the text, that the Prophet prayed in it. Ḥudhayfah said: “Oh bald-headed one, do you find that the Prophet prayed in it?” I said: “No”. He said: “By God, the Messenger of God did not pray in it that night. If he had prayed there, then it would have been obligatory for you to pray in it as it has been obligatory for you to pray in al-Ḥarām Mosque, by God, they [the Prophet and Gabriel] did not leave *al-Burāq* until the gates of heaven were opened for them and they saw the paradise, hell fire and all that has been promised for the hereafter, then they came back as they started”...etc.<sup>84</sup>

A similar narration to this *ḥadīth* is also mentioned by al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 AH / 892 CE) (2000: (2) 798). The researcher argues that, although Ḥudhayfah was one of the

عن زر بن حبیش قال: أتيت على حذيفة بن اليمان وهو يحدث عن ليلة أسري بمحمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو يقول: فانطلقت – أو انطلقنا – فلقينا حتى أتينا على بيت المقدس فلم يدخلناه، قال: قلت بل دخله رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ليلتنا وصلى فيه، قال: ما اسمك يا أصلع؟ فإني أعرف وجهك ولا أدري ما اسمك، قال: قلت أنا زر بن حبیش، قال: فما علمك بأن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم صلى فيه ليلتنا؟ قال: قلت القرآن يخبرني بذلك، قال: من تكلم بالقرآن أفلح، اقرأ، قال: فقراءت: (سبحان الذي أسرى بعبده ليلاً من المسجد الحرام) قال: فلم أجده صلى فيه، قال: يا أصلع هل تجد صلى فيه؟ قال: قلت لا، قال: والله ما صلى فيه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ليلتنا، لو صلى فيه لكتب عليكم صلاة فيه كما كتب عليكم صلاة في البيت العتيق، والله ما زايلا البراق حتى فتحت لهما أبواب السماء فرأيا الجنة والنار ووعد الآخرة أجمع، ثم عادا عودهما على بدئهما... إلخ.

companions of Prophet Muhammad, and thus a reliable source, it should be noted that other companions narrated authentic narrations about the Night Journey, such as Anas Ibn Mālik (d. 93 AH / 712 CE). Ḥudhayfah could have been unaware of the Prophet's narrations about his prayer inside al-Aqṣā Mosque. Also, Ḥudhayfah does not mention that the Prophet actually said that he did not pray in al-Aqṣā Mosque during that night; this was his judgment, and not a saying of the Prophet. Rather he said "they did not enter it", which means that this was his own opinion and understanding without a clear reference to the Prophet. On the other side, the other *aḥādīth* that clearly state that the Prophet prayed in al-Aqṣā Mosque depend on the actual words of the Prophet himself. Therefore, the researcher argues that the opinion of Ḥudhayfah cannot be accepted in the presence of other authentic narrations taken directly from the Prophet, mainly the *ḥadīth* of Muslim (2000: (1) 82).

This leads to another question regarding the prayer itself; was it only an individual prayer? Or was it a congregational prayer with the other Prophets? The researcher argues that the *ḥadīth* of Muslim (2000: (1) 82) states that the Prophet prayed in al-Aqṣā without specifying whether this prayer was performed together with other Prophets or alone. It could be argued that the Prophet may have prayed alone since he did not mention any congregational prayer; however, the absence of a clear statement, regarding praying alone or in congregational prayer, does not necessarily mean that the Prophet prayed there alone, and thus this needs further investigation.

It may be claimed that the Prophet Muhammad did not lead prayer in al-Aqṣā Mosque since there is no evidence on this. However, the researcher disagrees with this claim, arguing that there are many accounts which state that the Prophet Muhammad actually led all the Prophets in prayer inside al-Aqṣā Mosque during the

Night Journey. Al-Ṭabarī (1999: (8) 6) argues this, and mentions some narrations that support this opinion. Al-Albānī gathered many different narrations regarding this point and studied both the authentic and the weak among them. The researcher attempts to investigate some of these narrations and find out whether it can be argued that the Prophet led a prayer in al-Aqṣā or prayed alone.

For example, al-Albānī (2000 B: 41) mentions a *ḥadīth* narrated by al-Bayhaqī (d. 458 AH / 1066 CE), and Ibn Kathīr, from the companion Anas Ibn Mālīk where he says:

Until he arrived at *Bayt al-Maqdis*, then he was offered to drink water, milk, or wine... Then Adam and all the other Prophets were resurrected and the Messenger of God led them [in prayer] that night.<sup>85</sup>

Al-Albānī argues that this *ḥadīth* is problematic since one of the narrators of this *ḥadīth*, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Hāshim, is unknown. The researcher argues that this narration clearly states that the Prophet led the prayer immediately after he entered al-Aqṣā Mosque before the ascension to heaven, yet its weak status should be noted. However, another narration, mentioned by Ibn Kathīr (1994: (3) 11) states:

Then I left and it was not more than a little while when a lot of people gathered, and someone called for the prayer and the prayer was established. He [the Prophet] continued: so we stood in lines waiting for someone to come and lead us, then Gabriel took my hand and asked me to lead the prayer, and I did. After the end of the prayer Gabriel asked me: O Muhammad, do you know who prayed behind you? I said: No. He said: Every Prophet sent by God

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حتى انتهى إلى بيت المقدس، فعرض عليه الماء واللين والخمر... ثم بعث له آدم فمن دونه من الأنبياء فأمرهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم تلك الليلة

prayed behind you. Then Gabriel took my hand and we ascended to heaven.<sup>86</sup>

Al-Albānī weakens this narration because one of its narrators, Khālīd Ibn Yazīd, is a weak narrator (see al-Albānī: 2000 B: 48). Another narration is mentioned by Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal and al-Suyūṭī (see al-Albānī 2000 B: 74); it says:

And when the Prophet entered al-Aqṣā Mosque he stood to pray, then he turned and turned [meaning he turned in both directions to see who was behind him] and he saw all the Prophets praying with him.<sup>87</sup>

The researcher argues that this narration is slightly different than the one before, since it mentions that the Prophet did not know that the Prophets were standing behind him when he was about to start the prayer. Interestingly, this narration is different from another narrated by Ibn Kathīr (1994: (3) 24-25) from al-Ḥasan Ibn ‘Arafah, which says:

... [On the way to IslamicJerusalem] I met Jesus... then I met Moses... then I met Abraham [i.e. before arriving at al-Aqṣā]. Then we went until we arrived at al-Aqṣā Mosque, and I went down and tied the animal [i.e. *al-Burāq*] in the ring that is in the gate of the Mosque where the Prophets used to tie [their animals]. Then I entered the Mosque and I recognised the Prophets bowing and prostrating, then two cups were brought to me: one was honey and the other was milk, I took the milk and drank, so Gabriel put his hand on my shoulder and said: By the God of Muhammad, you chose the *Fitrah* [natural instinct]. Then the prayer was established and I led them [i.e. the Prophets].<sup>88</sup>

ثم انصرفت، فلم ألبث إلا يسيراً حتى اجتمع ناس كثير، ثم أذن مؤذن، وأقيمت الصلاة. قال: فقمنا صفوفاً ننظر من يؤمنا، فأخذ بيدي جبريل عليه السلام فقدمني، فصليت بهم. فلما انصرف قال جبريل: يا محمد، أتدري من صلى خلفك؟ قال: قلت: لا. قال: صلى خلفك كل نبي بعثه الله عز وجل. ثم أخذ بيدي جبريل فصعد بي إلى السماء.

فلما دخل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم المسجد الأقصى قام يصلي، فالتفت ثم التفت، فإذا النبيون أجمعون يصلون معه.<sup>87</sup>

فلقيت عيسى... فلقيت موسى... فلقيت إبراهيم... ثم اندفعنا حتى انتهينا إلى المسجد الأقصى، فنزلت فربطت الدابة في الحلقة التي في باب المسجد التي كانت الأنبياء تربط بها، ثم دخلت المسجد فعرفت النبيين من بين قائم وراكع وساجد. قال: ثم أتيت بكأسين من عسل ولبن، فأخذت اللبن فشربت، فضرب جبريل عليه السلام منكبي وقال: أصبت الفطرة ورب محمد. قال: ثم أقيمت الصلاة فأممتهم.

This narration is strange since it contradicts other more authentic narrations. Ibn Kathīr refuses this narration when he (1994: (3) 25) says:

This *Sanad* [chain of narrators] is strange... among the other strange things in this narration is that he [i.e. the Prophet] met the Prophets before he entered al-Aqṣā Mosque, but the right thing is that he met them in the heavens, and then he came down to *Bayt al-Maqdis* again with them and led them in prayer in it [i.e. al-Aqṣā Mosque].

The researcher agrees with Ibn Kathīr in his rejection of this narration; this is further strengthened by al-Albānī (2000 B: 93-94), who states that this narration's authenticity is problematic. However, the problem of this narration as Ibn Kathīr mentions, i.e. meeting the Prophets before arriving at al-Aqṣā Mosque, may be noted in greater clarity in another narration mentioned by al-Ḥākim (d. 405 AH / 1014 CE), al-Bazzār (d. 292 AH / 905 CE), Abū Ya'la (d. 307 AH / 919 CE) and al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 AH / 971 CE) as al-Albānī mentions (2000 B: 97). The narration states:

[After he met Jesus, Moses, and Abraham on his way to Islamic Jerusalem]... Then we moved until we arrived at *Bayt al-Maqdis*, and I tied the animal in the ring that the Prophets tie in, and then I entered the Mosque. Then the Prophets came to me; those whom God named and those whom he did not name, and I led them in prayer, except those three Prophets: Abraham, Moses, and Jesus peace be upon them.<sup>89</sup>

This narration is not authentic as al-Ḥākim and al-Albānī notes (see al-Albānī 2000 B: 97-98).

The researcher argues that it is clear that most of the *aḥādīth* that clearly mention that the Prophet Muhammad led the Prophets in prayer inside al-Aqṣā Mosque, during

<sup>89</sup> ثم مضينا حتى أتينا بيت المقدس، فربطت الدابة بالحلقة التي يربط بها الأنبياء، ثم دخلت المسجد، فنشرت لي الأنبياء، من سمي الله عز وجل منهم ومن لم يسم، فصليت بهم، إلا هؤلاء نفر الثلاثة: إبراهيم، وموسى، وعيسى عليهم الصلاة والسلام.

that night, are problematic and weak. Yet it is noted that the weakness in most of these narrations is not caused by narrators accused of being lying, but by narrators with weak memorisation. In addition, the presence of numerous weak narrations, from different chains of narrators, supports the level of the authenticity of the *ḥadīth*. This raises the status of this *ḥadīth* into *Ḥasan Lighayrih* (accepted because of other supporting narrations). In addition, the researcher argues that there is another authentic *ḥadīth* mentioned in Muslim (2000: (1) 88-89) regarding leading the Prophets in prayer:

Narrated by Abū Hurayrah: The Messenger of God said: I saw myself [ i.e. I was] standing in *al-Hijr* while [the tribe of] Quraysh were asking me about my Night Journey, they asked me about things in *Bayt al-Maqdis* that I was not sure of, so I felt troubled more than I ever felt before, but God visualised it [i.e. *Bayt al-Maqdis*] to me, and I started answering anything they asked about. I saw myself in a group of Prophets: Moses [was amongst them] was standing in prayer; a big man with curly hair looks like one of the tribe of Shanū'ah. Jesus the son of Mary also was standing in prayer; the closest one who looks like him is 'Urwah Ibn Mas'ūd al-Thaqafi. Abraham also was standing in prayer; the closest one to his look is the one who is speaking to you [meaning himself]. Then the prayer time came, and I led them [in prayer], and when I finished the prayer someone said: "Oh Muhammad, this is Mālik, Hell's gatekeeper, greet him", I turned my face towards him, and he greeted me first.<sup>90</sup>

This *ḥadīth* is clear in saying that the Prophet Muhammad led the Prophets in prayer during his lifetime. The time of this prayer, as can be understood from the sequence of the *ḥadīth*, was most likely during the Night Journey, especially since the Prophet, in this *ḥadīth*, mentioned leading the prayer when he was referring to the story of the Night Journey to Qur'aysh.

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لقد رأيته في الحجر وقريش تسألني عن مسراي، فسألتني عن أشياء من بيت المقدس لم أثبتها فكربت كربة ما كربت مثله قط، قال فرفعه الله لي أنظر إليه ما يسألوني عن شيء إلا أنبأتهم به، وقد رأيته في جماعة من الأنبياء فإذا موسى قائم يصلي فإذا رجل ضرب جعد كأنه من رجال شنوءة، وإذا عيسى ابن مريم عليه السلام قائم يصلي أقرب الناس به شبيهاً عروة بن مسعود الثقفي، وإذا إبراهيم عليه السلام قائم يصلي أشبه الناس به صاحبكم، يعني نفسه، فحانت الصلاة فإممتهم، فلما فرغت من الصلاة قال قائل: يا محمد هذا مالك صاحب النار فسلم عليه. فالتفت إليه فبداني بالسلام.

The researcher argues that, by gathering together the previous narrations, one can conclude that leading the Prophets in prayer most likely took place in al-Aqṣā Mosque. Here the *ḥadīth* of Muslim (2000: (1) 82), which states the prayer of the Prophet in al-Aqṣā Mosque: “I entered the Mosque and I prayed two *Ruk‘ah*”, should be noted, since it does not specify that the Prophet prayed in al-Aqṣā alone or in congregation. It only says: “I entered the Mosque and I **prayed** two *Ruk‘ah*”; it can be noted that the prayer here has been mentioned infinitively. The other weaker narrations support this argument, and it is very likely that the Prophet did lead the other Prophets in prayer inside al-Aqṣā during the Night Journey. It should be noted also that no account exists that specifies that the Prophet might have prayed with other Prophets in any other location such as Makkah or heaven during his lifetime, except one narration mentioned by al-Bazzār (see al-Albānī 2000 B: 104-105). However, this narration in particular is considered *Mawḍū‘* (fabricated), and as such cannot be taken into consideration. These findings lead the researcher to conclude that the Prophet not only prayed in al-Aqṣā Mosque, but also led the other Prophets in prayer inside al-Aqṣā Mosque during the Night Journey, with all that this signifies.

Also, there is disagreement on whether or not the Prophet led the prayer in al-Aqṣā before or after his ascension to heaven, and whether he prayed actually once or twice in al-Aqṣā. On one hand, Ibn Kathīr (1994: (3) 25) argues that the Prophet met the Prophets in heaven, and then they came down with him to earth and he led them in prayer in al-Aqṣā Mosque. On the other hand, Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi argues that the Prophet may have prayed alone in al-Aqṣā when he first arrived there during the Night Journey; he then met the Prophets in heaven and he came down afterwards and he led them in prayer, different from his prayer alone, in al-Aqṣā Mosque before he

travelled back to Makkah.<sup>91</sup> The researcher argues that there is no clear evidence of any of the two cases, i.e. whether the Prophet prayed in al-Aqṣā once or twice, or before or after the ascension. The researcher argues that the act of leading the Prophets in prayer inside al-Aqṣā Mosque is in itself the most significant event that took place inside al-Aqṣā Mosque during the Night Journey. To claim that the Prophet prayed before or after the ascension, or even once or twice, is indeed irrelevant to the topic and will add no significance to the event.

### **The significance of praying in al-Aqṣā and leading the Prophets**

The researcher argues that there are a number of aspects that should be taken into consideration while studying this point: first, the significance of praying in al-Aqṣā itself and second, the significance of leading the other Prophets during prayer in al-Aqṣā.

The researcher argues that praying in al-Aqṣā Mosque in itself has its own crucial importance and significance; the Prophet never prayed out of the Arab Peninsula before or after the Night Journey, and this should be taken into consideration. Why would the Prophet Muhammad pray in al-Aqṣā Mosque and not pray in any other place outside the Arab Peninsula,<sup>92</sup> unless this prayer was to declare the connection between Muhammad, and thus Muslims, with Islamic Jerusalem. In addition, it should be noted that the Prophet did not specify whether his prayer was a command from God or his own personal choice. Nonetheless, this issue should have been clear to the

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<sup>91</sup> This argument was mentioned by El-Awaisi during a discussion with the researcher in Al-Maktoum Institute in Dundee, the UK on 4th October 2006

<sup>92</sup> Some very weak narrations regarding the Night Journey claim that the Prophet **prayed** on that night in Medīnah, Sinai or Madyan, and Bethlehem (see Ibn Kathīr 1994: (3) 21-22). However, many scholars such as Ibn Kathīr reject these narrations; in addition, these narrations, about praying in places other than al-Aqṣā Mosque, are not supported by any other more authentic *ḥadīth*, the only authentic narration would be only the prayer in al-Aqṣā.

Prophet Muhammad even if he was not ordered to pray and prayed directly. The Prophet knew the al-Aqṣā Mosque to be holy, and thus he prayed in it as a natural reaction when entering a Mosque.

Leading the Prophets in prayer in al-Aqṣā Mosque has very crucial importance and significance. It signifies inheriting the legacy of the other Prophets, and the leadership of humankind. As well, the leadership of various Prophets, coming from different backgrounds and places in the world, in IslamicJerusalem particularly, symbolised the international nature of IslamicJerusalem, and its world-wide vision. The Prophet did not lead the Prophets in prayer in Makkah, although it symbolises the centre of the Muslim faith, but in IslamicJerusalem which symbolises the centre of world interest, as El-Awaisi argues (see El-Awaisi 2006: 14). El-Awaisi (2006: 46) also uses a very interesting argument for this event: “Prophet Muhammad did not only travel to IslamicJerusalem in the Night Journey but arrangement was made for him to hold a unique summit meeting for the Prophets in IslamicJerusalem”. This Prophetic “summit” was unique in all dimensions, it was unique in the place in which it was held, unique in the time it took place, and unique in its audience; such has never happened before or since in the history of humanity. This gives IslamicJerusalem a special rank among all other holy sites on Earth, and specifies a very important significance for that region. Some scholars even say that a verse of the Qur’ān was revealed in IslamicJerusalem commenting on this Prophetic summit and dialogues.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Al-Zarkashī (d. 794 AH / 1392 CE) (1998: (1) 197) argues that verse 45 of Chapter 43 of the Qur’ān was actually revealed in IslamicJerusalem, during the Night Journey. The verse is as follows:

And ask the Messengers whom We sent before you: did We appoint any other gods, other than the Most Compassionate [i.e. God], that might be worshipped?  
(43:45)

واسأل من أرسلنا من قبلك من رسلنا أجعلنا من دون الرحمن آلهة يعبدون

This reveals a huge importance into an understanding of what happened during the Prophets' summit in Islamicjerusalem. The researcher argues that the spiritual

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This opinion is also mentioned by al-Suyūṭī (n.d.: (1) 9), but not by other scholars of the Qur'ānic Sciences such as al-Qaṭṭān and al-Zarqānī. However, Al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 AH / 971 CE) (1985: (8) 171) narrates a *ḥadīth* that could assist in this context, where the Prophet Muhammad states places where the Qur'ān was revealed. The narration is as follows:

Narrated Ibrāhīm Ibn Duḥaym, from his father, and narrated Ahmad Ibn al-Mu'allā al-Dimashqī, from Hishām Ibn 'Ammār. Both narrated from al-Walīd Ibn Muslim, from 'Ufayr Ibn Ma'dān, from Salīm Ibn 'Āmir, from Abū Umāmah, said: The Messenger of God said: "the Qur'ān was revealed in three places: Makkah, Madīnah, and al-Shām".

حدثنا إبراهيم بن دحيم ثنا أبي (ح)، وحدثنا أحمد بن المعلى الدمشقي ثنا هشام بن عمار قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "أنزل القرآن في ثلاثة أماكن: بمكة والمدينة والشام".

Al-Suyūṭī (n.d.: (1) 9) quotes this narration, and also an addition by one of its narrators, al-Walīd, who says that by 'al-Shām' the Prophet means 'Islamicjerusalem'. The researcher argues that this *ḥadīth* is very weak because of the presence of 'Ufayr who is a very weak narrator as Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 327 AH / 940 CE) (1952: (7) 36) argues. Al-Rāzī actually specifies the narrations of 'Ufayr from Salīm Ibn 'Āmir from Abū Umāmah, in particular, as being very weak and thus not at all reliable. In addition, this narration contradicts other strong opinions by scholars such as al-Zarkashī (1998: (1) 197) who says a number of verses were revealed in different places other than Makkah, Madīnah and Islamicjerusalem, such as al-Juhfah, al-Tā'if, and al-Ḥudaybiyah. The researcher argues that the mentioned *ḥadīth* cannot be relied upon, despite its possibility being the only clue from the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad, due to its very weak status.

Many of the exegetes do not state whether or not this verse, verse (43:45), was revealed in Islamicjerusalem. Yet they mention two main opinions about the meaning of this verse. First is that, if this verse did actually occur, i.e. that the Prophet Muhammad was asked to ask the previous Prophets about this matter, it was revealed before or during the Night Journey. Second is that this verse is symbolic and did not actually take place. Exegetes such as al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 AH / 1273 CE) (1998: (8) 88) and al-Alūsī (1994: (13) 86) of the *Ra'y* School of *Tafsīr*, support the first opinion. The majority of the scholars of the *Ma'thūr* School of *Tafsīr* do not specify this opinion, but do mention the different ones. Only al-Ṭabarī (1999: (11) 192-193) clarifies his opinion after he points to the different narrations and opinions about this verse. He clearly rejects the first opinion, and supports the second. Also, one of the contemporary exegetes, Sayyid Quṭb of the *Ra'y* School, supports the same opinion. Quṭb (1996: (5) 3191) argues that this verse is actually a metaphor that makes a strong impact on the reader of the Qur'ān, by cancelling time, place, life and death, and draws a symbolic picture of the Prophet Muhammad questioning previous Prophets.

The researcher agrees with al-Ṭabarī and Quṭb. It is true that the verse directs the Prophet Muhammad to ask the previous Prophets about the presence of other gods. Yet this does not necessarily mean that this verse was revealed when he met the previous Prophets in reality during the Night Journey. It is unlikely that the Prophet Muhammad would have asked such a question to the previous Prophets, or even been ordered to ask in reality, since this could show that the Prophet may have had doubt about the monotheism of God and would have been ordered to ask the previous Prophets about that. The researcher argues that it seems that this is a metaphor that is used in logical discussion throughout the previous and later verses.

The researcher actually doubts the arguments of the exegetes and the scholars of Qur'ānic sciences, who say that this verse was revealed in Islamicjerusalem. This argument is based only on a general look at the wording of the verse, not on any other valid evidence. It neglects the rhetorical structure of the verse and its coherence with verses before and after it.

symbolism of praying in al-Aqṣā Mosque, together with previous Prophets, marks the most important content and significance of this Prophetic summit. Al-Qaraḏāwī (1998: 10) argues that this was a declaration of transmitting the religious leadership of the world to a new global nation, a global Prophet, and a global book, i.e. the Qur'ān. Also, Jawād Baḥr al-Natsheh (2006: 250) refers to the importance of choosing IslamicJerusalem for this symbolic prayer and argues that this was a link between the duty of the Muslims in delivering the guidance to the globe with the main character of IslamicJerusalem as being the land of *Barakah*, which is considered *Lil'ālamīn* (for all the livings). Such significance would have affected the way the Prophet Muhammad perceived this region, and thus it might have affected his understanding of the importance of this region for his call to humanity.

### **The Significance of the Night Journey**

The Night Journey was a very important aspect in defining the shape of the relationship between Prophet Muhammad and IslamicJerusalem. It was also a very important element that helped to shape his vision towards that region. The researcher argues that the significance of the time and place of the Night Journey needs to be understood in order to identify and understand the effect of this event on the Prophet Muhammad's relationship with IslamicJerusalem. While the researcher studied the significance of the time of the Night Journey, he realised the other aspect in this relationship should also be studied, i.e. its place. In other words, why was Prophet Muhammad taken to IslamicJerusalem before his ascension to heaven?

Al-Natsheh (2006: 250) pointed out that light should be shed on the main element that identifies IslamicJerusalem in the Qur’ān, namely the *Barakah*.<sup>94</sup> This can be understood when studying the Qur’ānic identification of al-Aqṣā Mosque in chapter 17: “which We have surrounded with *Barakah*”. This expression shows that the Qur’ān actually identified the main feature of IslamicJerusalem, namely the *Barakah*.

In this context, the researcher refers to “the *Barakah* Circle Theory of IslamicJerusalem”, introduced in 2005 by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi in his monograph “Introducing IslamicJerusalem”. In this theory, El-Awaisi argues that the *Barakah* of al-Aqṣā Mosque, and thus IslamicJerusalem, expands in circles to cover nearly all of the Earth with different levels, depending on the distance from IslamicJerusalem, which is the centre of the *Barakah* (see El-Awaisi 2006: 32-40).

Relying on the *Barakah* Circle Theory of IslamicJerusalem, and connecting it to the concept of the “Land of Hope”, El-Awaisi (2006: 48-49) argues that “reaching IslamicJerusalem, the centre of *Barakah*, meant, according to the *Barakah* Circle Theory of IslamicJerusalem, that the message would radiate from IslamicJerusalem and grows and expands to reach global level”. The researcher argues that this connection is significant, since a circle is a shape without angles, thus referring to non-stop growth since the circle shape symbolises infinity (see al-Ratrout 2002: 177-178).

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<sup>94</sup> Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi (2006: 28) argues that the *Barakah* in the Arabic language “in the light of the first verse of chapter 17 and the other Qur’ānic verses and Prophetic tradition, could be defined as growth and expansion”. He also argues that “it is very difficult to translate this concept into the English language”. The researcher agrees with El-Awaisi in his argument and, therefore, will use the terminology *Barakah* throughout this study to refer to this meaning.

According to El-Awaisi, the Night Journey was the start of a strategic plan that was put by the Prophet towards the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. This was because this journey showed the Prophet that IslamicJerusalem was the starting point for global expansion of the Prophet Muhammad's mission according to the *Barakah* Circle Theory. The Prophet's attention was, therefore, drawn to the importance of controlling this region in particular, which led him to draw up a strategic plan for the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem.

However, the researcher argues that there may be a problematic issue with this understanding that depends on the meaning of *Barakah*. One could argue that, since the core aim of the Prophet Muhammad's mission was to **guide** humanity, the starting point towards the globe should have been Makkah and not IslamicJerusalem. This is since, according to the Qur'ān, IslamicJerusalem's main global feature is the *Barakah* as the Qur'ān says: "And We saved him and Lot to the land which we gave ***Barakah Lil'ālamīn*** (for all the livings)" (Qur'ān 21:71)<sup>95</sup>. In the case of Makkah, the Qur'ān states: "Verily, the first House (of worship) that has been put (on the Earth) for the people is the one in Bakkah (Makkah), *Mubarak* (i.e. the *Barakah* is within it only) and **as a guidance for *Lil'ālamīn*** (for all the livings)" (Qur'ān 3:96)<sup>96</sup>. This shows that *Barakah* in Makkah is for the Ka'bah itself, while the guidance there is the main global feature. According to this opinion, Makkah should have been the starting point of global guidance for all humanity, i.e. the core message of the Prophet Muhammad, not IslamicJerusalem, while IslamicJerusalem would redirect it throughout the globe.

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<sup>95</sup> ونجيناه ولوطاً إلى الأرض التي باركنا فيها للعالمين (الأنبياء: 71)

<sup>96</sup> إن أول بيت وضع للناس للذي ببكة مباركاً وهدى للعالمين (آل عمران: 96)

It is very interesting to note that the Qur'ān clearly draws this new stage after the Night Journey by declaring the global nature of the call of the Prophet Muhammad. Verses such as “and warn your close tribe” (Qur'ān 26:214) were revealed before the Night Journey. Yet after the Night Journey, the Qur'ānic verses that speak about the global nature of the call to the Prophet Muhammad started to appear in the Qur'ān, such as “to warn Um al-Qurā [Makkah] and what is around it” (Qur'ān 6:92, 42:7) and “We have not sent you but a Mercy *Lil'ālamīn*” (Qur'ān 21:107) (see al-Zarkashī 1998: (1) 193).

The researcher argues that here also comes the meaning role of the *Barakah*, which is growth and expansion. While guidance does not necessarily hold the meaning of expansion, it contains the concept of understanding and guiding to the truth. This is, represented here in Muhammad and the religion delivered through him to humanity. In other words, “guidance” is the main aim of the call of Muhammad, from a Muslim perspective, but it does not hold the meaning of expansion or growth as in the meaning of *Barakah*.

Therefore, the researcher here develops an understanding of the interchangeable role of Makkah and Islamicjerusalem, in the light of the Night Journey, and according to the understanding of the main global character of Makkah, i.e. guidance, and Islamicjerusalem, *Barakah*. Since Makkah represents guidance and Islamicjerusalem represents growth and expansion, both on a global level, the researcher argues that the first priority for Muhammad was the land of global guidance, i.e. Makkah. When guidance is achieved, it should then expand to the globe from the land of expansion and growth, i.e. Islamicjerusalem. Expansion does not necessarily refer to religion only, but it also refers to the growth and expansion in a nation's size and population,

and guidance too (from a Muslim perspective). Thus, the researcher argues that the Night Journey shaped a full plan for the Prophet, not only regarding IslamicJerusalem, but also Makkah, the first priority after the migration, since it represents global guidance, according to the Qur'ān. This is with regard to the significance of the starting and final points of the Night Journey.

In addition, with regard to the route of the journey from Makkah to IslamicJerusalem, Ahmad Rabī' Yūsuf argues that the route of the journey itself had a special significance. Yūsuf argues that the journey “went through all the places where a revelation has been given to earth throughout history; it started from Makkah, where the revelation to Muhammad started, and went by Madīnah, in which the revelation continued to Muhammad, then it passed near Sinai, where Moses had the revelation, and it ended where the revelation came to Zachariah, John, Jesus, David, and Solomon”<sup>97</sup> etc. This argument is very interesting since it connects the final element in the study of the significance of the place, namely the route.<sup>98</sup> This link is also made in the Qur'ān (95: 1-3), where God swears by three places, IslamicJerusalem, Sinai, and Makkah, as the researcher mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis.

Finally, the researcher agrees with El-Awaisi in connecting the concept of the Land of Hope with the *Barakah* Circle Theory for IslamicJerusalem, but he also develops El-Awaisi's argument and argues that the significance of the Night Journey was not only in praying inside al-Aqṣā and leading the Prophets in the prayer, it also lay in all the stages of the journey, starting from Makkah, and throughout the way until IslamicJerusalem.

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<sup>97</sup> See Yūsuf, *Rasūlunā wa al-Quds: Washā'ij Aṣīlah*, date consulted: 12/10/2006, <http://www.islamonline.net/arabic/daawa/2003/09/article14.shtml>.

<sup>98</sup> The researcher here refers only to the route that the journey took, not the praying at these places.

## Conclusion

The researcher concludes that the Night Journey was, indeed, a turning point in the life of the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet suffered humiliation and hardship at the beginning of his Prophethood, and this suffering reached its worst point prior to the Night Journey. Yet the Night Journey marked the start of the changing of the life of the Prophet Muhammad. After this journey, the Prophet Muhammad reached what he hoped for when the people of Yathrib (later Madīnah) welcomed him and he started to build up the first Muslim state.

This journey was a very important element in shaping the Prophet Muhammad's thought and understanding of not only the importance of Islamic Jerusalem, but also the need to plan towards its *Fath*. The Prophet Muhammad started a new era immediately after the Night Journey; this era could be summarised as practical planning for the future of his mission. It is noted, when studying the *sīrah*, that the Prophet Muhammad began a new stage of disseminating his message, by starting practical steps to build a form of power through a state. This can be seen in the second 'Aqabah pledge soon after the Night Journey. This pledge mapped the first practical step of Muhammad towards establishing a real state, which marked the first step in practical political, social, financial, diplomatic, and military planning in his life.

Moreover, it could be concluded that the Night Journey marked the main turning point, not only in the relationship between Muhammad and Islamic Jerusalem, but also in the relationship between Muhammad and the whole world. It opened his eyes to the concept of internationalism through his leadership of the various Prophets. The

Night Journey marked the start of Muhammad's mission as messenger to all humanity; His leadership of the other Prophets during the prayer in al-Aqṣā Mosque was of great significance in his life, and had showed him that IslamicJerusalem was the path to lead the world towards guidance, in the same way that he had led the Prophets in prayer.

Also, the Night Journey marked a turning point between two historical stages: a stage of hardship, and a stage of victory. Thus the Night Journey was actually the main turning point in the life of the Prophet Muhammad; it took him to a new level by opening his eyes on the starting point. It is not strange, therefore, that the chapter in the Qur'ān that mentions the Night Journey, chapter 17, is situated very close to the middle point of the Qur'ān, similarly as the event itself being situated in the Prophethood period of Muhammad. Not only this, the Night Journey marked a new stage for IslamicJerusalem itself, as it took place at almost the same time that the armies of Byzantines started their practical plans towards re-conquering that region, and thus fulfilling the Qur'ānic prophecy (according to the Muslims) in chapter 30. The Night Journey was, indeed, a crucial and a major changing point in the lifetime of Muhammad and the history of IslamicJerusalem and the nations around it, and thus the whole world. One of the main events that took place during the Night Journey was setting the five daily prayers in Islam (see al-Bukhārī 2000: (1) 74-75), this matter takes the researcher, in the next chapter, into a study of the relationship between the concept of prayer and its relationship with IslamicJerusalem in order to find out whether or not it could be argued the the prayer had a role in establishing a special relationship between the Prophet Muhammad, and thus the Muslims, and IslamicJerusalem, which could have been developed later into a strategic plan for the *Fath* of that region.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

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### ***PRAYING TOWARDS ISLAMIC JERUSALEM***

## Chapter Three

### Praying towards Islamicjerusalem

#### Introduction

Prayer is the second pillar of Islam after the testimony of faith; it is the only obligation that all Muslims, whatever their situation regarding finance, health, work, etc., must perform on a daily basis. Other obligations may vary from one person to another, and are restricted by time and place. Some Muslims may be exempted from such obligations for differences in circumstances, such as wealth or poverty, health or illness. Since prayer is unique to such an extent in Islam, any connection between prayer and Islamicjerusalem must also be very significant.

This chapter aims to investigate any connections between the two and their impact on the status of Islamicjerusalem in Islam. The researcher will discuss whether it can be argued that this relationship influenced the way the Prophet Muhammad viewed Islamicjerusalem. Also, if it did have an influence, could this have been developed to the extent that the Prophet Muhammad developed a plan for the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem? It should be noted, however, that nowadays Muslims' main relationship in their prayer is mainly with Makkah, not with Islamicjerusalem.

Throughout this chapter, the researcher will investigate the actual relationship between prayer, as an important aspect of the Muslim faith, and Islamicjerusalem. He will attempt to answer important questions that arise in this context, such as whether Islamicjerusalem has any links with the concept of prayer in Islam, and also identify

the nature of this relationship. The reason why the direction of prayer was changed to Makkah also must be studied. Finally, the question must be answered as to whether this relationship could have any impact on forming the plan for the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem as the researcher noted earlier.

### **The Meaning of *Ṣalāh* (Prayer) in Islam**

The Arabic terminology for ‘prayer’ is صلاة *Ṣalāh*, which linguistically comes from the Arabic root صلا *Ṣalā* as Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711 AH / 1311 CE) (1999: (7) 397) and al-Fayrūz’ābādī (1991: (4) 510) argue, both say that it means ‘supplication’. Al-Jirjānī (d. 816 AH / 1413 CE) (2002: 112) also agrees: “Prayer linguistically means supplication”<sup>99</sup>. The researcher argues that the term *Ṣalāh* in its linguistic meaning, i.e. supplication, is more likely to be related to another Arabic terminology derived from a very close Arabic root, namely, صلة *Ṣilah*, which has the meaning of engagement (see Baalbaki: 2001: 699). This terminology derives from the Arabic root وصل *Waṣala*, meaning “to link” or “to connect” (see Baalbaki 2001: 1235). This meaning is also related to that given by Ibn Manẓūr and al-Fayrūz’ābādī, since supplication represents a link and a connection between the invocator (i.e. the person) and the invocated (i.e. God). Thus it could be understood that the concept of prayer in Islam represents the connection between the human being and God, and this is what gives prayer its importance in Islam.<sup>100</sup>

This gives a strong impression that the concept of prayer in Islam is one that goes beyond a regular daily routine to a major pillar in the life of every Muslim as it

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<sup>99</sup> الصلاة في اللغة الدعاء

<sup>100</sup> Prayer as an Islamic concept is defined by al-Jirjānī (2002: 112) as: “Special pillars, and known invocations, with specific conditions, in specific times” (عبارة عن أركان مخصوصة وأذكار معلومة بشرائط (محصورة في أوقات مقدرة). The researcher will not concentrate on this definition since it is irrelevant to this research.

represents a continuous connection with God and, as such, has a huge status in Islam. Thus, linking this important concept to Islamicjerusalem is very significant, since it opens up a new horizon in the understanding of the importance of Islamicjerusalem in the life of the Prophet Muhammad. In order to understand the extent of prayer's influence in forming the relationship between Muslims and Islamicjerusalem, the duration of prayer towards Islamicjerusalem should be studied. This should start from the first point, i.e. the beginning of Prayer in Islam.

### **The beginning of Prayer in Islam:**

It is known that the obligation of five prayers in Islam began during the Night Journey, since different *aḥādīth* mention this. For example, Imām Muslim (2000: (1) 82) narrates the authentic *ḥadīth* of the story of the obligation of the five prayers that occurred in heaven during the Night Journey and the Ascension. Some scholars argue that the start of Prayer in Islam was however from a very early stage, referring to two of the earliest revealed chapters of the Qur'ān, namely chapter 73 (*al-Muzzammil*) and chapter 74 (*al-Muddaththir*). These chapters are the earliest in the Qur'ān to be revealed; the first two verses of chapter 73 read:

O you, who are enfolded in your cloak! Keep awake throughout the night, all except a small part of it.<sup>101</sup> (73:1-2)

The first three verses of chapter 74 read:

O you, who are wrapped in your cloak, arise and give warning!  
Proclaim the greatness of your Lord<sup>102</sup> (74:1-3)

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<sup>101</sup> يا أيها المزمّل، قم الليل إلا قليلا the researcher has taken this translation from M. A. S. Abdel Haleem (2004: 395) and Muhammad Asad (2003: 1031), with some amendments. The researcher argues that the translation of some parts is less accurate.

With regard to the first verse, i.e. (73:2), the researcher argues that many of the exegetes interpret the verse (73:2), i.e. ‘Keep awake throughout the night’, as being referring to praying throughout the night. This argument is mentioned by many exegetes, for example, Ibn Kathīr (1994: (4) 558) and al-Ṭabarī (1999: (12) 278-279) of the *Ma’thūr* School, Al-Zamakhsharī (1995: (4) 623-624), al-Rāzī (2002: (15) 172-173), and al-Alūsī (1994: (15) 114) of the *Ra’y* School; they all aver that the meaning of the verse (73:2) is praying throughout night.

This is the same also for verse (73:20) of the same chapter: “Indeed, your Lord knows that you stand [to pray at night] less than two-thirds of the night, [sometimes] half of it, and [sometimes] one-third of it, and so does a group of those [the believers] who are with you”. The researcher argues that this verse actually affirms this and notes a reduction of the night prayer for early Muslims.

However, with regard to verse (74:3), the majority of the exegetes of the different schools, especially the *Ma’thūr*, argue that the meaning of verse (74:3) is not prayer, but the *Takbīr* (proclaiming the greatness of God) only (see al-Ṭabarī 1999: (12) 298, Ibn Kathīr 1994: (4) 567, al-Alūsī 1994: (15) 130). However, al-Zamakhsharī (1995: (4) 633) argues that the concept of *Takbīr* mentioned in verse (74:3) might refer to the same act that is usually performed in prayer, i.e. it might refer to the prayer itself. Al-Rāzī (2002: (15) 191-192) has the same opinion, adding that this verse may have

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<sup>102</sup> يا أيها المدثر، قم فأنذر، وريك فكبر the researcher has taken this translation from M. A. S. Abdel Haleem (2004: 397) but he has changed the first part (O you who are); in the original text it is written (You), the researcher argues that Haleem’s translation of this part is less accurate.

meant that there was prayer in the beginning of the Prophet's mission, and it may have been voluntary.

Some might argue that depending on verse (73:2) as proof that prayer began very early after the start of Islam is not accurate. This is because the Qur'ānic expression in this verse does not clearly refer to prayer. The first word in this verse is *قم* *qum*, which literally means (stand); this does not necessarily refer to prayer. The researcher argues that such an argument might not be fully acceptable since the terminology used in the Qur'ān is actually *قم الليل* *qum al-layl*. This concept should be taken as one concept not as two separate words, since it refers to a known concept in Islamic core sources, namely *قيام الليل* *Qiyām al-Layl* (praying throughout the night); it can be found in many of the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet Muhammad mentions this concept of referring to prayer at night in, for instance, the *ḥadīth* of al-Nasā'ī (2000: (1) 272)<sup>103</sup> and the *ḥadīth* of Muslim (2000: (1) 223).<sup>104</sup> However, the researcher argues that, since the Qur'ān does not mention the prayer explicitly, there may be a need to refer to the *ḥadīth* and the *sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad. This could strengthen the argument that there was a prayer before the Night Journey or at the start of Muhammad's Prophethood.

In this context, the researcher argues that there are different narrations that mention the prayer in Makkah before the Night Journey, which seems to contradict the different *aḥādīth* about the start of the obligation of the five prayers during the Night Journey. Ibn Ishāq clearly mentions that prayer started after Khadījah embraced

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<sup>103</sup> Narrated by Ḥumayd Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān: The Prophet Said: (The Best Prayer after the obligated one is *Qiyām al-Layl*...) (أفضل الصلاة بعد الصلاة (المفروضة قيام الليل).

<sup>104</sup> 'Ā'ishah said: (Do not leave *Qiyām al-Layl*, since the Messenger of God never left it, and he used, if he felt ill, to pray sitting (i.e. instead of standing)). قالت عائشة رضي الله عنها: (لا تدع قيام الليل، فإن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان لا يدعه، وكان إذا مرض أو كسل صلى قاعداً).

Islam; he mentions (2004: 180) that, at the beginning of the Prophethood, the Prophet and Khadījah used to pray secretly.

In addition, Ibn Ishāq quotes the companion ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas‘ūd: “We could not pray beside the Ka‘bah except when ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb embraced Islam” (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 225). It is known that ‘Umar converted to Islam in Makkah well before the Night Journey; he embraced Islam in the year 6 AB / 615 CE (see al-Mubārāpurī 1996: 109), i.e. after the first Muslim migration to Abyssinia. This account shows that the Muslims used to pray from quite an early stage. As also in the narration of Ibn Ishāq about ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib seeing the Prophet Muhammad and Khadījah praying only two days after the start of the Prophethood (see Ibn Ishāq: 181). Another narration, which shows that prayer started very early, is the narration quoted by al-Albānī about the prayer of the Prophet, Khadījah, and ‘Alī. Al-Albānī (2000 A: 115-116) quotes Ibn Ishāq:

‘Ufayf said: I came before Islam to Makkah, and I went to al-‘Abbās Ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib [as a guest]. When the sun rose, i.e. after sunrise, and became high in the sky, while I was looking at the Ka‘bah, a man came, and looked up to the sky, then he faced the Ka‘bah, and stood up facing it, and after a while a boy came and stood to his right hand, and then a woman came and stood behind them. Then the man bowed, so the boy and woman did, then the man stood up again, and so did the boy and woman, then the man prostrated, and they prostrated with him... etc<sup>105</sup>

This narration clearly shows that there was actually prayer from the very early stages of Islam. Ibn Hishām (2005: (pt.1) 177) mentions the start of prayer as being almost immediately after the conversion of Khadījah, the wife of the Prophet, to Islam,

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عن عفيف قال: جئت زمن الجاهلية إلى مكة، فنزلت على العباس بن عبد المطلب، فلما طلعت الشمس، وحلقت في السماء – وأنا أنظر إلى الكعبة – أقبل شاب، فرمى ببصره إلى السماء، ثم استقبل الكعبة، فقام مستقبليها، فلم يلبث حتى جاء غلام فقام عن يمينه، فلم يلبث حتى جاءت امرأة فقامت خلفهما، فركع الشاب، فركع الغلام والمرأة، فرفع الشاب، فرفع الغلام والمرأة، فخر الشاب ساجداً، ... فسجدا معه... The researcher quoted the whole narration earlier in this thesis (see p. 79).

knowing that she was the first person to convert to Islam after the Prophethood of Muhammad. This narration tells that there are no Muslims other than those with the Prophet Muhammad, i.e. Khadījah and ‘Alī. It could be argued that al-‘Abbās could have said his statement before he knew about Abū Bakr and the other early Muslims. Yet it seems clear that the narration speaks of a very early era in Islam. If there were many Muslims during the time of this narration, al-‘Abbās would have known them, since it is known that the companions of the Prophet Muhammad began to reveal their allegiance to Islam later.

It should also be noted that Ibn Hishām (2005: (pt.1) 177-178), when he discusses the start of prayer in Islam, quotes a narration from Ibn Ishāq. This states that the Angel Gabriel came to the Prophet, at a very early stage of Islam, and prayed with him at each of the five times of the obligatory prayers throughout two days. Gabriel then says: “O Mohammad, Prayer is within your prayer today and yesterday”.<sup>106</sup> The researcher argues that it seems that either Ibn Hishām added this narration here by mistake, or he may have wanted to give full information about the whole concept of prayer, including the time when prayer was instigated to being obliged to be performed five times a day. This narration speaks about the obligation of the five prayers in Islam; this occurred after the Night Journey yet he places it, while speaking about the start of the obligation of prayer, at the start of Islam. Ibn Hishām did not give the reason why he put this narration here, but al-Suhaylī (d. 581 AH / 1185 CE) (1994: (1) 425-426) comments on this narration in his explanation of the *Sīrah* of Ibn Hishām, arguing that:

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<sup>106</sup> يا محمد، الصلاة فيما بين صلاتك اليوم وصلاتك بالأمس

This *ḥadīth* should not have been mentioned in this place, since authentic scholars have agreed that this story happened the day after the Night Journey.<sup>107</sup>

This statement of al-Suhaylī strengthens the researcher’s argument; it shows that some scholars have paid attention to the account of Ibn Hishām in putting this story here, and considered the classification of this narration in this early stage of the Prophethood of Muhammad as inaccurate. In addition, it should be noted that Ibn Hishām mentions the obligation of five prayers a day while speaking about the Ascension to Heaven during the Night Journey (see Ibn Hishām 2005: (pt.2) 9-10). Therefore, it is most likely that Ibn Hishām may have put this story here either by mistake or for the purpose of mentioning the whole issue of prayer in Islam in one place.

This shows that prayer was most likely performed by the Prophet, and so by Muslims, since the beginning of the Prophet Muhammad’s mission. This makes it the first of the four physical pillars of Islam which are obligatory for Muslims.<sup>108</sup> However, this opens up another discussion about the form of prayer at the beginning; was it the same as the prayer performed by Muslims after the Night Journey or was it different? And how many prayers used to be prayed every day by Muslims?

On one hand, Ibn Ishāq (2004: 180) mentions a narration that says:

When prayer became obligatory for the Prophet, Gabriel came to him, while he was in a high place in Makkah, he [Gabriel] pointed to a place in the valley, and a spring of water came out,

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<sup>107</sup> وهذا الحديث لم يكن ينبغي أن يذكره في هذا الموضع، لأن أهل الصحيح متفقون على أن هذه القصة كانت في الغد من ليلة الإسراء

<sup>108</sup> The other three physical pillars of Islam are *Ṣiyām* (Fasting), *Zakāh* (Charity), and *Ḥajj* (Pilgrimage). These have been obligatory for Muslims since the migration of the Prophet to Madīnah.

so Gabriel made the *Wuḍū'* [ablution], while the Prophet was watching him, to show him how to make the ablution for the prayer, then the Prophet made the *Wuḍū'* in the same way he saw Gabriel doing it. After that, Gabriel stood up with the Prophet and led him in prayer, and the Prophet prayed in the same way as Gabriel, then Gabriel left.<sup>109</sup>

On the other hand, with regard to the number of daily prayers, al-Suhaylī (1994: (1) 423) quotes al-Muzanī (d. 264 AH / 878 CE):

Prayer, before the Night Journey, was a prayer before the sunset, and another one before the sunrise; this is strengthened by the verse [of the Qur'ān]: “And glorify the praise of you Lord at the fall of evening and the early morning” (Qur'ān 40:55).<sup>110</sup>

Al-Suhaylī adds that Yaḥyā Ibn Salām (d. 201 AH / 816 CE) had a similar opinion. The researcher argues that the statement of al-Muzanī is not based on any clear or strong evidence, except the verse of the Qur'ān. However, the researcher argues that this verse does not clearly mention prayer as a terminology; rather it refers to glorifying God. Yet it should be noted that most of the exegetes of the *Ma'thūr* school of *Tafsīr*, such as al-Baghawī (2002: (5) 29), al-Ṭabarī (1999: (11) 70-71), agree that the concept of ‘Glorifying the Praise of God’ in this verse refers to prayer except for Ibn Kathīr (1994: (4) 108), who seems to prefer the meaning of glorification in this verse rather than claiming that it means prayer.

<sup>109</sup> ان الصلاة حين افترضت على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أتاه جبريل وهو بأعلى مكة، فهمز له بعقبه في ناحية الوادي، فانفجرت منه عين. فتوضأ جبريل عليه السلام، ورسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ينظر إليه، ليريه كيف الطهور للصلاة، ثم توضأ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كما رأى جبريل توضأ، ثم قام به جبريل، فصلى به، وصلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بصلاته، ثم انصرف جبريل عليه السلام.

al-Suhaylī (1994: (1) 424-425) mentions a very close narration to Ibn Ishāq's, but he takes it from Zayd Ibn Hārithah. Yet al-Suhaylī argues that this *ḥadīth* is not mentioned in the sources of *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence), but is narrated only through a chain of narrators including ‘Abdullāh Ibn Lahī'ah, who was known, towards the end of his life, as being a weak narrator, which makes the whole narration weak. The researcher argues that having this weak narration as the only clue on this matter makes it more likely to be used to strengthen the argument, not as clear or strong evidence. Thus, it may be accepted that this incident may have occurred.

<sup>110</sup> وذكر المزماني أن الصلاة قبل الإسراء كانت صلاة قبل غروب الشمس وصلاة قبل طلوعها، ويشهد لهذا القول قوله سبحانه: (وسبح 55: بحمد ربك بالعشي والإبكار) غافر: Chapter 40, mentioned in this account, is Makkan as a whole.

Other exegetes of the *Ra'y* school such as al-Rāzī (2002: (14) 79) and al-Zamakhsharī (1995: (4) 169) agree with the *Ma'thūr* school, at least to some extent, though al-Rāzī refers to the verse as meaning prayer. It seems that he most likely does not prefer this meaning since he says “Generally, the meaning of the verse is an order to keep remembering God and glorifying Him all the time”.

However, it seems that the majority of the exegetes of the different schools, who assert that the glorification in this verse refers to the prayer, argue that the meaning of the term ‘the fall of evening and the early morning’ in this verse refers to the ‘*Aṣr*<sup>111</sup> and *Fajr*<sup>112</sup> prayers. Only al-Alūsī (1994 (12) 330-331) quotes al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110 AH / 728 CE), clarifying that “the meaning of this verse is two *rak'ah* (unit of prayer) in the morning and another two *rak'ah* at the evening, since the obligation in Makkah, at that time, was as such”. The researcher argues that this statement of al-Ḥasan strengthens al-Muzanī’s opinion.

In conclusion, prayer was the first practical manifestation of Muslim belief, and it began at the start of the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad. It seems that prayer has remained thus since the beginning of the Prophethood of Muhammad. The only change that took place after the Night Journey was in defining of the number of daily obligatory prayers to five prayers a day. It is very interesting to note that this major change occurred during the Ascension (*Mi'rāj*) that took place during the Night Journey, starting at Islamic Jerusalem. Moreover, Islamic Jerusalem was the first place on earth to receive the obligation of the five daily prayers. This shows the importance of Islamic Jerusalem and its central role in the history of prayer in Islam.

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<sup>111</sup> *Aṣr* Prayer is the third prayer of the Muslims in the day, and it is prayed between afternoon and sunset.

<sup>112</sup> *Fajr* Prayer is the first prayer of the Muslims in the day, and it is prayed at dawn before the sunrise.

## **The *Qiblah***

The word *Qiblah* refers to the “direction of prayer” (Qal‘ajī 1988: 356). The word *قِبْلَة* *Qiblah* in the Arabic Language comes from the root *ق ب ل* *Qāf Bā’ Lām*. It, literally, means ‘direction’ (see Ibn Manẓūr 1999: (11) 25, al-Fayrūz’ābādī 1991: (4) 46). This shows that the *Qiblah* in Islam is a specific direction towards which a Muslim should pray.

## ***Qiblah* in other religions**

The idea of directing prayer towards a specific side or horizon or towards a building was indeed not new to Islam. Jews and Christians also have their own directions during prayer. Christians in general, according to Gordon (1971: 212), used to direct their prayers towards the East, disregarding where a person was situated. However, Gordon argues that this idea could be different in the case of the Jews, since the direction of prayer for them is not always towards the East but towards “Holy Jerusalem, The City of God” (Gordon 1971:212). The researcher agrees with Gordon; Solomon, the builder of the Temple, according to the Bible, said: “And they pray to Yahweh, turning towards the city which you have chosen and towards the Temple which I have built for your name” (1 Kings 8:44); this verse clearly shows that direction of prayer for the Jews is in fact towards the ‘Temple’. However, it should be noted that among historians the site of the Temple is still unclear and debatable. Yet what is important in this text is the mentioning of the ‘City of God’, which can be concluded to be the city of Yabūs (Jerusalem). This means that Islamic Jerusalem as a region, where the city is situated, would have been considered as the *Qiblah* of the Jews who were outside this region. With regard to Christians, it seems from different religious and historical accounts that the direction of prayer for

the majority is in general towards the East (see Gordon 1971: 213). This choice has been given different reasons and interpretations.<sup>113</sup> Yet praying towards IslamicJerusalem is clearer in the case of the Jews, unlike in the Christian one.<sup>114</sup>

### ***Qiblah* of the Prophet Muhammad**

It is mentioned in the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad that he used to pray towards *Bayt al-Maqdis*, i.e. IslamicJerusalem.<sup>115</sup> Al-Qazqī (2003: 35-55) collected all the different narrations of *aḥādīth* that mention the change of the *Qiblah* from *ḥadīth* sources, mainly that of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal, al-Tirmidhī, Mālik (d. 179 AH / 795 CE), Abū Dawūd (d. 275 AH / 888 CE), Ibn Mājah (d. 275 AH / 888 CE), and al-Nasā'ī (d. 303 AH / 916 CE). The number of these narrations mentioned in these sources is 34 narrations.<sup>116</sup> Most of these narrations have slight differences, yet these do not affect them since the majority of the differences are in letters or a few non-central words. However, the researcher will concentrate his study on some of the *aḥādīth* and narrations that are related to this issue and that have

<sup>113</sup> The researcher will not tackle this issue since it is not relevant to this research.

<sup>114</sup> Usāmah Ibn Munqidh (d. 584 AH / 1188 CE) mentions an event that took place when he visited al-Aqṣā Mosque during the rule of the Crusaders. When Usāmah was performing prayer in al-Aqṣā Mosque directing himself almost towards the South, i.e. towards the Muslims' *Qiblah* in Makkah, a Crusade soldier approached him and turned him, by force, towards the East ordering him to pray in that direction. Usāmah records soldier's comment on the event. This comment shows that the soldier thought that the direction of prayer should be always towards the East, and that he did not know that they used to pray in Europe towards the East **because** it is the direction where the 'Holy City of Jerusalem' is (see Ibn Munqidh 1999: 134-135). The researcher argues that it seems that IslamicJerusalem's status as a *Qiblah*, in Christianity, could have been inherited from Jewish tradition, since the two religions believe in the Old Testament, i.e. the Torah.

<sup>115</sup> It should be noted here that the meaning of the term *Bayt al-Maqdis* in this context, i.e. whether it means a mosque, a city, or a region, does not affect this research and does not make any difference to the arguments, except if the direction of the Prophet's prayer inside al-Aqṣā Mosque, during the Night Journey, were to be studied.

However, the researcher argues that translating this term, from the Arabic language into the English language, **always** as 'IslamicJerusalem' might not be fully acceptable in all cases, especially when translating the Prophet's *aḥādīth*, and when there might be no clear reference in the *ḥadīth* to a mosque, a city, or a region (see Omar 2005). Therefore, the researcher will use the term *Bayt al-Maqdis* as it is when relating it to the Prophet's *aḥādīth*.

<sup>116</sup> In addition, al-Qazqī (2003: 35-55) mentions other 11 narrations mentioned in sources of *ḥadīth* other than the main ones mentioned earlier, such as that of Sa'īd Ibn Manṣūr (d.227 AH / 842 CE), Ibn Abī Shaybah (d.230 AH / 845 CE), al-Dārimī (d. 255 AH / 869 CE), and al-Ṭabarānī (d.360 AH / 971 CE). Also, he mentions 5 narrations of this event mentioned in the sources of Tafsīr, mainly that of al-Ṭabarī, and Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 327 AH / 939 CE).

significant variations; he will mention any important ones among these narrations throughout the study. Al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (2000: (1) 13):

Narrated by Al-Barā' Ibn 'Āzib: When the Prophet came to Madīnah, he stayed at the beginning in his grandfathers' or maternal uncles' home. They were from the *Anṣār* [the original residents of Madīnah]. He performed his prayers facing *Bayt al-Maqdis*, and this remained for sixteen or seventeen months. Yet he wished that he could pray facing the Ka'bah [in Makkah]. The first prayer which he performed facing the Ka'bah was the *'Aṣr* [afternoon] prayer, and he was accompanied by some people. Then, one of those who prayed with him [towards Makkah] passed near some people, in a mosque, bowing during their prayers [facing IslamicJerusalem]. The man said: "I swear by God, I testify that I prayed with the Messenger of God facing Makkah". Hearing that, those people changed their direction towards the Ka'bah immediately. In the meantime, Jews and the people of the scripture were first pleased to see the Prophet facing *Bayt al-Maqdis* in his prayers. Yet when he changed his prayer direction towards the Ka'bah, they refused that.<sup>117</sup>

In this *ḥadīth*, it can be seen that the narrator has doubts about the period during which the Prophet faced towards IslamicJerusalem in his prayer. The confusion here is between 16 and 17 months. Nevertheless, there are other narrations that specify the duration, such as that of al-Nasā'ī (2000: (1) 120):

Narrated by al-Barā' Ibn 'Āzib: The Messenger of God came to Madīnah and prayed towards *Bayt al-Maqdis* for sixteen months, then, he was ordered to turn to the Ka'bah. A man, who prayed with the Prophet [towards Makkah], passed near people from the *Anṣār* [praying towards IslamicJerusalem] and said: I testify that the Messenger of God has been ordered to turn to the Ka'bah, so they turned towards the Ka'bah [during their prayer].<sup>118</sup>

عن البراء بن عازب أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم كان أول ما قدم المدينة نزل على أجداده أو قال أخواله من الأنصار، وأنه صلى قِبَلَ بَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ سِتَّةَ عَشَرَ شَهْرًا أو سبعة عشر شهرًا وكان يعجبه أن تكون قِبَلَتُهُ قِبَلَ الْبَيْتِ وأنه صلى أول صلاة صلاة العصر وصلى معه قوم فخرج رجل ممن صلى معه فمر على أهل مسجد وهم راكعون فقال أشهد بالله لقد صليت مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قبل مكة فداروا كما هم قبل البيت، وكانت اليهود قد أعجبهم إذ كان يصلي قبل بيت المقدس وأهل الكتاب فلما ولي وجهه قبل البيت أنكروا ذلك.

عن البراء بن عازب قال: قدم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم المدينة فصلى نحو بيت المقدس ستة عشر شهرًا ثم إنه وجه إلى الكعبة، فمر رجل قد كان صلى مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم على قوم من الأنصار فقال أشهد أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قد وجه إلى الكعبة، فاتحرفوا إلى الكعبة.

This narration gives an exact duration, namely 16 months. It should be noted that this *ḥadīth* is also cited by Al-Barā' Ibn 'Āzib, the same teller of al-Bukhārī's narration. For a moment, it could be argued that there is a contradiction between the two narrations; one says that the period was exactly 16 months, and the other is in doubt as to whether it was between 16 and 17 months.

Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852 AH / 1448 CE) gathered and studied almost all the chains of the narrators of this *ḥadīth* in particular and compared them: those that are in doubt about the period, i.e. whether between 16 and 17 months such as al-Bukhārī's; others that state that the period was 16 months such as Muslim and al-Nasā'ī's narrations; and the ones who state that the period was 17 months such as al-Tabarānī's (d. 360 AH / 971 CE). Al-'Asqalānī (1997: (1) 130) tries to reconcile the two opinions (16 and 17 months):

The reconciliation of the two narrations is easy; whoever states that the period was 16 months must have counted the days only, starting from the day when the Prophet entered Madīnah until the month during which the turning of the *Qiblah* happened, while whoever states that the period was 17 months must have counted the two months altogether. Whoever doubts the two opinions must have hesitated.

The researcher agrees with al-'Asqalānī's argument; the real cause of the disagreement between the narrators could be due to the difference in including the whole month during which the Prophet Muhammad migrated to Madīnah and the whole month in which the change of the *Qiblah* occurred, in the counting, as al-'Asqalānī clarifies. The Prophet arrived at Madīnah in the middle of *Rabī' al-Awwal* as the majority of scholars agree (see al-'Asqalānī 1997: (1) 130). Since al-Bukhārī's narration was not specific and Muslim's one was specific clearly to 16 months, the duration would most likely be 16 months, because Muslim's narration is more

authentic compared with other narrations, except that of al-Bukhārī. Al-‘Asqalānī (1997: (1) 130) mentions that it is most likely that the change of the *Qiblah* was in the middle of *Rajab*; this is also how Ibn Hishām quotes Ibn Ishāq (see Ibn Hishām 2005: (pt.2) 98). The researcher argues that if 16 months are to be counted from the middle of *Rabī‘ al-Awwal* in the year 1 AH, the month of changing the *Qiblah* would be the middle of *Rajab* in the year 2 AH.

However, there is actually more confusion in this issue; Ibn Mājah (2000: 146) narrates the following *ḥadīth*:

Al-Barā’ bin ‘Āzib said: We prayed with the messenger of God towards *Bayt al-Maqdis* for 18 months, and the *Qiblah* was changed to the Ka‘bah two months after he entered Madīnah. The messenger of God used, when he prayed towards *Bayt al-Maqdis*, to turn his face in the sky a lot, and God knew from his Prophet’s heart that he (the Prophet) liked the Ka‘bah, so Gabriel ascended to heaven, and the Prophet watched him with care, awaiting for what he might receive. God revealed the verse: (We see the turning of your face in the sky) (2:144). Then, someone came to us and said: (the *Qiblah* has been changed to the Ka‘bah. At that time, we had already prayed two *rak‘ahs* towards *Bayt al-Maqdis*, and we were bowing, so we turned our directions (towards Makkah) and continued the prayer. The messenger of God asked Gabriel: O Gabriel, what is the situation of our previous prayer towards *Bayt al-Maqdis*? So God revealed the verse: (and God would never waste your faith) (2:143).<sup>119</sup>

It might be strange that this narration indicates that the period before the change of the *Qiblah* was 18 months, in addition to the fact that this is also narrated by al-Barā’ bin ‘Āzib. The researcher argues that this confusion in the three narrations shows that

عن البراء قال: صلينا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم نحو بيت المقدس ثمانية عشر شهراً وصرفت القبلة إلى الكعبة بعد دخوله المدينة بشهرين، وكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إذا صلى إلى بيت المقدس أكثر تقلب وجهه في السماء، وعلم الله من قلب نبيه صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه يهوى الكعبة، فصعد جبريل فجعل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يتبعه بصره وهو يصعد بين السماء والأرض ينظر ما يأتيه، فأنزل الله: (قد نرى تقلب وجهك في السماء) الآية، فأتانا أت فقال إن القبلة صرفت إلى الكعبة وقد صلينا ركعتين إلى بيت المقدس ونحن ركوع فتحولنا فبينما على ما مضى من صلاتنا فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: يا جبريل، كيف حالنا في صلاتنا إلى بيت المقدس؟ فأنزل الله عز وجل: (وما كان الله ليضيع إيمانكم).

there could be confusion in some of the narrators of this *ḥadīth*, i.e. the names of the narrators in the *sanad* after al-Barā’.

The researcher argues that, in order to clarify this confusion, the chain of narrators should be studied. It is noted that al-Albānī (d. 1999 CE) argues that the narration of Ibn Mājah is weak (see al-Albānī 1997: 80). In addition, al-‘Asqalānī examined the chain of these narrators in particular and found one person in the *sanad*, namely Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Ayyāsh, who is well known as a weak narrator due to his bad memorisation. Al-‘Asqalānī also argues that this narrator was confused (*wahima*) (see Al-‘Asqalānī 1997: (1) 130). The researcher argues that in this case this narration cannot be reliable in this context since it contradicts other more authentic ones.

### **The duration of praying towards Islamicjerusalem before the migration**

Although the narration of Ibn Mājah on the change of the *Qiblah* is not accepted, it raises another matter of discussion, namely the period during which the Prophet prayed towards Islamicjerusalem **before** his migration to Madīnah. The researcher argues that it is known that Muslims started praying the five obligatory prayers a day after the Night Journey, which took place before the migration to Madīnah. Therefore, the question about the direction of prayer in Makkah, before the migration, should be answered.

Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal (1995: (3) 310) narrates:

Narrated by Ibn ‘Abbās: “Prophet Muhammad used to pray, while he was in Makkah, towards *Bayt Al-Maqdis*, putting the Ka‘bah in front of him. He

stayed [praying towards *Bayt al-Maqdis*] after his migration for sixteen months, then he was turned [by God] towards the Ka‘bah”.<sup>120</sup>

It is clear from this *ḥadīth* that the Prophet used to pray towards IslamicJerusalem when he was resident in Makkah, yet he would pray towards IslamicJerusalem but facing the Ka‘bah, i.e. he used to pray behind the southern corner of the Ka‘bah, which is called *al-Rukn al-Yamānī* (The Yemeni corner), and thus he faced IslamicJerusalem at the same time of facing the Ka‘bah.

Ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Al-Mubārakfūrī (d. 1353 AH / 1934 CE) (2003: (8) 253) mentions in his explanation of the *Sunan* of al-Tirmidhī a narration from al-Ṭabarānī, who refers it to Ibn Jurayj, saying:

The Prophet prayed in the beginning towards the Ka‘bah, and then he was turned [by God] to *Bayt al-Maqdis* while he was in Makkah, and he prayed [towards there] for three years, then he migrated, and prayed towards it [*Bayt al-Maqdis*] after his arrival in Madīnah for sixteen months, and then, God turned him towards the Ka‘bah [again].<sup>121</sup>

Al-‘Asqalānī also mentions this narration (1997: (1) 651). Surprisingly, the two authors, al-Mubārakfūrī and al-‘Asqalānī, comment on this narration in exactly the same words. In al-‘Asqalānī’s comment on this narration (1997: (1) 651), he says that this is narrated by Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Yazīd Ibn Aslam, a weak narrator. In addition, there is confusion in the source from which al-‘Asqalānī quoted this

عن ابن عباس قال: (كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يصلي وهو بمكة نحو بيت المقدس والكعبة بين يديه، وبعد ما هاجر إلى المدينة ستة عشر شهراً، ثم صرف إلى الكعبة).

This *ḥadīth* is authentic as al-Haythamī (d. 707 AH / 1308 CE) mentions in *Majma‘ al-Zawā‘id* (2001: (2) 88).

صلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أول ما صلى إلى الكعبة ثم صرف إلى بيت المقدس وهو بمكة فصلى ثلاث حجج ثم هاجر فصلى إليه بعد قدومه إلى المدينة ستة عشر شهراً ثم وجهه الله إلى الكعبة.

narration.<sup>122</sup> The researcher argues that since this narration contradicts the other more authentic ones in this context, it should not be accepted.

The researcher argues that looking at the narrations and *ahādīth* mentioned earlier, it is clear that most, spoke about the period of praying towards IslamicJerusalem **after** the migration to Madīnah, except for the *ḥadīth* of Ibn Ḥanbal that mentioned praying in Makkah towards IslamicJerusalem from behind the Ka‘bah. Yet this narration did not mention anything about the period during which the Prophet prayed towards IslamicJerusalem while he was in Makkah. It should be noted that only Ibn Mājah’s narration, which specified that the Prophet prayed in Madīnah towards IslamicJerusalem for two months, clearly stated a period during which the Prophet prayed towards IslamicJerusalem while he was in Makkah. However, the researcher concluded earlier that this narration is weak and cannot be considered as a proof in this context.

Moreover, the narration of al-Barā’ Ibn Ma‘rūr (d. 1 AH / 622 CE) also supports the opinion that the Muslims prayed towards IslamicJerusalem before the migration of the Prophet Muhammad to Madīnah. This narration is mentioned by Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354 AH / 965 CE) (2000: 87-88) and Ibn Hishām (2005: (pt. 2) 27). This story took place when a delegation from Madīnah, including al-Barā’, came to the Prophet in

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<sup>122</sup> In the printed copy of al-‘Asqalānī’s book, it says that this narration was taken from al-Ṭabarānī. However, a footnote states that in another manuscript of the same book of al-‘Asqalānī, he says that he quoted this *ḥadīth* from al-Ṭabarī not al-Ṭabarānī. When the researcher searched for the *ḥadīth* in al-Ṭabarānī’s books, he could not find it; neither could he find this narration in any book of al-Ṭabarī. Moreover, there is a missing volume of al-Ṭabarānī’s ‘*al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*’; this is what caused the confusion and what makes confirming the truth about the source of al-‘Asqalānī’s narration very hard. In addition, al-‘Asqalānī mentions another *ḥadīth* in the same paragraph which he quotes from al-Ṭabarī; after he mentions the two *ḥadīths* he says: “and al-Ṭabarī narrated this *ḥadīth* from ‘Abdul Rahmān Ibn Yazīd Ibn Aslam, who is weak” (1997: (1) 651). The researcher found that the first *ḥadīth*, which al-‘Asqalānī quoted from al-Ṭabarī, was not narrated by Ibn Aslam, and his name was not in the chain of narrators. Therefore, the researcher argues that al-‘Asqalānī was most likely discussing this *ḥadīth* of the *Qiblah*, i.e. al-Ṭabarānī’s narration. Thus, the researcher argues that this narration is weak and confusing, and hence unreliable.

Makkah for the second al-‘Aqabah pledge in the year 1 BH / 622 CE. The narration goes:

When they [i.e. the delegation of Madīnah] were at Dhī al-Ḥulayfah, al-Barā’ Ibn Ma’rūr Ibn Khansā’ Ibn Ṣakhr, who was the leader of the *Anṣār* [the Muslims of Madīnah], said: “I have an opinion and I do not know whether you agree with me or not; I decided not to turn my back to this building [i.e. the Ka’bah], and to pray towards it”. They said: “By God, this is not a good opinion, and we would never pray to a different *Qiblah* [other than Islamicjerusalem]”. They refused his opinion and he insisted to pray towards it [i.e. the Ka’bah], when the sun set, he prayed towards the Ka’bah, and they prayed towards al-Shām, [and they remained so] until they arrived at Makkah. Al-Barā’ Ibn Ma’rūr said to Ka’b Ibn Mālik: “O my nephew, by God, I am not comfortable with what I did during this journey, so lets go to the Messenger of God in order to ask him about what I did”.... [When they met the Prophet] Al-Barā’ Ibn Ma’rūr said to him: “O Messenger of God, I have done something in my journey that I am not comfortable with, so tell me [your opinion on the matter]; I decided not to turn my back towards this building [i.e. the Ka’bah], and I prayed towards it. My peers scolded me and they opposed me”. The Messenger of God said: “You were on a *Qiblah* that you should have been patient [and pray] towards it”, and he did not say more than that.<sup>123</sup>

This narration shows clearly that the direction of *Qiblah* was towards Islamicjerusalem before the migration of the Prophet Muhammad, and the Muslims of Madīnah were directing their prayers towards it from after the first pledge of al-‘Aqabah. Yet this narration does not specify when in Makkah the start of prayer towards Islamicjerusalem took place.

Thus, the researcher returns to his study of the start of prayer, as a whole, in Islam, relying on that and on what was found in the study of the different narrations and *aḥādīth* about the change of the *Qiblah*, in which the researcher concluded that

<sup>123</sup> فلما كانوا بذی الحلیفة قال البراء ابن معرور بن صخر بن خنساء و كان کبیر الأنصار : إني قد رأیت رأياً ما أدري أتوافقوني علیه أم لا قد رأیت ألا أجعل هذه النبیه مني بظهر ، و أن أصلي إليها - یعنی الکعبة ، فقالوا له : و الله ما هذا برأي و ما کنا لنصلي إلى غیر قبله ، فأبوا ذلك علیه و أبى أن لا يصلي إلا إليها ، فلما غابت الشمس صلی إلى الکعبة و صلی أصحابه إلى الشام حتی قدموا مکه ، قال البراء بن معرور لکعب بن مالک : و الله یا ابن أخي ! قد وقع في نفسي مما صنعت في سفري هذا فانطلق بنا إلى رسول الله صلی الله علیه و سلم حتی أسأله عما صنعت ... فقال له البراء یا رسول الله صلی الله علیه و سلم ! إني صنعت في سفري هذا شيئاً قد وقع في نفسي منه شيء فأخبرني عنه ، رأیت أن لا أجعل هذه النبیه مني بظهر و صلیت إليها ، فعنفني أصحابي و خالفوني فقال رسول الله صلی الله علیه و سلم لقد كنت علی قبله لو صیرت علیها - و لم یزد علی ذلك

Muslims prayed towards Islamicjerusalem from the beginning before turning the *Qiblah* towards the Ka‘bah after the migration to Madīnah in the year 2 AH. Fadi Alrabi (2007: 50) argues that there is no evidence that there was any change of the *Qiblah* after the Night Journey (otherwise such a vital event would have been well-recorded), which means that praying towards Islamicjerusalem was the original act of the Muslims since the start of prayer in Makkah. The researcher, therefore, concludes that the Prophet and the Muslims prayed towards Islamicjerusalem more than 14 years; only about 16 months of these years were in Madīnah, the rest were in Makkah. In other words, the Prophet Muhammad in his lifetime prayed towards Islamicjerusalem more than he prayed towards Makkah.

### **The change of the *Qiblah* in the Qur’ān**

Studying the issue of praying towards Islamicjerusalem in the first place opens gates for discussion with regard to the actual reasons for changing the *Qiblah* from Islamicjerusalem to Makkah, and the circumstances that surrounded this issue. Does the change of the *Qiblah* mean that Islamicjerusalem lost its importance for the Prophet Muhammad? Or could the principle of praying towards that region have been a mistake from the beginning until it was later “corrected” to Makkah?

The Qur’ān refers to the changing of the *Qiblah* in 9 verses, namely verses 142-150 in chapter 2 (*al-Baqarah*).<sup>124</sup> These verses show different aspects that could help in

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<sup>124</sup> The researcher will not go into detailed study of all these verses since this is out of the scope of this research, these verses were studied fully by Alrabi (2007) in his unpublished Master Dissertation titled: “Islamicjerusalem: The First *Qiblah*”. Thus the researcher will only mention these verses for reference. These verses read as follows:

The fools among the people will say: ‘what turned them [i.e. Muslims] from their *Qiblah* that they were [praying] towards it?’ Say: ‘To God belongs the East and the West, He guides whoever He desires to a strait path’ \* And thus we have made you a *wasat* [modest, middle, upper in real faith] nation, so that you may be witnesses unto the people, and so that the Prophet be a witness unto you. Yet We have not made the *Qiblah* that you were [facing during your prayer] but to know who follows

understanding the circumstances and reasons behind this change. Throughout the verses, the Qur'ān builds different arguments and reasons to support the decision of changing the *Qiblah*. The sequence of the verses before these supports this argument. For more than 80 verses in this chapter, namely verses 40-123, the Qur'ān strongly criticises the people of the scriptures, mainly the Jews (Children of Israel), and decides that they disobeyed God and changed the real message that was revealed to them through the Prophet Moses and the other Prophets. Then, starting from verse 124, the Qur'ān describes the story of Prophet Abraham's building of the Ka'bah in Makkah. This is followed by mentioning the Prophet Jacob (Israel) and his legacy to his children, concentrating on the concept of Islam in particular within these two stories, i.e. the story of Abraham and Jacob. After that, in verses 135-141, the Qur'ān argues that Muslims, namely the followers of the Prophet Muhammad, are the true

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the Messenger and who turns over [i.e. disobeys]. Verily, it was immense [i.e. very hard] except for those whom God has guided. God would never make your faith be lost. Verily, God is Most Kind and Merciful to People \* Verily, We see the turning of your face towards the heaven. Thus We will turn you to a *Qiblah* that may please you. So, turn your [i.e. Muhammad] face [i.e. in the prayer] towards al-Ḥarām Mosque [in Makkah], and wherever you [i.e. the Muslims] were, turn your faces towards it [al-Ḥarām Mosque]. Verily, the people of the scripture [i.e. Jews and Christians] know that it is the truth from their Lord, and God is not unaware of what they are doing \* Verily, even if you brought the people of the Scripture every sign, they would never follow your [i.e. Muhammad] *Qiblah*, and you [i.e. Muhammad] will never follow their *Qiblah*, and neither of them [i.e. the people of the Scripture] will follow each other's *Qiblah*. If you follow their desires, after what you have received of knowledge, you will be surely one of the unjust people \* Those to whom We gave the Scripture, they know him [i.e. Muhammad, or "it" which might refer to the Scriptures and the Qur'ān] as they know their own sons. Verily, a party of them covers the truth while they know \* The truth from your Lord [is in this Qur'ān], so do not be one of those in doubt \* For every one [i.e. nation] a *Qiblah* towards which he faces, so hasten towards the good [i.e. things or deeds]. Wherever you be, God can bring you all together. Verily, God can do everything \* And from wherever you [i.e. Muhammad] start [a prayer], turn your face towards al-Ḥarām Mosque, for it is the truth from your Lord, and God is not unaware of what you [All] do \* And from wherever you [i.e. Muhammad] start [a prayer], turn your face towards al-Ḥarām Mosque, and wherever you [i.e. Muslims] were, turn your faces towards it, so that the people [of other faiths] may not have any argument against you, except for those who are unjust [i.e. wrong-doers], [as for those,] do not fear them, but fear Me, and so that I would convey My grace on you, and that you may be guided. (Qur'ān 2: 142-150)

سيقول السفهاء من الناس ما ولاهم عن قبلتهم التي كانوا عليها، قل الله المشرق والمغرب يهدي من يشاء إلى صراط مستقيم \* وكذلك جعلناكم أمة وسطاً لتكونوا شهداء على الناس ويكون الرسول عليكم شهيداً، وما جعلنا القبلة التي كنت عليها إلا لنعلم من يتبع الرسول ممن ينقلب على عقبيه، وإن كانت لكبيرة إلا على الذين هدى الله، وما كان الله ليضيع إيمانكم، إن الله بالناس لرؤوف رحيم \* قد نرى تقلب وجهك في السماء، فلنولينك قبلة ترضاها، فول وجهك شطر المسجد الحرام، وحيث ما كنتم فولوا وجوهكم شطره، وإن الذين أوتوا الكتاب ليعلمون أنه الحق من ربهم، وما الله بغافل عما يعملون \* ولئن أتيت الذين أوتوا الكتاب بكل آية ما تبعوا قبلتك، وما أنت بتابع قبلتهم، وما بعضهم بتابع قبلة بعض، ولئن اتبعت أهواءهم من بعد ما جاءك من العلم إنك إذا لمن الظالمين \* الذين آتيناهم الكتاب يعرفونه كما يعرفون أبناءهم، وإن فريقاً منهم ليكتمون الحق وهم يعملون \* الحق من ربك فلا تكونن من الممترين \* ولكل وجهة هو موليها فاستبقوا الخيرات، أينما تكونوا يأت بكم الله جميعاً، إن الله على كل شيء قدير \* ومن حيث خرجت فول وجهك شطر المسجد الحرام وإنه للحق من ربك وما الله بغافل عما تعملون \* ومن حيث خرجت فول وجهك شطر المسجد الحرام وحيث ما كنتم فولوا وجوهكم شطره لئلا يكون للناس عليكم حجة إلا الذين ظلموا منهم فلا تخشوهم واخشوني، ولأتم نعمتي عليكم ولعلكم تهتدون.

followers of the Prophets Abraham, Jacob and Isaac. It is noted that this came about soon after mentioning the rebuilding of the Ka‘bah by Abraham. Then, the Qur’ān starts the verses that discuss the changing of the *Qiblah*. It could be understood that the whole sequence of the verses before the verses of the *Qiblah*, i.e. 40-141, came to pave the way for this decision that the Qur’ān itself describes as “immense” (2:143).

The researcher has studied these verses of the *Qiblah*, i.e. verses 142-150, in different *Tafsīr* sources of the two main schools of *Tafsīr*, namely *al-Ma‘thūr* and *al-Ra’y*.<sup>125</sup> The majority of these exegetes argue around the main ideas that had been gathered and classified in al-Ṭabarī’s *Tafsīr*. The researcher argues that the main two points relevant to this research, among the different arguments in the verses, are the historical authenticity of this *Qiblah*, i.e. Makkah, and the reasons for the change of the *Qiblah*. In order to study these points, there is a need to investigate the authenticity of Islamic Jerusalem as being a *Qiblah* for the Muslims, in the first place, in the Qur’ān and compare this with the previous Prophets, since the issue of the changing of the *Qiblah* is linked to this. This opens a discussion on the matter of the point of reference that led to state Islamic Jerusalem as being the *Qiblah* of the Muslims first.

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<sup>125</sup> The researcher studied in depth the different classical and contemporary *Tafsīr* sources of these verses and compared them. This included different *Tafsīr* of the *Ma‘thūr* and the *Ra’y* schools such as al-Ṭabarī (1999), Ibn Kathīr (1994), al-Ṣuyūṭī (2000), al-Shawkānī (2000), al-Samarqandī (1997), al-Baghawī (2002), Ibn ‘Aṭīyyah (2001), Ibn al-Jawzī (1987), al-Alūsī (1994), al-Zamakhsharī (1995), al-Qurṭubī (1998), al-Rāzī (1990), al-Bayḍāwī (1988), al-Ṭabarsī (1983), Sayyid Quṭb (1996), Ibn ‘Āshūr (1997), al-Sha‘rāwī (1991) and others. While studying the verses in the different sources, the researcher noted that the majority followed the way of the *Ma‘thūr* school in general, even some of the major *Tafsīr* sources of the *Ra’y* school, such as al-Rāzī and al-Zamakhsharī. Yet it should be noted that some of the exegetes of this school, i.e. the *Ra’y*, did not depart from their school, trying to interpret the verses according to the school of *Ra’y*. Quṭb and al-Sha‘rāwī are the best examples on these scholars. In addition, though al-Rāzī tried to stay within the *Ra’y* school, he followed the *Ma‘thūr* school in many of his main arguments on these verses.

## The point of reference in praying towards Islamicjerusalem

This issue raises a question, namely whether praying towards Islamicjerusalem, in the first place, can be considered as a revelation from God, or whether it was the Prophet Muhammad's personal choice. Al-Ṭabarī (1999: (2) 6-7) investigated this issue and mentions two main opinions among the scholars: first, the Prophet Muhammad chose Islamicjerusalem as a *Qiblah* without any revelation from God; this can be noted in a narration by Abū al-ʿĀliyah (al-Ṭabarī 1999: (2) 6):

The Prophet of God was given the choice to turn his face [in the prayer] wherever he choses, so he chose *Bayt al-Maqdis* in order to approach the people of the scripture [i.e. the Jews] and so it was his *Qiblah* for sixteen months, during which he used to turn his face in the sky [i.e. hoping to be ordered to pray towards the Kaʿbah], then God turned him towards the al-Ḥarām Mosque [i.e. towards the Kaʿbah as a *Qiblah*].<sup>126</sup>

The researcher argues that Abū al-ʿĀliyah refers this narration to the Prophet though there is no connection between them; Abū al-ʿĀliyah is not a companion of the Prophet, but a *tābiʿī* (successor), which means that there is a disconnection between him and the Prophet. Especially that he is the only one who narrates this from the Prophet without a connection, which makes it *ḥadīth mursal*,<sup>127</sup> which is considered weak according to the majority of *ḥadīth* scholars (see ʿItir 1997: 371) especially if it contradicts a stronger narration or text.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>126</sup> قال أبو العالية: إن نبي الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خيّر أن يوجه وجهه حيث شاء، فاختر بيت المقدس لكي يتألف أهل الكتاب، فكانت قبلته ستة عشر شهراً، وهو في ذلك يقلب وجهه في السماء، ثم وجهه الله إلى البيت الحرام.

<sup>127</sup> The *ḥadīth mursal* is a *ḥadīth* that is mentioned by a *tābiʿī* from the Prophet without mentioning a companion between the *tābiʿī* and the Prophet (see ʿItir 1997: 370).

<sup>128</sup> Abū al-ʿĀliyah's narration also contradicts another weak narration mentioned by al-Ṭabarī (1999: (2) 7), in which he quotes Ibn ʿAbbās considering the Kaʿbah as the *Qiblah* of Abraham. This says:

Narrated by al-Muthannā: narrated by ʿAbdullāh Ibn Ṣāliḥ: narrated by Muʿāwiyah Ibn Ṣāliḥ: narrated by ʿAlī Ibn Abū Ṭalḥah: narrated by Ibn ʿAbbās: When the Messenger of God migrated to Madinah, and most of its people were Jewish, God ordered him to pray towards *Bayt al-Maqdis*, so the Jews rejoiced. The Messenger of God prayed towards it [i.e. *Bayt al-Maqdis*] for more than ten months, and the Messenger of God used to love the *Qiblah* of Abraham Peace Be Upon Him, and he

This is the case here, the narration of Abū al-‘Āliyah contradicts a Qur’ānic text; verse 143 in chapter 2 of the Qur’ān, which is one of the verses that discuss the change of the *Qiblah*, says:

Yet We have not made the *Qiblah* that you were [facing during your prayer] but to know who follows the Messenger and who turns over.<sup>129</sup>  
(2:143)

It should be noted that the Qur’ān uses the expression “We have not made the *Qiblah*” to refer to the appointment of IslamicJerusalem as the first *Qiblah*. This expression shows clearly that appointing IslamicJerusalem as a *Qiblah* was not the Prophet Muhammad’s own opinion or choice, it came from God. In other words, the appointment of IslamicJerusalem as a *Qiblah* was a divinely revelation as this verse of the Qur’ān clarifies. Moreover, the Qur’ānic expression ‘*Tarḍāhā*’ (accept it), in verse (2:143), is also clear evidence that the Prophet Muhammad had no choice in praying towards IslamicJerusalem in the first place. It was a revelation from God. Should the Prophet Muhammad have had a choice in choosing his *Qiblah*, he would not have waited for a revelation to change it.

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used to supplicate and look towards the sky, so God revealed: “Verily, We see the turning of your face towards the heaven” [Qur’ān 2: 144]... (etc).

The researcher argues that this weak narration is mentioned by a companion, namely, Ibn ‘Abbās, who was closer to the Prophet’s acts. This makes it in a better position than that of Abū al-‘Āliyah, since Ibn ‘Abbās was closer to the Prophet Muhammad and his narration is considered as a *ḥadīth marfū‘*, i.e. a real *ḥadīth* narrated from the Prophet directly by a companion. Therefore, as the two narrations contradict each other, then Ibn ‘Abbās’s narration should be favoured as evidence due to its greater closeness to the Prophet. Also, al-‘Asqalānī (1997: (1) 651) mentions these narrations and agrees that the *ḥadīth* of Ibn ‘Abbās can be considered as proof that praying towards IslamicJerusalem was through a revelation from God, not because of the Prophet, which strengthens the researcher’s argument even more. However, this narration is still rejected since the rest of its text shows that the satisfaction of the Jews was a factor that affected the decision of praying towards IslamicJerusalem and changing the *Qiblah*, which contradicts the Qur’ānic text as the researcher clarifies in this section.

<sup>129</sup> وما جعلنا القبلة التي كنت عليها إلا لنعلم من يتبع الرسول ممن ينقلب على عقبيه

### **The *Qiblah* of the Prophet, and the *Qiblah* of the previous Prophets**

It is noted that the verses of the *Qiblah* do not mention anything about IslamicJerusalem in name. In addition, the verses concentrate on the Ka‘bah as being the true *Qiblah* and that praying towards it is the ‘Truth from your Lord’ (2: 149). This raises a question about the authenticity of IslamicJerusalem itself as a *Qiblah*; does this mean that the Qur’ān decides that IslamicJerusalem was a false *Qiblah*?

The researcher argues that although the Qur’ān does not mention IslamicJerusalem in name while speaking about the previous verses, it mentions names of Prophets that have never been recorded historically as having visited Makkah, such as Jacob (Israel) and Isaac. It does not say whether Abraham, Isaac and Jacob actually did pray towards Makkah or IslamicJerusalem. Yet this does not solve the problem of whether this means that those Prophets did actually pray towards IslamicJerusalem or towards Makkah. This is an important point since, if those Prophets, mentioned in the Qur’ān, did not pray towards IslamicJerusalem at all, and the Prophet Muhammad chose to pray to IslamicJerusalem of his own accord, this means that the whole issue of changing the *Qiblah* to Makkah was only to correct a mistake, which was made by the Muslims, after more than 14 years of praying towards IslamicJerusalem.

Al-Ratrout (2005: 12) argues that the first *Qiblah* of all the Prophets was towards the Ka‘bah in Makkah; according to al-Ratrout, the Ka‘bah was the first house of worship to be built in history, and thus all the buildings of worship of the Prophets must have been built facing the direction of the Ka‘bah until the *Qiblah* was turned to IslamicJerusalem during the time of the Israelites. Al-Ratrout depends, in his argument, on Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Ḥamawī (d. 1098 AH / 1687 CE), who states

this in his book *Tuhfat al-Akyās*<sup>130</sup>. The researcher argues that Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ḥamawī's argument does not depend on historical texts dating back to the times of the previous Prophets. It should be noted that none of the early religious texts of the three monotheistic religions, i.e. Judaism, Christianity and Islam, explicitly mention anything related to Makkah being a direction of prayer for the Prophets. The only surviving places of worship, dated back to the times of previous Prophets, are the Ka‘bah and al-Aqṣā Mosque. Al-Aqṣā is directed towards the Ka‘bah, as argued by al-Ratrout (2005: 12). Al-Ratrout adds that this direction shows that the Ka‘bah was most likely built as a point of reference for all other places of worship.

According to Al-Ṭabarī's narration (1999: (2) 7), mentioned earlier, Ibn ‘Abbās refers to the Ka‘bah as being the *Qiblah* of Abraham, when he says:

The Messenger of God used to love the *Qiblah* of Abraham Peace Be Upon Him.<sup>131</sup>

This text mentions the Ka‘bah clearly as the *Qiblah* of Abraham. The researcher argues that this narration's authenticity is accepted, since all the mentioned narrators are considered trustworthy. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (d. 734 AH / 1334 CE) (1986: (1) 313) adds the Prophet Ishmael, and argues that the Ka‘bah was his *Qiblah*. It should be noted that the concept of ‘The *Qiblah* of Abraham’ is not mentioned in al-Bukhārī's narration of this *ḥadīth* (2000: (1) 84), but it mentions ‘the Ka‘bah’ by name instead of ‘the *Qiblah* of Abraham’; yet al-Bukhārī's narration was taken from al-Barā’, not from Ibn ‘Abbās, which means that Ibn ‘Abbās is most likely the actual source of the term ‘the *Qiblah* of Abraham’ in al-Ṭabarī's narration. This strengthens the opinion

<sup>130</sup> This book has not been printed; there are a few manuscripts of it in some libraries in Damascus and Madinah. Unfortunately, the researcher could not gain access to this manuscript.

<sup>131</sup> فكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يحب قبلة إبراهيم عليه السلام

that the Ka‘bah was the *Qiblah* of at least the Prophet Abraham; thus there is no reason to refuse the argument that the Ka‘bah could have been the *Qiblah* of some Prophets other than Abraham due to his high rank among the Prophets, as the Qur’ān and often Bible state (see also Alrabi 2007: 30-33).

It is interesting to note also that, according to some Muslim historical sources, considering IslamicJerusalem as the *Qiblah* of the previous Prophet, mainly the Prophet of the Children of Israel, is not true. According to this claim, the real *Qiblah* of the Jews was towards Makkah before they turned it towards IslamicJerusalem by their own decision. This opinion is mentioned by Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (1986: (1) 313-314), who quotes a narration in this context, from al-Zuhrī:

... Khālīd Ibn Yazīd said [to the Umayyad Caliph Sulaymān Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik]: I swear by God, I read the book that God revealed to Muhammad (PBUH) and I read the Torah. The Jews did not find it [i.e. that *Bayt al-Maqdis* is their *Qiblah*] in the book that God revealed to them [i.e. the Torah], but the Ark of Covenant was situated on the Rock [i.e. the Rock that is now under the Dome of the Rock in al-Aqṣā Mosque], but when God got angry with the Children of Israel He ascended it, so their prayer was towards the Rock after their own consultation [among themselves].<sup>132</sup>

This narration assures that, according to Khalid Ibn Yazīd, the Prophets of the Children of Israel used not to pray towards IslamicJerusalem before the Ascension of the Ark of Covenant, which means that the Prophets, before that, used to pray towards another direction. Al-Ṭabarī (1999: (2) 38) mentions another narration with a similar meaning:

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<sup>132</sup> قال خالد بن يزيد: أما والله إنني لأقرأ الكتاب الذي أنزله الله على محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم، وأقرأ التوراة، فلم تجدها اليهود في الكتاب الذي أنزل الله عليهم، ولكن تابوت السكينة كان على الصخرة، فلما غضب الله على بني إسرائيل رفعه، فكانت صلاتهم إلى الصخرة على مشاورة منهم.

A Jew argued with Abū al-‘Āliyah about the *Qiblah*. Abū al-‘Āliyah said: [the Prophet] Moses used to pray beside the Rock [in IslamicJerusalem] facing al-Ḥarām Mosque, and putting the Rock in front of him [while praying]. The Jew said: Between us is the mosque of the Prophet Ṣāliḥ PBUH [i.e. as a proof that its *Qiblah* was not towards Makkah but towards the Rock in al-Aqṣā]. Abū al-‘Āliyah said: I prayed in the mosque of Ṣāliḥ, and its *Qiblah* is towards the Ka‘bah. Abū al-‘Āliyah said also: I prayed in the Mosque of Dhū al-Qarnayn, and its *Qiblah* is towards the Ka‘bah.<sup>133</sup>

The researcher argues that praying towards the Rock, or at least towards al-Aqṣā Mosque, is mentioned in the Torah dating back to Solomon (1 Kings 8:44)<sup>134</sup>. This weakens the reliability of Ibn Yazīd’s opinion historically, since he does not relate his opinion to any historical source from the Jewish historical narrations. Also, although al-Ṭabarī’s narration clearly mentions two Prophets, namely Moses and Ṣāliḥ, in addition to Dhū al-Qarnayn,<sup>135</sup> this narration cannot be accepted simply because it neglects the fact that the core sources clearly mention that Moses did not enter IslamicJerusalem, how would he pray behind or beside the Rock in al-Aqṣā Mosque, which is situated in the heart of IslamicJerusalem? The problem with this narration is not in its authenticity, since is not a *ḥadīth*, but that it is only the opinion of Abū al-‘Āliyah.<sup>136</sup>

After investigating these narrations and opinions, the researcher concludes that it might be argued that Makkah was a *Qiblah* for a number of Prophets, such as

<sup>133</sup> أن يهودياً خاصم أبا العالية في القبلة، فقال أبو العالية: إن موسى عليه السلام كان يصلي عند الصخرة ويستقبل البيت الحرام، فكانت الكعبة قبلته وكانت الصخرة بين يديه، وقال اليهودي: بيني وبينك مسجد صالح النبي عليه السلام. فقال أبو العالية: فإني صليت في مسجد صالح وقبلته إلى الكعبة. وأخبر أبو العالية أنه صلى في مسجد ذي القرنين وقبلته إلى الكعبة.

<sup>134</sup> The Torah mentions that the ‘Temple’ was built on the Moria Hill (2 Chronicles 3:1), on which al-Aqṣā Mosque is located today. However, the researcher will not go deeply into the authenticity of the Jewish narrations or into consideration of Solomon as being a Prophet or only a King in these sources. This is out of the scope of this research, and the researcher deals with these sources as historical texts.

<sup>135</sup> Dhū al-Qarnayn was not a Prophet as can be understood in the Qur’ān; his story is mentioned in chapter 18 of the Qur’ān (18: 83-98).

<sup>136</sup> Abū al-‘Āliyah’s real name is Rufay‘ al-Riyāḥī, and he is considered as a *Tābi‘* (successor of the companions). He heard from many of the companions of the Prophet such as ‘Umar and Ubay Ibn Ka‘b, and he was considered *thiqah* (trustworthy) in *ḥadīth*. He died in 90 AH / 709 CE (see Ibn Sa‘d 1997: (7) 79-84).

Abraham. Yet it cannot be said that Makkah was the *Qiblah* for all Prophets before the Prophet Muhammad; as it can be seen from the different religious and historical texts and after comparing them, especially with the biblical ones. The only Prophet who could be argued for certain to have prayed towards the Ka'bah initially is Abraham, and may be Ishmael also since he lived in Makkah. The Prophet Adam could have prayed towards the Ka'bah due to its presence as the first house of worship on earth. Yet there is no explicit evidence that any other Prophet actually prayed towards the Ka'bah, especially the Prophets of the Children of Israel such as David, Solomon and Jesus. In other words, the religious and historical information that can be found in the biblical sources confirms that Islamic Jerusalem was most likely the *Qiblah* of the Children of Israel's Prophets, and not Makkah. There is no reason for any other opinion, unless strong historical evidence can be found to confirm the opposite, which is not the case on this topic. In addition, it is unlikely that the Prophet Muhammad would have done an act of worship with no point of reference, i.e. revelation. This is what the Qur'an states: "He does not speak out of his own desires, verily, it is but a revelation"<sup>137</sup> (53: 3-4)

Concerning the matter of identifying Islamic Jerusalem as the *Qiblah* of the Prophets, and that this was by a revelation from God, the main issue that the verses of the *Qiblah* speak of is raised. Why did the *Qiblah* need to be changed?

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<sup>137</sup> وما ينطق عن الهوى، إن هو إلا وحي يوحى

## Reversing the Question

The researcher argues that it is now clear that the Prophet Muhammad was most likely ordered through a revelation to turn towards IslamicJerusalem in his prayer from the outset; he would pray towards IslamicJerusalem putting the Ka‘bah in front of him while doing so. It should be noted that, according to many Muslim sources, the Ka‘bah was most likely the *Qiblah* of Abraham, who represents the point of reference of the Prophet Muhammad as the Qur’ān says in many verses.<sup>138</sup> This is, probably, why the verses of the Qur’ān that come before the verses of the *Qiblah*, in chapter 2, mention Abraham and his rebuilding of the Ka‘bah, i.e. as a point of reference for the whole concept of choosing the Ka‘bah as the *Qiblah*.

This means that praying towards IslamicJerusalem from the beginning was not as supposed because Abraham’s *Qiblah* was the Ka‘bah, as the researcher mentioned earlier. This means that the different interpretations of these verses, in the different *Tafsīr*, miss the central point. They concentrate on the reasons for the change of the *Qiblah* from IslamicJerusalem to Makkah, in verse (2:143), without investigating the reasons for appointing IslamicJerusalem as a *Qiblah* in the first place. This can be clearly found in al-Ṭabarī’s different narrations (see al-Ṭabarī 1999: (2) 13-17),

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<sup>138</sup> For example: “and follow the religion of Abraham [who was] *ḥanīf*” (4:125). *Ḥanīf* means the true pure monotheism, to believe in one God (see Khan 1996: 804). Other verses are mentioned in this context such as “and who rejects the religion of Abraham except for who fools himself” (2:130), “Say: Nay, but [I choose] the religion of Abraham [who was] *ḥanīf*, and he was not among the polytheists” (2:135), “Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but a *ḥanīf*, Muslim, and he was not among the polytheists. Verily, the only [people] to have claim to Abraham are the ones who followed him [during his life], this Prophet [i.e. Muhammad] and the believers [i.e. the Muslims]” (3:67-68), “Say: God has said the truth, so follow the religion of Abraham [who was] *ḥanīf*” (3:95), “Say: Verily, My Lord has guided me to a straight path, a true religion, the religion of Abraham [who was] *ḥanīf*, and he was not among the polytheists” (6:161), “Then We revealed to you: Follow the religion of Abraham, [who was] *ḥanīf*” (16:123), “The religion of your father, Abraham; he [Abraham] was the one who named you ‘the Muslims’ before” (22:78) and many more. These verses and many others show that the point of reference of Islam in general is the Prophet Abraham

which were taken and elaborated upon by exegetes of the two schools of *Tafsīr*, as the researcher mentioned earlier. These narrations concentrate on identifying ‘the fools’ mentioned in verse (2:142), namely the Jews, the Hypocrites, or the Polytheists of the tribe of Quraysh. According to al-Ṭabarī’s narrations, the statement of ‘the fools’, as the verses mention, was the main reason for making the Prophet Muhammad unhappy with Islamicjersalem, and thus changing the *Qiblah*.<sup>139</sup> Yet why was the Prophet Muhammad ordered to pray towards Islamicjersalem for more than 14 years?

The researcher argues that the only possible reason for this was to make Islamicjersalem a point of reference for the Muslims and to establish an actual spiritual connection between them and Islamicjersalem, which is manifested physically through prayer. This would allow them to understand the importance of the region and its crucial position in Islam. When looking into the Qur’ān, it can be noted that the verses that refer to the Prophet Abraham can be divided into two categories: First are the verses that were revealed before the migration to Madīnah; these usually mention the story of Abraham from his early years in his home country, i.e. Iraq, until almost the end of his life. They discuss the nature of Islam as being a continuation of Abraham’s religion, but do not argue against other claims made about Abraham, by Jews and Christians. This could be due to the nature of the Makkan society and their deep established relationship with Abraham; thus there is

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<sup>139</sup> Sayyid Qutb (1996: (1) 132) is the only scholar who tried to answer the reverse question, i.e. the reason why the *Qiblah* was directed to Islamicjersalem. Yet his argument depends on the Ka’bah being the *Qiblah* before the migration, then being changed to Islamicjersalem, and after the migration to Madīnah the *Qiblah* being ‘returned’ to Makkah again. He argues that the change of the first *Qiblah*, i.e. the Ka’bah as he claims, into Islamicjersalem was to test the believers who considered the Ka’bah a national symbol. The researcher argues that this claim is not accurate since there are evidences that prove that the Prophet Muhammad prayed towards Islamicjersalem while he was in Makkah before the migration.

no need to argue this point such as arguing about building the Ka‘bah by Abraham or the right to claim him as being Jewish, Christian, or Muslim.

Second are the verses revealed after the migration to Madīnah; these verses discuss Abraham’s connection with the Muslims and their right to claim him, and argue against the Jewish and Christian claims to Abraham. It is noted that, during this period, the Qur’ān deals with Abraham’s relationship with Makkah and the region around it, especially the case of rebuilding the Ka‘bah. This may be understood as being a reflection of the relationship with the Jewish and Christian communities, established after the migration. This could clarify the change of the *Qiblah* in Madīnah; it was simply a return to Abraham as the point of reference in this religion. It was also to strengthen the relationship between the Muslims and the Prophet Abraham who was linked historically with the Ka‘bah, and was a central point of discussion on the claims of the three monotheistic religions. Therefore, it is not strange to return to the *Qiblah* of the Prophet Abraham as a manifestation of the strong and original relationship between the Muslims and Abraham.

There should be a reason for mentioning the Prophet Abraham in this context, in the Madīnah stage of the Qur’ān. This could be that a new kind of religious argument and debate emerged through the integration with the Jewish and Christian communities after the migration. This was not a case in Makkah, since the majority there took their ancestry from Abraham for granted; they considered themselves the actual descendents of the Prophet Abraham. Thus, it was most likely that the Prophet Muhammad took his relationship with the Prophet Abraham for granted in Makkah, since from the beginning he came with a message that went back, according to

Muslims, to the true religion of Abraham, which the Arabs in Makkah claimed to be following.

The researcher argues that, according to the Makkans' claim to the relationship with the Prophet Abraham, the Prophet Muhammad should have prayed towards the Ka'bah from the beginning of his Prophethood, not towards Islamicjerusalem. Why should Muhammad pray towards Islamicjerusalem when he lived in a whole community that glorified the Ka'bah and gave it a very high position, and then when he migrated to a place where there was a community, i.e. of Jews, sharing one of the most important aspects of his religion, namely the *Qiblah*, would he turn it back towards Makkah? Therefore, the argument of pleasing the Makkans or the Jews is invalid. If the Prophet Muhammad had aimed to please the Makkans or the Jews, then he would have prayed towards the Ka'bah in Makkah, and towards Islamicjerusalem in Madīnah. Yet this was not the case.

The researcher argues that changing the *Qiblah* towards Makkah, after the migration, was a return to the origin. Yet there should be specific reasons that led to allocating Islamicjerusalem as a *Qiblah* for the Muslims for such a long time. This can be understood if it is argued that Islamicjerusalem was allocated as a *Qiblah* in order to establish a relationship with the Muslims, and especially to note that the call of the Prophet Muhammad to Islam started in Makkah, where the Ka'bah was well-known as the most sacred place on earth. In addition, Alrabi (2007: 63) argues that praying towards the Ka'bah from the beginning of Islam would have sent wrong messages to the new Muslims in Makkah, especially seeing they were prostrating towards the idols surrounding the Ka'bah while their call was to worship only one God.

Therefore, there was a wisdom in turning their prayers towards IslamicJerusalem as the Muslims needed to turn their faces away from the idols surrounding the Ka‘bah.

The researcher agrees with Alrabi, and adds that the Muslims needed to pray towards IslamicJerusalem, on a daily basis and for a long time, in order to establish this sacred connection between them and IslamicJerusalem, which would in the future be one of the most important motivations for them in working hard for its *Fath*. Thus, since praying towards IslamicJerusalem was a command from the start, it was not the Prophet Muhammad, but his Lord, attaching him and the Muslims to this place as was the case with the Chapter 30 of the Qur’ān (*al-Rūm*).

#### **The reason for turning the face towards the sky**

The Qur’ān clearly states that the Prophet was turning his face towards the sky (2:144), and as a result, the *Qiblah* was changed from IslamicJerusalem. In addition, the Qur’ān mentions the Ka‘bah as a *Qiblah* that the Prophet ‘might be pleased with’ (2:144). Could this mean that the Prophet Muhammad disliked praying towards IslamicJerusalem?

The researcher argues that, by studying the different accounts mentioned by the exegetes of the *Ma‘thūr* and *Ra’y* schools, it can be noted that there is almost a consensus among the exegetes that the meaning of the turning of the Prophet’s face towards the sky means that he ‘liked’ to change the *Qiblah* towards the Ka‘bah. This opinion is based on the terminology *Tarḍāhā* (accept it) (2:144) that is mentioned in verse, which describes the Ka‘bah. Al-Ṭabarī (1999 (2) 22-23) gathers different narrations to support this opinion, which is almost the same as that of most of the other *Ma‘thūr* school of *Tafsīr* sources.

However, it is noted that most of the exegetes of the *Ra'y* school were traditional in this case and depended only on the different narrations that were mentioned with regards to the case of the reasons for the change of the *Qiblah*. For example, al-Rāzī (2002: (2) 121-122) argues that the Prophet liked to pray towards the Ka'bah rather than IslamicJerusalem. He then adds a narration by Abū Muslim al-Aṣfahānī, who claims that the Prophet used to pray in Makkah towards the Ka'bah until his migration to Madīnah where he did not know which direction to pray, so he turned his face toward the sky, as a sign of wondering. The researcher argues that this opinion cannot be accepted due to different evidences which prove that the Prophet prayed in Madīnah towards IslamicJerusalem. This means that he knew the *Qiblah*. In addition, it cannot be accepted that the Prophet did not know where to pray in Madīnah throughout the several months between his migration and the change of the *Qiblah*. Also his companions in Madīnah were already praying towards IslamicJerusalem before his migration (see Ibn Ḥibbān 2000: 87-88, Ibn Hishām 2005: (pt. 2) 27).

Al-Ṭabarī (1999: (2) 22-23), al-Rāzī (1990: (2/4) 100-101), and others give different opinions on why the Prophet wished the *Qiblah* to be changed. One opinion is that the Prophet “disliked” praying towards IslamicJerusalem since the Jews of Madīnah claimed that the Prophet was praying towards their *Qiblah*, i.e. IslamicJerusalem, which he disagrees with since he would not have known the direction unless he had been taught this by the Jews. Another opinion is that it was because the Ka'bah was the *Qiblah* of Abraham.

Al-Zamakhsharī (1995: (1) 201) of the *Ra'y* school argues that the meaning of the verse is that the Prophet was “expecting” the change of the *Qiblah*, without specifying a reason, and this is why he was turning his face towards the sky. Al-Alūsī (1994: (1) 407), of the same school, agrees that the Prophet was turning his face since he was expecting the *Qiblah* to be changed; he adds that the reason for expecting the change of the *Qiblah* was because the Prophet liked to pray towards the Ka‘bah for several reasons, such as that it was the *Qiblah* of Abraham and that the Jews took this issue as a reason to doubt Islam.

The researcher argues that all these opinions might be taken into consideration except the one that the Prophet “disliked” praying towards IslamicJerusalem. Al-Ṭabarsī (d. 548 AH / 1154 CE) (1983: (1) 227) argues that it is unlikely that the Prophet would have hated IslamicJerusalem, but the terminology *Tarḍāhā* could mean that the Prophet liked Makkah only in a human, non-divine way, and al-Rāzī (1990: (2/4) 100) agrees with al-Ṭabarsī. The researcher agrees with al-Rāzī and al-Ṭabarsī, especially that the Prophet prayed towards IslamicJerusalem for more than 14 years. In addition, it should be noted that IslamicJerusalem represented ‘hope’ for the Prophet Muhammad, during the Night Journey, prior to his migration to Madīnah, as the researcher elaborated earlier in this chapter. It represented the hope that the Prophet needed when in his hardest times; therefore, it is unlikely that the Prophet would have disliked IslamicJerusalem or praying towards it. This also contradicts verses of the Qur’ān and the *aḥādīth* in which the Prophet mentions the virtues of IslamicJerusalem and urges the Muslims to go to and pray in it.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Al-Rāzī (1990: (2/4) 100) mentions a narration, quoted from Ibn ‘Abbās, in which the Prophet Muhammad says to the Angel Gabriel: “O Gabriel, I wish God would order me to pray to another *Qiblah*, rather than the *Qiblah* of the Jews, since I dislike it”. Al-Samarqandī (d. 373 AH / 983 CE), of the *Ma'thūr* School, narrates a similar narration (1997: (1) 127), in which the Prophet says to the Angel Gabriel: “I wish God would order me to pray to another *Qiblah*, rather than the *Qiblah* of the

Some might claim that the Prophet may have “disliked” praying towards IslamicJerusalem, although he prayed towards it for a long time, simply because he used to pray towards it in Makkah from behind the Ka‘bah. In other words, he did not feel that he was praying towards IslamicJerusalem, but towards the Ka‘bah. However, the researcher argues that this argument is unacceptable since the Prophet used to pray towards IslamicJerusalem while he was out of the range of the Ka‘bah, even when he was in Makkah, such as when the Prophet, his family, and the Muslims, spent three years in *Shi‘b Abī Ṭālib* (the valley of Abū Ṭālib) during the boycott by the people of Makkah (see Ibn Hishām 2005: (pt.1) 238). This valley is situated to the East of the Ka‘bah (see Abū Khalīl 2003: 43), which means that it is impossible for someone to pray towards IslamicJerusalem and the Ka‘bah at the same time from there. This matter is elaborated on by Alrabi (2007: 34-48), who adds other places, in which the Prophet prayed during the Makkan period while it was impossible for him to pray towards both the Ka‘bah and IslamicJerusalem at the same time, such as al-Ṭā‘if and al-Ḥijr. In addition, it is known that the Prophet used to spend time in Minā and Muzdalifah during the pilgrimage of the polytheists every year to invite them to Islam. Minā, ‘Arafah, and Muzdalifah are situated to the south east of Makkah (see ‘Abd al-Ghanī 2001: 16), and it is almost impossible to pray towards IslamicJerusalem and the Ka‘bah at the same time from there too. Yet there have been no accounts or narrations that mention that the Prophet prayed towards the Ka‘bah from there; thus, it should be mentioned that it is most likely that the Prophet

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Jews”. He does not mention the addition of al-Rāzī, which says that the Prophet ‘disliked’ IslamicJerusalem. The researcher argues that the two narrations are without chains of narrators; therefore they cannot be accepted as acceptable *aḥādīth*. However, as historical narrations only, the researcher argues that al-Samarqandī is much earlier than al-Rāzī. In addition to this, his narration does not contradict many of the principles of the life of the Prophet Muhammad, as the researcher elaborated earlier. Therefore, al-Samarqandī’s narration can be considered stronger than al-Rāzī’s.

used to pray there only towards Islamicjerusalem although he was unable to put the Ka‘bah in front of him.

Following this investigation, the researcher argues that the reason that led the Prophet to turn his face towards the sky was most likely because the Ka‘bah was supposed to be his *Qiblah* from the beginning since it was the *Qiblah* of Abraham, as the researcher mentioned before. Whereas praying towards Islamicjerusalem was only for the reason the researcher investigated earlier. Also it was a test as the Qur‘ān affirms “Yet We have not made the *Qiblah* that you were [facing] but to know who follows the Messenger and who turns over” (2:143). The Prophet could have wondered about this issue, thinking that this was the time to ‘return’ to the point of reference, i.e. the *Qiblah* of Abraham, after this new stage had begun. In addition, the different accounts that mention the claims of the Jews of Madīnah show that the Prophet might have felt that the reason for praying towards Islamicjerusalem was fulfilled, and thus the benefit for Muslims would be to ‘return’ to the *Qiblah* of Abraham, after long years of establishing the status of Islamicjerusalem in their hearts.

The turning of the Prophet’s face towards the sky was, most likely, a sign of expectation, as al-Zamakhsharī and al-Alūsī mentioned. The researcher argues that this does not contradict the emotional element in the case, i.e. the Prophet’s wish to pray towards Makkah, his home town. It does not neglect the inner feelings of the Prophet Muhammad who was negatively affected by the Jewish claims. Yet this cannot have led him to ‘dislike’ Islamicjerusalem. His unique relationship with Abraham needs also to be taken into consideration. All of these elements were gathered, which led the Prophet to expect the change of the *Qiblah* back to the

*Qiblah* of Abraham. Perhaps this is why the Qur'ān mentions the word *Tarḍāhā* which means, in Arabic, more than acceptance only; it refers mostly to full satisfaction.<sup>141</sup>

## Conclusion

Praying towards IslamicJerusalem can indeed be considered as one of the major steps that linked the Muslims to IslamicJerusalem and helped to set the status of that region in their hearts. Throughout this chapter, the researcher concludes that the act of praying towards IslamicJerusalem itself was not an ordinary action, but a major step that was not expected from the beginning. This is due to the nature of Islam and its reference to the religion of Abraham.

The researcher concludes that the actual question that should be asked is not why the *Qiblah* was changed from IslamicJerusalem to Makkah, but why it was towards IslamicJerusalem in the first place. This conclusion came after a thorough study of the issue of *Qiblah* in Islam, which is most likely related to the Prophet Abraham in particular. However, this does not mean that the Ka'bah was the point of reference for all the Prophets before the Prophet Muhammad as some scholars argue; it is not accurate to claim that the Ka'bah was the *Qiblah* of all the Prophets before the Prophet Muhammad, particularly the Prophets of the Children of Israel due to the lack of evidence and the actual historical material that contradict this claim. However, it can be said that the Ka'bah was very likely the *Qiblah* of the Prophet Abraham, which gives it a huge significance in Islam. This leads the researcher to

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<sup>141</sup> This can be understood also by referring to other verses in the Qur'ān which mention similar meanings, such as verse (20:130): "Praise (your Lord) during parts of the Night, and at the (beginning and the end) of the day, so that you may be *Tarḍā* (i.e. be fully satisfied)".  
ومن آناء الليل ففسح وأطراف النهار لعلك ترضى

conclude that the action of praying towards IslamicJerusalem had religious and historical roots, yet it was not the expected action due to the nature of the Islamic faith and its unique relationship with the Prophet Abraham.

The researcher was also able to investigate the issue of the duration of the Muslims' prayer towards IslamicJerusalem; it is noted that the majority of the Muslim sources used to speak about this duration as a matter of only months in Madīnah. Yet the researcher was able to find out that this claim neglects the whole Makkan period, with regard to prayer, which affects the accuracy and the historical sequence of the many narrations and *aḥādīth* that have mentioned important incidents in the Makkan period that were related to the prayer yet occurred in a very early period in Islam. The researcher concludes that the full period of praying towards IslamicJerusalem was the 13 years in Makkah in addition to 16 months in Madīnah, which means that the Muslims prayed towards this region more than they prayed towards the Ka'bah in the Prophet's lifetime. This was reflected in the building of a huge significance of IslamicJerusalem in the Muslims' hearts many years before the actual *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. This indeed would have been one of the first things to link the Muslims to IslamicJerusalem and would have probably given them a strong motivation to move towards the *Fath* of this region.

The same can be said of the Prophet Muhammad; praying towards IslamicJerusalem for more than he prayed towards the Ka'bah must have had a very important effect on the way how he viewed this region. This would have given him a clear idea of its importance and the significance it held to the previous Prophets and to their religion he was reviving. In addition, concluding that the Prophet Muhammad's religious point of reference was the Prophet Abraham makes it easier to understand the

significance of IslamicJerusalem to the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet Muhammad's point of reference, as the Qur'ān shows, was the Prophet Abraham, who came to Makkah from IslamicJerusalem; not only did he live in IslamicJerusalem, he also died in Hebron, which is a part of IslamicJerusalem, and was buried there. This might have given IslamicJerusalem even more significance to the Prophet Muhammad as the legacy of the Prophet Abraham, and this could have led to setting a plan for the *Fath* of this region. Praying towards IslamicJerusalem was indeed another important aspect in establishing this unique relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and the Prophet Abraham.

It should be noted that the historical link between the Prayer and the Night Journey also played a very important role in setting the significance of IslamicJerusalem in the Muslim mind on a daily basis. The five prayers continuously reminded the Muslims of IslamicJerusalem and its importance. IslamicJerusalem was not only the first place on earth to receive the obligation of the five prayers in Islam, but it was also the first *Qiblah* of those prayers. This made prayer a daily manifestation of the unique relationship between Muslims and IslamicJerusalem, and a daily reminder of this region in their hearts and minds.

Finally, this significance of prayer towards IslamicJerusalem could have been an aspect of setting the agenda that Islam brought to this region, which was reflected in a huge impact on the region's future, which led in the end to the Muslim *Fath* of the region many years later. As the prayer was a practical demonstration of this process, which set the importance and the status of IslamicJerusalem in the Muslim minds at the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the researcher will deal in the following chapters with the interpretation of this special status into practical steps towards the

*Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem, starting from the documents that formed this important link, followed by the actual military steps that the Prophet Muhammad took while planning for the *Fath*.





## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### ***KEY DOCUMENTS***

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# Chapter Four

## Key Documents

### Introduction

In the case of planning for the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem, documents acquire a very important role in confirming or denying the presence of a plan for the *Fath* of that region. Thus, this chapter will deal with a number of important historical documents, dating back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad. These documents may assist in examining the hypothesis of the plan of the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem.

The researcher will concentrate, in this chapter, on three main kinds of such documents, diplomatic letters, endowments, and political pacts or assurances of safety. These are to be analysed and used to understand the relationship between the Prophet and Islamicjerusalem. They may clarify the nature of this relationship and whether or not it could be interpreted as a plan towards the *Fath* of this region.

### Related documents

The researcher examined various kinds of document dating to the time of the Prophet Muhammad. These documents were all gathered by Muhammad Ḥamīdullāh (1987), who classified them chronologically according to the different opinions of the *Sīrah* scholars. Yet concentration here is only on the documents relating to Islamicjerusalem directly or on places very close to that region. The researcher developed criteria to select the related documents, they criteria can be summarised in the following points.

Firstly, the researcher will study the documents that relate only to IslamicJerusalem or the region between it and Madīnah, i.e. on the Northern Western routes between Madīnah and IslamicJerusalem.<sup>142</sup> This means that the political document that was agreed on between the Prophet Muhammad and Dūmat al-Jandal town does not relate to the study.<sup>143</sup> Secondly, the researcher will study the documents of which texts can be found in the historical sources. The text is very important in analysing the spirit of the document and its significance to the scope of the research. This will omit some documents such as the letter of the Prophet to Jabalah Ibn al-Ayham al-Ghassānī, and his letter to Shurahbīl Ibn ‘Amr al-Ghassānī, since the text of these letters is not mentioned in the historical sources. Thirdly, the researcher will only study the documents devised on the initiative of the Prophet Muhammad, since this will reveal the actual strategy of the Prophet. Therefore, the letter of the Prophet Muhammad to Farwah al-Jidhāmī will not be studied, since it was only a reply to Farwah’s letter.<sup>144</sup> Finally, in the case of political documents considered as political pacts or assurances of safety particularly, the researcher will deal only with documents that have specific conditions that can be used to understand the Prophet’s strategy. The documents that have got only assurance of safety with no conditions on

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<sup>142</sup> This region includes many areas such as the Southern parts of al-Balqā’ and Wādī al-Qurā, and it contains many cities such as Ma’ān, Adhruh, Aylah, Maqnā, Khaybar and other cities and villages.

<sup>143</sup> Dūmat al-Jandal is in the area called today al-Jawf in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Some authors, such as al-Ashqar (2006: 40), include this area in the study of the movement of the Prophet Muhammad towards al-Shām. However, the researcher argues that Dūmat al-Jandal was situated on the route to Iraq not IslamicJerusalem (see Abū Khalīl 2002: 28). In addition, after careful reading and studying the document of Dūmat al-Jandal and the movement of the Muslim armies on their way to IslamicJerusalem, the researcher argues that it did not have a role in the Muslim campaign towards the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem.

<sup>144</sup> Farwah al-Jidhāmī sent a letter to the Prophet Muhammad informing him that he embraced Islam, and the Prophet replied to him, blessing his conversion to Islam and encouraging him. The text of this letter is as follows (Ibn Sa’d 1997: (1) 215):

From Muhammad, the Messenger of God, to Farwah Ibn ‘Amr: Your messenger came to me and informed me what you sent with him, and he informed me that you embraced Islam and that God has guided you with his guidance [and you shall remain so] if you [always] make good, obeyed God and his Messenger, Pray, and give charity.

However, this resulted in Farwah being executed by the Byzantines.

the receivers, such as the Prophet's political document to Banī Ghadiyyā, will not be studied for this reason.

These criteria leave the researcher with seven documents that will be studied in order to clarify the strategy of the Prophet Muhammad in this context. These documents are: The endowments of the Prophet Muhammad to Abū Tha'labah, Banī Jaffāl, and Tamīm al-Dārī. In addition, the letter to Heraclius will be investigated, and the assurances of safety to the people of Aylah, Maqnā, and Adhruḥ and Jarbā' will also be studied.<sup>145</sup> These seven documents fulfil the criteria that the researcher put in order to be able to draw a clear picture of the Prophet's plan and strategy.

### **First: Endowments**

Endowment means granting something, such as a land, forever; the researcher argues that the endowment in this case mainly refers to the Arabic term *Iqtā'* إقطاع more than *Waqf* وقف.<sup>146</sup> Yet this does not mean that the grant of a land could not be considered as a *Waqf*, such as in the case of Tamīm al-Dārī's grant, which is now considered *Waqf*. However, the researcher will not go deeply into differentiating these two terminologies since this is out of the scope of this research.

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<sup>145</sup> The researcher studied the nature of these three documents in particular in order to identify whether or not they could be considered as political treaties. He found that these documents could not be considered political treaties like other documents, such as the truce of al-Ḥudaybiyah for example. This was because these documents were not agreed on between two equal powers, but were 'granted' by the Prophet Muhammad to the people or the leaders of these towns. One of the most important aspects that help to identify this is starting the texts with the name of the Prophet Muhammad, mentioning safety as being granted to certain people, and the absence of mentioning terms and conditions given by the people to which the document is written. This means that these documents were granted by the Prophet with no enforcement by the other sides, unlike the Truce of al-Ḥudaybiyah for example. Therefore, the researcher will use the terminology "assurance of safety" to refer to these three documents.

<sup>146</sup> The terminology *Iqtā'* إقطاع is different from *Waqf* وقف. The first refers to granting a land to the benefit of a person and making him/her the owner of this land. The latter means taking the concept of ownership from human being and declaring the subject of the *Waqf* owned by God (see Qaḥf 2000: 62). The researcher argues that this does not make a huge difference in the cases that he is studying on this topic. Since even the *Waqf* mentioned here, namely the *Waqf* of Tamīm al-Dārī, is considered as *Waqf Dhurrī*, i.e. that it is for the benefit of the descendants of the person, though they do not have the right to sell it (see Qaḥf 2000: 114-115)

The researcher argues that by looking into the *sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad, one notes that he made many similar endowments, i.e. he gave many lands to various people in different occasions. Many of these lands were given in places that were under Muslim rule, except on three occasions where they related to Islamic Jerusalem and the region around it. One of them was a land located somewhere in al-Shām, and was granted to Abū Tha‘labah. Another was a land to the south of Islamic Jerusalem region, which was granted to Banī Jaffāl. The third was the endowment of Tamīm al-Dārī inside Islamic Jerusalem.

### **The Endowment of Abū Tha‘labah**

In the case of Abū Tha‘labah, a *ḥadīth* in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (1995: (13) 478) mentions the following narration:

Narrated by Abū Tha‘labah al-Khushanī: I came to the Prophet and said: “O Messenger of God, write me [an endowment granting me] the land of such and such, in the region of al-Shām, which was not yet under the Prophet’s rule”. The Prophet said [to the other companions]: “don’t you hear what this [man] says”? Abū Tha‘labah said: “I swear by the One [God] who sent you with truth, it will come under your control”. So the Prophet wrote for him [the endowment] granting him that land.<sup>147</sup>

A similar narration is mentioned by Abū ‘Ubayd (d. 224 AH / 838 CE) in his book *al-Amwāl*<sup>148</sup> (1986: 287-288). This narration has an addition, which says that the Prophet Muhammad’s statement “Do not you hear what this man is saying?” was a sign of his approval and happiness at the request of Abū Tha‘labah. This could also clarify the approval of the Prophet to write to Abū Tha‘labah.

<sup>147</sup> عن أبي ثعلبة الخشني قال: أتيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقلت: "يا رسول الله، اكتب لي بأرض كذا وكذا بأرض الشام، لم يظهر عليّ النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم حينئذٍ". قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: "ألا تسمعون إلى ما يقول هذا؟" فقال أبو ثعلبة: "والذي نفسي بيده لتظهرن عليها" قال فكتب له بها. This *ḥadīth* is accepted.

<sup>148</sup> Abū ‘Ubayd was not a historian but a jurist, yet he studied many such matters in his book from a juridical perspective.

Neither the date of the endowment nor the location of this granted land is specified in this narration. The location of the granted land is mentioned generally in al-Shām. This means that the land was either in or around the region of Islamic Jerusalem, which occupies quite a significant area of al-Shām. This has gained an important significance although the text of the endowment is not mentioned, as it is clear in the narration, and as Ḥamīdullāh (1987: 134) also confirms.<sup>149</sup>

### **The Endowment to Banī Jaffāl**

In another incident, al-Ashqar (2006: 47-48) and Ḥamīdullāh (1987: 281) state that the Prophet Muhammad made another endowment to Banī Jaffāl al-Judhāmiyyīn<sup>150</sup>, who were from al-Shām, an endowment giving them “Iram”, a mountain considered a part of Ḥismā<sup>151</sup> (al-Ḥamawī 1990: (1) 185). The text of this endowment was mentioned first by al-Daybulī (d. 322 AH / 934 CE) (see Ibn Ṭūlūn 1987: 148-149),<sup>152</sup> and was also mentioned by al-Ḥamawī (1990: (1) 185). The text goes as follows:

By the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.  
From Muhammad, the Prophet, to Banī Jaffāl Ibn Rabī‘ah Ibn Zayd al-  
Judhāmiyyīn: They are granted Iram. No one shall take it from them or  
ask for any rights in it.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>149</sup> Very little is known about this companion and his tribe.

<sup>150</sup> Judhām was a large tribe and was divided into smaller branches or tribes. Abū al-Rub (2002: 39) mentions that Judhām contained 13 branches; one of them was Banū Jaffāl. The tribe of Judhām lived, according to Abū al-Rub, in a large area from Tiberias in the North to Ḥismā in the South. Ḥismā in particular was considered one of their main lands.

<sup>151</sup> Ḥismā is a large area that is located in the areas to the North West of Tabūk, all the way through Aylah to Sinai (see al-Ḥamawī 1990: (2) 298).

<sup>152</sup> Al-Daybulī wrote a book on the correspondences of the Prophet Muhammad. This book, according to Ḥamīdullāh (1987: 656), is considered one of the earliest books on this topic. The texts of the correspondences that al-Daybulī gathered were all added to the end of Ibn Ṭūlūn’s (d. 953 AH / 1546 CE) book *I‘lām al-Sā’ilīn*, and Ibn Ṭūlūn stated the chain of the narrators through which these texts reached him from al-Daybulī.

<sup>153</sup> بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، من محمد النبي لبني جفال بن ربيعة بن زيد الجذامييين: إن لهم إرم لا يحلها عليهم أحد أن يغلبهم عليها، ولا يحاقهم فيها. There is an added sentence to al-Daybulī’s text says: “Whoever asks for right in it has no rights, and their right [in this land] is the truth”. فمن حاقهم فلا حق له، وحقهم حق. The researcher argues that this addition does not affect the study of the text of this endowment since it is only a reconfirmation of the sentence before it.

The date of this endowment is not mentioned historically, yet it seems that it was granted in the late period of Muhammad's Prophethood, since it mentions the tribe of Banī Jaffāl.<sup>154</sup> The researcher argues that it seems from this text that this tribe was already living in or maybe even ruling the area, and this endowment came to reconfirm their ownership of the land. This is since it does not mention any reference to the future. This document also has a very important significance since that area was located to the south of Islamic Jerusalem and, by securing it with a tribe that is loyal to the Prophet, the whole route to Islamic Jerusalem from the south and through Aylah was also secured.

### **The Endowment to Tamīm al-Dārī**

The endowment of Tamīm al-Dārī is considered one of the most important documents in Muslim history. According to El-Awaisi (2006: 51), this charitable endowment was not only the first in Islamic Jerusalem, but also the first in Muslim history.<sup>155</sup> The most important significance of this endowment was its being the first within the region of Islamic Jerusalem.<sup>156</sup> Not only this, it is also unique since it was the first detailed document within this context; the text of the endowment of Abū

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<sup>154</sup> The researcher argues that the language and style of this endowment shows that it could have been written after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. This was the time when most of the surrounding tribes came to Madīnah and submitted to the Prophet Muhammad. This area is quite far from Madīnah, and thus it seems that they came to the Prophet Muhammad when he had gained a global reputation, after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk or maybe while he was in Tabūk.

<sup>155</sup> The researcher argues that El-Awaisi's argument might not be wholly accurate. The researcher accepts the part of the endowment of Tamīm being the first in Islamic Jerusalem, since there are no records of other specific lands within that region. The endowment of Abū Tha'labah's location, within al-Shām, is not known. Yet with regard to the timing of the endowment of the Tamīm, the Prophet Muhammad granted many endowments in different regions that were under Muslim control, and Ḥamīdullāh gathered many of these endowments (1987: 157-158, 161, 168-172). However, it seems that El-Awaisi developed this argument according to the narration that this endowment was granted in Makkah.

<sup>156</sup> Ibn Sa'd (1997: (7) 286) and Ibn Durayd (d. 321 AH / 933 CE) (1854: (1) 226) argue that the Prophet Muhammad never granted any lands anywhere in al-Shām except for the endowment of Tamīm al-Dārī. Yet the researcher argues that this is not accurate. The researcher discussed the endowment of Abū Tha'labah earlier, and it is clear that it was in al-Shām, as was also that of Banī Jaffāl.

Tha‘labah, for example, is not known. This makes this endowment an important milestone in studying the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic Jerusalem.

There are three main versions of the text of this endowment. On the one hand, Shurrāb (1990: 120-136) collected all the different narrations and versions of the endowment throughout history and ordered them chronologically. On the other hand, Ḥamīdullāh (1987: 129-132) gathered together the three main versions of this document, yet he claimed that this document had been written twice, not just once. Thus, he argues, one version, mentioned in his book, is a separate endowment, and the other two are two versions of the same endowment.

The presence of three or more versions of this endowment could be due to disagreement on the date it was written. Some narrators, such as Ibn ‘Asākir (1995: (11) 64-66), mention that it was written in Makkah, before the migration of the Prophet Muhammad. According to many narrations, the endowment was granted during the visit of a delegation of Tamīm’s family. This was in Madīnah after the *Ghazwah* to Tabūk (see Ibn Sa‘d 1997: (1) 285-286). The narration of the grant of this endowment in Makkah is very weak, as Shurrāb argues (1990: 126). Shurrāb says that this narration mentions a verse from Chapter 3 of the Qur’ān, *Āl ‘Imrān*, which was revealed in Madīnah. This can be considered as evidence on that this narration happened in Madīnah, and that the whole narration of the tribe of al-Dārī’s visit to the Prophet in Makkah is weak (see Appendix I).

However, the researcher investigated the various narrations and versions of this endowment. He argues that the closest version of this endowment to authenticity is

actually the earliest, namely the narration of Ibn Sa‘d (1997: (1) 205) and Abū Yūsuf (d. 182 AH / 798 CE) (n.d: 216) (see Appendix I)

The text of this endowment is as follows:

By the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful; this is a document from Muhammad, the Messenger of God, to Tamīm Ibn Aws al-Dārī: He [i.e. Tamīm] is granted the towns of Hebron and Bayt ‘Aynūn, including their valleys and mountains [i.e. all the land around them], their water and farms, and their *Anbāt* and cows. [This grant is given] to his descendents after [his death]. No one shall claim any right in it [i.e. the granted land], and no one shall harm them [i.e. Tamīm and his descendent] in this land. Anyone harms them or takes anything from them may be cursed by God.<sup>157</sup>

The researcher argues that this text shows a clear grant of the whole of the area around Hebron, yet it mentions that the region granted is only Ḥabrūn (Hebron) and Bayt ‘Aynūn. Hebron is known today as *al-Khalīl* in IslamicJerusalem, and Bayt ‘Aynūn is a small village near it. This text is one of the most important in the Muslim history of IslamicJerusalem, as it probably marks the first full legal binding grant of a land inside IslamicJerusalem. It can be considered as a ‘declaration of authority’ by the Prophet Muhammad over that part of IslamicJerusalem, although it was not under Muslim political rule at the time that the endowment was made.

This grant marks a prophetic hint on the future of IslamicJerusalem; the Prophet never granted a land without an authority over it. This issue has been understood and applied historically by many Muslim scholars and politicians. For example, Al-‘Ulaymī (d. 927 AH / 1521 CE) (1999: (2) 146-147) notes an incident that happened

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، هذا كتاب من محمد رسول الله إلى تميم بن أوس الداري: إن له قرية حبرون، وبيت عينون، قريةيهما<sup>157</sup> كلهما، وسهلتهما وجبلتهما، وماءهما وحرثتهما، وأنباطهما وبقرهما، ولعقبه من بعده، لا يحاقه فيهما أحد، ولا يلجها عليهما أحد بظلم. فمن ظلم وأخذ منهم شيئاً فإن عليه لعنة الله.

to the descendents of Tamīm al-Dārī around the year 485 AH / 1092 CE, i.e. before the first crusade. He says that, during that time, one of the governors tried to seize the granted lands from the descendents of Tamīm al-Dārī. He was supported by the judge, Abū Ḥāmid al-Harawī. The judge decided that the endowment of Tamīm al-Dārī was not binding, because the Prophet Muhammad had granted Tamīm a land that he, i.e. the Prophet, did not own. When the case reached Imām al-Ghazālī (d. 505 AH / 1111 CE), he declared that the judge was a disbeliever. Al-‘Ulaymī narrates that al-Ghazālī said:

This judge is a disbeliever; the Prophet Muhammad said: “The whole Earth was seized for me”, He used to grant lands in Heaven, saying: “This palace is for so and so”. His promise is true, and his grant is right.<sup>158</sup>

The governor and the judge were disgraced by this statement, and the land stayed in the descendents of Tamīms’ hands. This story shows how important this grant is in Muslim history. Al-Ghazālī’s statement shows a deep understanding of the purpose of this endowment. The Prophet Muhammad gave a promise through this endowment. This Prophetic promise was established as a Prophecy revealing that the region of IslamicJerusalem was to be under actual Muslim authority in the foreseen future. This grant also gives a picture of the political authority of the Prophet Muhammad over IslamicJerusalem.

Moreover, the timing of the granting of this endowment, after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, has a very important significance also; it came immediately after the Prophet Muhammad was very near to IslamicJerusalem. This could be interpreted as the

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هذا القاضي كافر، فإن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "زويت لي الأرض كلها"، وكان يقطع في الجنة، فيقول: "قصر كذا"<sup>158</sup> لفلان"، فوعده حق، وعطاؤه صدق.

practising of the Prophetic Authority of the Prophet Muhammad over IslamicJerusalem. Aminurrayid Yatiban (2006: 135) argues that this act from the Prophet Muhammad ‘showed his great intention in a very suitable way that reveals his cautiousness and forethought in planning his great project’ of the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. Yatiban, interestingly, compares this grant with the Grant of Surāqah Ibn Mālik ‘who had been promised by the Prophet that he would one day wear the bangles of Kisrā, the King of Persian’ (Yatiban 2006: 135). Both of which were fulfilled after the death of the Prophet. The grant of Tamīm was fulfilled after the completion of the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem (see Ibn ‘Asākir 1995: (11) 66).

The researcher argues that the endowment of Tamīm al-Dārī, along with the other two endowments of Banī Jaffāl al-Judhāmiyyīn and Abū Tha‘labah, are very important. They structure the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and IslamicJerusalem, which could have been formed already into a plan towards the *Fath* of that region. First of all, the endowment of Tamīm al-Dārī is unique in granting a land within IslamicJerusalem. This can be considered a political step forming a kind of authority over that region. Al-Khatib (2001:30) argues that this endowment “clearly indicates the early Islamic status given to al-Khalīl (Hebron) parallel to and following that of Jerusalem”. The researcher sees no difference in this context between the two cities as he investigates the region of IslamicJerusalem as a whole. This status of the region could be the reason why the Prophet was interested in granting this land to Tamīm.

However, the researcher argues that the three endowments need to be looked at together since, as it can be noticed, the Prophet Muhammad gave three lands, one somewhere in al-Shām, a land on the southern route to IslamicJerusalem, in Negev,

which is a part of al-Shām but not IslamicJerusalem, and a land inside IslamicJerusalem, which lies only about 30 km south of al-Aqṣā Mosque, namely Hebron and its neighbourhood. There is no evidence of granting a land within the northern parts of IslamicJerusalem, and this is what makes the researcher argue that the land that was given to Tha‘labah could also be in the south, or the south east, of IslamicJerusalem or al-Shām. This shows that the grant of these lands was part of a process of opening up a route to IslamicJerusalem from Arabia. It should be noted that Banī Jaffāl were living in that region, and Tamīm was originally from there. This shows that the Prophet was most likely forming an alliance in the region, which would help in the future to open up the route to IslamicJerusalem from the South East.

## **Second: Diplomatic Correspondence**

### **Letter to Heraclius**

The letter of the Prophet Muhammad to the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius is one of the most well-known documents dating back to the Prophet Muhammad’s era. It is mentioned in various Muslim and non-Muslim historical sources, and has been studied and analysed by numerous historians and scholars. This is because the text of this document has been well preserved, either through oral transmission or by written narrations.

This letter dates back, as many historians argue, such as El-Awaisi (2006: 52), to the year 6 AH / 627 CE.<sup>159</sup> It was sent immediately after the al-Ḥudaybiyah Truce

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<sup>159</sup> Some narrations mention that the letter of the Prophet to Heraclius was sent during the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk (see Ḥamīdullāh 1987: 111-115). Yet these narrations are not reliable since they contradict the *ḥadīth* of Abū Sufyān and the letter of Heraclius, which will follow, that clearly state that this letter was sent during the truce of *al-Ḥudaybiyah*.

between the Prophet Muhammad and the leaders of Quraysh in Makkah. This truce contained an agreement concerning the ceasing of war between the two parties for 10 years. Ibn Hishām (2005: (pt.4) 148) says that all the letters of the Prophet Muhammad to world leaders were sent at the same time after the truce of al-Ḥudaybiyah.

The researcher argues that it is clear that the letter was sent after the treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyah as it can be seen in the *ḥadīth* narrated in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī (2000: (1) 4-6) and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim (2000: (2)772-773). This *ḥadīth* mentions the letter and its text also, and is narrated by Abū Sufyān Ibn Ḥarb, the leader of Quraysh. In this *ḥadīth*, Abū Sufyān narrates that he was in al-Shām during the truce between Quraysh and the Prophet Muhammad. It seems that this visit to al-Shām was commercial, as was the case in the annual trips to al-Shām and Yemen (Qur’ān 106: 1-4). While he was in that region, according to the *ḥadīth*, the letter of the Prophet arrived with his messenger Diḥyah al-Kalbī, who delivered the letter to Heraclius. Abū Sufyān and the delegation with him were brought to Heraclius, in Aelia, and there was a conversation between Heraclius and Abū Sufyān about the Prophet Muhammad; at the end, Heraclius said to the delegation: “His, (Muhammad’s) kingdom will reach what is under my feet”, then the letter of the Prophet was read as follows:

In The Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful:  
From Muhammad, the Messenger of God, to Heraclius, the leader of  
the *Rūm*<sup>160</sup>. Peace be to the person who follows the truth. I invite you  
to Islam; embrace Islam and you’ll be safe, and God will give you  
twice of your reward. If you turn back [i.e. refuse], then you shall hold

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<sup>160</sup> The word “*Rūm*” means “Romans”, this is how the Arabs used to refer to the Byzantines.

the blame of the *Arīsiyyīn*.<sup>161</sup> “Oh people of the scripture, come to a word that is equal between us and you: [that is] not to worship [anything] but God, and not to accompany anything with Him [in worship], and not to take each other gods rather than [the one true] God. If they turn back, say: bare witness that we are Muslims” (Qur’ān 3:64).<sup>162</sup>

The narration of al-Bukhārī (2000: (1) 4-6) mentions that the letter was delivered in Aelia. The next *ḥadīth* in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim (2000: (2) 773) clarifies that Heraclius was, at that time, in Aelia, thanking God for his victory over the Persians. Although the Chr. P. does not mention this letter, it says that Heraclius went to the “east lands”, at that time with his son, whose name was also Heraclius, and his daughter. This terminology, i.e. “east lands” in the Chr. P. usually refers to the region of al-Shām, as can be understood when it speaks of the Persian occupation of Islamic Jerusalem (1989: 156).

The researcher argues that the text of this letter does not represent its main significance, since it appears very similar to the texts of the other letters of the Prophet Muhammad to the kings of the world at that time (see Ḥamīdullāh 1987: 135-145). In fact, one of the significances of this letter is its timing. The Prophet Muhammad sent this letter immediately after the treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyah, and just before the start of one of the most important events that took place at that time, namely the Battle of Mu’tah.

<sup>161</sup> Although this text is mentioned in an authentic *ḥadīth*, where the methodology is stricter than that in the historical one, it is noted that there is more than one version of the same document in different history sources. This is particularly the terminology *Arīsiyyīn*, which means “farmers” or “leaders” according to Ibn Manẓūr (1999: (1) 116). However, El-Awaisi (2006: 53) translates this word as “the people who follow the Chalcedonian theology”. The researcher argues that this translation might not be the correct one since this meaning of the terminology *Arīsiyyīn* is not mentioned in any of the Arabic dictionaries. Al-Ṭabarī (1998: (3) 139) mentions another word in the text, instead of *Arīsiyyīn*, which is *Akkārīn*. This terminology also means “the ploughmen”, i.e. “the farmers”, according to many Arabic dictionaries such as that of Ibn Manẓūr (1999: (1) 169).

<sup>162</sup> بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ إِلَى هِرَقْلَ عَظِيمِ الرُّومِ، سَلَامٌ عَلَى مَنْ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى أَمَا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي أَدْعُوكَ بِدَعَايَةِ الْإِسْلَامِ، أَسْلَمَ تَسْلَمُ يَوْمَئِذٍ اللَّهُ أَجْرُكَ مَرَّتَيْنِ، فَإِنْ أَبَيْتَ فَعَلَيْكَ إِيْمَ الْأَرِيسِيِّينَ، وَ(يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ، أَنْ لَا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا، وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ).

This means that the letter of the Prophet Muhammad to Heraclius differed slightly from the others; like a diplomatic move to warn before launching a military campaign inside the Byzantine territories in al-Shām region. This may be also understood from a statement mentioned in the letter: “Embrace Islam and you will be safe”. This holds a very important political significance. The letter’s text was filled with peaceful statements, such as expressing an invitation, pointing at a reward, and mentioning the verse in the Qur’ān. Yet it had a futuristic warning also in the event that the receiver did not accept its invitation.

Furthermore, the letter was delivered to Heraclius in Aelia, i.e. in the heart of Islamic Jerusalem. This holds many meanings when connected to chapter 30 of the Qur’ān (*al-Rūm*). That chapter comments on the defeat of the Byzantines by the Persians and clearly states that the Byzantines would be victorious again. The retaking of Islamic Jerusalem marked the crowning of the Byzantine victory over Persia.<sup>163</sup> Yet at this particular time, the Prophet sent his letter to Heraclius in Islamic Jerusalem to mark the start of a new era for that region. This is what Heraclius himself understood when he commented: “His (Muhammad’s) kingdom will reach what is under my feet”. This statement shows, indeed, that Heraclius understood the message clearly. Perhaps this is why he invited his own people to Islam as the narration of al-Bukhārī (2000: (1) 4-6) mentions.

The letter to Heraclius marked the warning needed before launching any military action against the Byzantines in particular. Mentioning *al-Arīsiyyīn* in itself supports

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<sup>163</sup> This marked the crowning of the Byzantine victory, not the first victory mentioned in the verses of Chapter 30.

this argument. These were the followers of Byzantium in that region, and mentioning them in this letter entailed a huge responsibility on Heraclius in the face of Muslim campaigns in the future. This is why this letter can be considered a very important diplomatic and political step before taking the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem to a new practical military level. Indeed the military moves towards the region itself were in action one year later.

### **Third: Assurances of Safety**

The Prophet Muhammad formed many political treaties and assurances of safety throughout his lifetime. Many of them were held in order to safeguard the borders or the military and commercial routes. It should be noted that the first political treaty to be held outside his state, i.e. Madīnah, was soon after his migration to Madīnah, namely with Banī Ḍamrah.<sup>164</sup>

However, it should be noted that most of the Prophet Muhammad's assurances of safety, related to the topic of this research, were formed in the later period of his life, and date back to the time of the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. Their being devised within a short period gives these assurances numerous similarities in ideas and style. Knowing that they came about around almost the same time could help in understanding the relationship between them.

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<sup>164</sup> This treaty was held with Banī Ḍamrah during the Prophet Muhammad's first military action that was led by himself in the year 2 AH, namely the Ghazwah of al-Abwā', which is also called Waddān (see al-Mubarakpuri 1996: 203), prior to the battle of Badr. In this treaty, as al-Qaṣṭalānī (d. 923 AH / 1571 CE) mentions (1996: (1) 174), the Prophet wrote:

This is a document from Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, concerning Banī Ḍamrah, in which he established them safe and secure in their wealth and lives. They can expect support from Muslims unless they oppose the religion of Allah. They are also expected to respond positively in case the Prophet should seek their help.

This text clearly shows that the Prophet made use of Banī Ḍamrah's unique location not only to secure the southern borders of Madīnah, but also to secure a supplying base on the road to Makkah, which shows that he was planning the road to Makkah immediately after his migration.

### Assurance to Aylah

Aylah was one of the most important ports in al-Shām region, and was the main southern port of al-Shām. Also, it was the last town on the coastal route before the Negev Desert towards the southern borders of Islamic Jerusalem.

The location of Aylah was, according to many historical excavations, within the city known today as Aqaba in the Kingdom of Jordan; there have been different excavations to reveal the original Aylah town. The researcher argues that this important location must have given Aylah a very high rank among other cities and towns on the coastal route between the Arab Peninsula and al-Shām. Thus, it is not strange to note the Prophet Muhammad's interest in securing this town.

The assurance given by the Prophet Muhammad to Aylah is spoken of in the books of the *ḥadīth*; al-Bukhārī (2000: (2) 617) mentions the *ḥadīth*:

Abū Ḥumayd al-Sā'idī narrated: We went with the Prophet on the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, and the king of Aylah presented him with a white mule, and the Prophet presented him with a garment and wrote him [an assurance] for their town [i.e. Aylah].<sup>165</sup>

This shows that there was a written assurance granted by the Prophet Muhammad to the king of Aylah. The text of this assurance is not mentioned in the books of *ḥadīth*.

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عن أبي حميد الساعدي قال: غزونا مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم غزوة تبوك، وأهدى ملك أيلة للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بغلة<sup>165</sup> According to al-'Asqalānī (1997: (6) 321), the meaning of the word *Bahrihim* (their Sea) is *Qaryatihim* (their Town). Also, al-'Asqalānī argues that the one who is mentioned in this narration as presenting a garment was the Prophet Muhammad. This can be seen when linking this narration to another one that says *فكتب له* (then, [the Prophet] wrote him), not *وكتب له* (And he wrote him) (al-'Asqalānī 1997: (6) 321). Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad was also the one who granted the assurance to the people of Aylah. The expression "wrote him" does not mean that the Prophet wrote it himself, since he was illiterate as is well-known. It means that the Prophet Muhammad granted this written assurance.

Yet it has been mentioned many times in the books of *sīrah* and by many historians. Unlike many other Prophetic documents that have different versions with serious differences, this document has almost only one version that was repeated in many historical sources with only very few and minor differences. In addition, another document that is related to the event was mentioned by Ibn Sa'd, namely a letter from the Prophet Muhammad to Aylah, yet it is not directly relevant to the topic of this research.<sup>166</sup>

<sup>166</sup> This document is a letter mentioned by Ibn Sa'd (1997: (1) 212-213). He says that it was sent by the Prophet Muhammad to Aylah before the **assurance**, as it seems from the letter. The text of this letter was not mentioned by any of the early historical sources except Ibn Sa'd. Al-Wāqidī, Ibn Ishāq and al-Balādhurī do not mention such a letter. The text in Ibn Sa'd's account goes:

They said: To Yuhannah Ibn Ru'bah and the Notables of Aylah: "You are safe, I thank God, who has no partner, to you, I would never have fought you before I write to you, so, convert to Islam, or pay the *Jizyah*, and obey God, His Messenger, and the Messengers of His Messenger, and be kind to them, and dress them with good clothes, different than the clothes of the fighters. And dress Zayd with good cloth, since I would be satisfied as long as my messengers are satisfied, and he has been taught the *Jizyah*. If you want the land and the sea to be safe, then obey God and His Messengers, and this will prevent you from any other dues for the Arabs and the non-Arabs, except for the duty towards God and the duty towards His Messenger. If you repulse them and do not satisfy them, I will not take anything from you until I fight you, capture the youngsters, and kill the adults. Hence I am the Messenger of God in truth, I believe in God, His books, His Messengers, and in the Messiah (Jesus) the son of Mary, that he is the word of God, and I believe that he was the Messenger of God also. Come before you get harmed, I have recommended you to my messengers, and give Ḥarmalah three *Awsuq* of barley. Ḥarmalah has interceded for you, and except for God and this, I would have never written to you until you see the army. If you obey my messengers, then God is your guarantor, and Muhammad and whoever he sends will be also. My messengers are Shuraḥbīl, Ubay, Ḥarmalah, and Ḥurayth Ibn Zayd Ibn al-Ṭā'ī. I accept whatever they agree with you, and you have the safeguard from God and the safeguard of Muhammad, the messenger of God. Peace be upon you if you obey, and prepare the people of Maqnā to be sent to their land.

The Arabic text goes:

قالوا: وكتب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى يحنة بن روبة وسروات أهل أيلة: "سلم أنتم، فإني أحمد إليكم الله الذي لا إله إلا هو، فإني لم أكن لأقاتلكم حتى أكتب إليكم فأسلم أو أعط الجزية وأطع الله ورسوله ورسوله، وأكرمهم واكسهم كسوة حسنة غير كسوة الغزاة. واكس زيدا كسوة حسنة فمهما رضيت رسلي فإني قد رضيت، وقد علم الجزية، فإن أردتم أن يأمن البر والبحر فأطع الله ورسوله ويمنع عنكم كل حق كان للعرب والعجم إلا حق الله وحق رسوله، وإنك إن رددتهم ولم ترضهم لا أخذ منكم شيئا حتى أقاتلكم فأسيي الصغير وأقتل الكبير، فإني رسول الله بالحق، أو من بالله وكتبه ورسله وبالمسيح ابن مريم أنه كلمة الله وإني أو من به أنه رسول الله، وأت قبل أن يمسمكم الشر فإني قد أوصيت رسلي بكم، وأعط حرمة ثلاثة أوسق شعيرا، وإن حرمة شفع لكم وإني لولا الله وذلك لم أراسلكم شيئا حتى ترى الجيش، وإنكم إن أطعتم رسلي فإن الله لكم جار ومحمد ومن يكون منه، وإن رسلي شرحبيل وأبي وحرمة وحريث بن زيد الطائي فإنهم مهما قاضوك عليه فقد رضيته وإن لكم ذمة الله وذمة محمد رسول الله، والسلام عليكم إن أطعتم، وجهزوا أهل مقنا إلى أرضهم.

The researcher argues that there are a number of problematic issues in this text with regard to its language and expressions; they are different from other authentic texts dating back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad. For example: the letter starts with *لا إله إلا هو* (I thank God, who has no partner, to you); this expression is not mentioned in any other letters of the Prophet Muhammad for the non-Muslims, but only in a condolence letter sent by the Prophet Muhammad to his convoy to Yemen, namely Mu'adh Ibn Jabal, when Mu'adh's son died (see al-Ḥākim 1990: (3)

The researcher argues that the text of the assurance of Aylah is one of the most common among the various historians and scholars with regard to that period. Perhaps this shows that the text of this document was well-preserved and known among historians which, in turn, raises another question about the possibility of the original manuscript of this assurance being preserved.<sup>167</sup>

The text of this document is mentioned by Ibn Ishāq (2004: 604), al-Wāqidī (d. 207 AH / 823 CE) (2004: (2) 409-410), Ibn Sa'd (1997: (1) 221), and many others. It seems that most historians agree on it, and thus, the researcher will go directly to analyse the text of the document. The text of this assurance goes as follows:

By the Name of God, The Most Compassionate, The Most Merciful:  
This is an assurance of safety from God, and (from) Muhammad, the Prophet, the Messenger of God, to Yūḥannā Ibn Ru'bah and to the people of Aylah; their ships, and their caravans in the land and the sea. They have the protection of God, and the protection of Muhammad the messenger of God, and for anyone who was with them from the people of al-Shām, the people of Yemen, and the people of the sea. If anyone does something [that violates this assurance], his money will not protect him from punishment. It shall be good for anyone who takes it among the people. They shall not be

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306-307). It is unlikely that the Prophet would have used this expression in this correspondence since it is different to all other letters sent by him to people inviting them to Islam. Moreover, the letter starts with assuring the people their safety yet it then threatens them with war; and it has another unusual expression, namely *لولا الله وذلك* (except for God and this). The researcher argues that this expression is not mentioned in any correspondence or *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad. The unusual language and expressions make this letter unreliable. In addition, it should be noted that Ibn Sa'd was the only historian who mentioned the letter, and he presented it without specifying the source of this text, while al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 409) argues that the people of Aylah were the ones who initially came to the Prophet after they heard the news of the Muslim attack on Dūmat al-Jandal. The text of this letter is not directly related to this research since it cannot be considered as a treaty or an assurance; also it cannot be studied in this chapter as a diplomatic correspondence since it does not have a clear relationship with Islamic Jerusalem. The authenticity of this letter and its text is also questionable as the researcher clarified earlier, and thus it cannot be studied as a valid document. Its text does not have any clear effect on the future *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem because it does not mention anything about the arrangements of the route of Islamic Jerusalem as the Assurance of Safety to Aylah does. Therefore, the researcher will not study this letter further.

<sup>167</sup> The researcher tried to unsuccessfully investigate the possibility of the presence of an original or very early copy of this document.

prevented neither from the water they drink, nor from a route that they might need in land or sea.<sup>168</sup>

Al-Blādhurī (1992: 69) mentions this document without noting the text itself; he refers only to the presence of an assurance from the Prophet Muhammad to the 300 people of Aylah. He says that the Prophet agreed with them to pay 300 Dinars annually as a *Jizyah*, i.e. one Dinar per person. In addition, al-Balādhurī argues that the Prophet Muhammad agreed with Aylah to provide any Muslims passing through their land with food.

The obligations of the people of Aylah come at the end of the document: “It should be good for anyone who takes it among the people. They shall not be prevented neither from the water they drink, nor from a road that they might need in land or sea”. There is clear disagreement in the interpretation and understanding of this sentence, yet the researcher argues that it is most likely speaking of the obligations of the People of Aylah to open up their sea ports and provide the route for the Muslims.<sup>169</sup>

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، هذه امانة من الله ومحمد النبي رسول الله ليحنة بن روية وأهل أيلة، لسفنتهم وسيارتهم في البر والبحر: لهم 168 ذمة الله وذمة محمد رسول الله، ولمن كان معهم من أهل الشام وأهل اليمن وأهل البحر، فمن أحدث حدثاً فإنه لا يحول ماله دون نفسه، وأنه طيب لمن أخذه من الناس، وأنه لا يحل أن يمتنعوا ماءً يردونه ولا طريقاً يريدونه من بر أو بحر. The researcher argues that there are only a very few differences between the sources of this text that do not affect the meanings in the text, such as saying هذا *Hādhā* instead of هذه *Hādhīh*. Both of the terminologies mean (This), but the first is masculine and the later is feminine. Yet this does not reflect on the meaning of the text.

<sup>169</sup> The researcher argues that this part is very problematic and might create contradictions if not read correctly. The reason for this is the wording; in the first sentence of this part, the text reads “it is good for anyone who takes it among the people”. It is not clear to which the term “it” refers, yet the linguist Al-Khatāb Al-May argues that it is very hard to understand what the “it” refers to in the text. This terminology could refer to the money mentioned in the sentence before, only because it comes after that sentence. Thus, the sentence could mean that the money of anyone who violates this assurance is open and free to everyone to take. This argument was mentioned by Al-May during a discussion about this sentence in al-Maktoum Institute – Dundee, on 30/3/2007. Yet Usāmah al-Ashqar argues that the terminology “it” in this text is what is called *Ḍamīr al-Sha’n* (the Matter Pronoun), which is well-known in Arabic literature, and does not refer to any previous terminology, but means “The matter is”. Therefore, the sentence “it shall be good for anyone who takes it among the people” could refer to the way of collection of the *Jizyah*, and mean: “The matter is that the money of *Jizyah* shall be given in a good manner, and through this legal contract, to whoever comes from the Muslim side to collect the *Jizyah*”. This argument was sent to the researcher by al-Ashqar on 12/4/2007.

The researcher argues that this document can be considered one of the most important documents in the history of this region. Through the terms of this document, the Prophet Muhammad secured one of the most important stations on the route to the south of Islamic Jerusalem. Aylah, as can be understood when studying its location, was the main port of al-Shām region on the Red Sea, i.e. the main marine connection with the rest of the Arab Peninsula. Not only this, it was also the last station on the route before the wide Sinai and Negev Deserts. This could explain why the issue of the water is mentioned in this document.

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The researcher argues that Al-May's argument cannot be accepted, since it contradicts other regulations mentioned by the Prophet Muhammad during the same *Ghazwah*, i.e. Tabūk; al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 411) mentions a story where a companion, namely Rāfi' Ibn Mukayth al-Juhānī, slaughtered a camel, and took what he needed from it and left it open for everyone. The Prophet ordered Rāfi' and everyone else to return what they took from the camel, and said: "This is a spoilation, and it is not permitted", they said to him: "Oh Messenger of God, the owner of the camel permitted this", the Prophet said: "even if he permitted". This historical text shows that almost at the same time of forming this document, the Prophet forbade this act, and therefore it is not logical to put a condition that is was forbidden by the Prophet. It should be noted that al-May argues that there is no way to find out what the word "it" refers to, except that the closest word to it is "money". The researcher argues that the "money" mentioned in the sentence before the word "it" is not meant in itself, but is only an expression to say that everyone who violates this assurance will be punished, disregarding his/her wealth, which refers here to the social status of the person.

The researcher argues that the word "it" in this sentence most likely does not refer to the money. The terminology "it" could be as al-Ashqar argues, or it could refer to the sea if the sentence "It shall be good for anyone who takes it among the people" is considered only *Jumlah Mu'tariḍah* (Obstructive Sentence). This is since the terminology "sea" is mentioned in many cases in the text before the sentence of the violation of the assurance. This started by mentioning the ships, then the land and the sea, and then the people of the sea. In this case, this sentence would be an obligation on the people of Aylah to make the sea open to anyone who would like to use it. Yet Al-May's opinion means that there is no obligation on the people of Aylah in this document since, according to Al-May, the terminology "They" in the final sentence in this document refers to the people of Aylah also, i.e. that the people of Aylah have the right of water and road always. This means that there are no duties needing to be fulfilled by the people of Aylah, and this issue is unlikely in the documents of the Prophet Muhammad, especially when studying other assurances and documents.

This also solves the other problematic matter in this part, which is the final statement. This will mean, then, that the word "They" in the final sentence refers to the "people" mentioned in the sentence before, i.e. "among the people". Which means that the interpretation of the last sentence in this assurance is: The people (in general) should not be prevented (by the people of Aylah) from drinking water, or from a route on land and sea. In other words: it is obligatory on the people of Aylah not to prevent anyone from fishing, drinking water, or passing by through the sea or land of Aylah. This could be supported by the statement of al-Balādhurī (1992: 69), who argues that the Prophet Muhammad agreed with Aylah to provide any Muslims passing through Aylah with food.

Mayerson (1964:198) elaborates on this, arguing that through this document “the Muslims gained passage through the narrow passes surrounding the town whose defence by even a small force of men could easily have prevented Muhammad’s use of this ingress in Palestine”. He also adds that Aylah “provided the necessary food, water and resting place for troops before a military operation through the desert”. The researcher argues that this means that the Prophet secured a supply station of food and water through this document. This could be one of the most important aspects regarding success or failure of any future campaigns taking this route. By securing this main aspect from Aylah, the southern road to IslamicJerusalem would be easily opened. Usāmah al-Ashqar (2006: 38) argues that this assurance could mean political admission of the new power, namely that of the Muslims.

The researcher agrees with Mayerson and al-Ashqar that this assurance not only opened up a small passage, but the whole southern areas of IslamicJerusalem, namely the Negev Desert, to the Muslim campaigners. Starting from that time, the Muslims would have been able to launch campaigns on large scales with no lack of food supplies, and not having to spend a great deal of time in opening up routes. This assurance marked the opening up of the long coastal route to the Muslims towards IslamicJerusalem. It also supports the strong assumption that the main aim for this step was IslamicJerusalem in particular. This is since the coastal commercial route that passes through Aylah goes directly to Gaza, which borders IslamicJerusalem. This means that the Prophet Muhammad was well aware of the needs of any future armies passing through this region.<sup>170</sup> Thus, he prepared them with drink supplies, in addition to being a backing-up station that could be used as a gathering point.

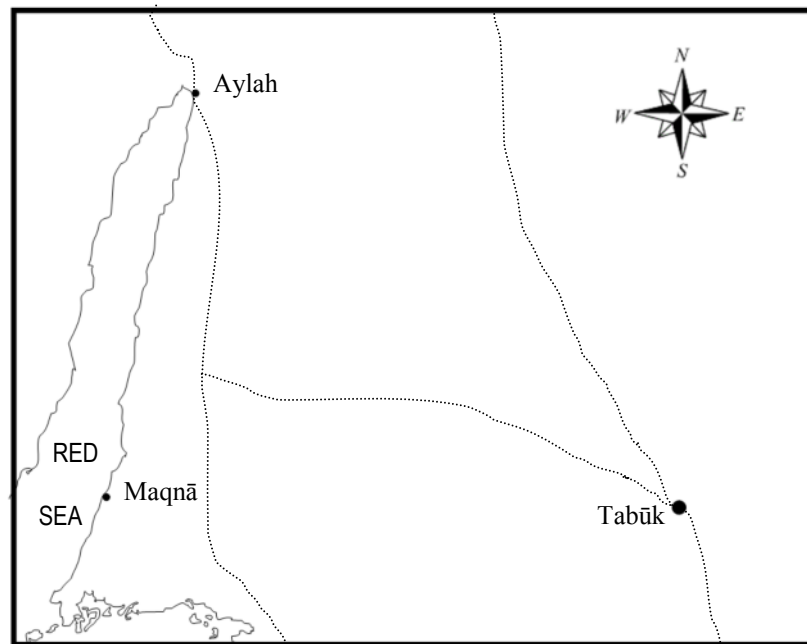
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<sup>170</sup> The army of ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ took this route during the campaign towards the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. This army had a great battle with the Byzantines in “Dāthin” at the South Western borders of IslamicJerusalem (see al-Wāqidī n.d: 18, al-Balādhurī 1992:127).

‘Athāminah (2000: 95) agrees with this, adding that the *Jizyah* mentioned in this assurance, along with the neighbouring towns, was enough to supply the Muslim armies with all their financial needs to buy the necessary supplies. ‘Athāminah here quotes a very interesting narration from Ibn ‘Asākir (1995: (2) 82), who mentions that when Abū Bakr, the first Muslim Caliph, launched the campaign towards the *Fath* of al-Shām, the armies marched with families, horses, and arms only and “they did not take with them donkeys or sheep, and they marched on the route of Palestine [i.e. Palestine III], until they reached a town named Dāthin”. ‘Athāminah interprets this statement as being a result of this assurance; the Muslims did not need to take food supplies with them since they would find these ready for them on their way. The researcher agrees with this interpretation; it shows that the assurance to Aylah in particular, being the biggest and most important point on that route, guaranteed these supplies and passage for the Muslim armies on their march towards Islamic Jerusalem.

### **Assurance to Maqnā**

Maqnā is mentioned historically in various sources; it seems that this town was well-known in the seventh century, perhaps due to its location on the coastal road between al-Shām and Arabia. This can be seen when accounts mentioning Maqnā are studied. Al-Ḥamawī (1990: (5) 206) argues that Maqnā was a village close to Aylah, as he quotes al-Waqidī’s account about the assurance granted by the Prophet Muhammad. The researcher argues that the historical Maqnā, mentioned in these sources, is most likely the same place that is today al-Maqnā in Saudi Arabia, which lies about 129 km, i.e. about 80 miles, south of Aqaba on the Red Sea. A brief look at the location of Maqnā shows its huge importance in controlling the coastal road between the Arab Peninsula and al-Shām region.



**Map (5):** The location of Maqnā on the Red Sea and its relationship with the coastal commercial route

Al-Ḥamawī (1990: (5) 206) claims that, according to al-Wāqidī, the people of Maqnā were Jews. The researcher argues that al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 410-411) did not specify in his account that all the people of Maqnā were Jews, mentioning only a Jewish woman who used to live in Maqnā. However, al-Balādhurī (d. 279 AH / 892 CE) argues that the people of Maqnā were Jews (see al-Balādhurī 1992: 69). The researcher argues that it seems that the people of Maqnā were in general Jews, since no other accounts mention other religious communities there. Al-Wāqidī speaks of a Jewish woman but does not mention people of other religions in that town. This strengthens the argument that Maqnā was most likely a Jewish town.

The assurance of the Prophet Muhammad to the People of Maqnā is noted in various historical sources. Ibn Ishāq does not note this document nor does Ibn Hishām. Yet the researcher argues that mentioning the letter by al-Wāqidī and al-Balādhurī gives

it reliability, since al-Balādhurī (1992: 70) also quotes the text of the document from a person from Egypt who claimed to have seen and copied the text. In addition, the presence of this assurance to the people of Maqnā is also mentioned by Ibn Sa‘d (1997: (1) 221). This strengthens the authenticity of the presence of the document.

One of the earliest historical versions of this assurance is al-Wāqidī’s text (2004: (2) 410), which comes abbreviated. The second is al-Balādhurī’s (1992: 70); the third is Ibn Sa‘d’s version (1997: (1) 212); and the fourth is a text found in the Cairo Genizah, translated and published in 1903 by Hartwig Hirschfeld (1903: 167-181). After studying the four versions of the document, the researcher argues that the text mentioned by Ibn Sa‘d is most likely the most reliable text of this document due to its language and its context (see Appendix II).

This text is mentioned by Ibn Sa‘d (1997: (1) 212) as follows:

Thereafter, your messengers came to me and informed that you are returning to your town. So when you receive this assurance [know that] you are safe, and you have the guarantee of God and His messenger. The messenger of God has forgiven your sins, and you have the guarantee of God and his Prophet, you shall not be harmed or oppressed. The messenger of God PBUH protects you from whatever he protects himself from. To the Messenger of God belongs *Bazzukum* [i.e. clothes] and your slaves and *al-Kurā’* [i.e. weapons or cattle] and *al-Halqah* [i.e. what is inside the house of money or weapons] except what the Messenger of God, or his messenger, excuses. You have to pay one quarter of your palm trees’ products, one quarter of your fishing, and one quarter of what your women spin. You are not supposed to pay *Jizyah* or *Sukhrah* [i.e. to work without pension] after this. If you hear and obey me, the Messenger of God shall be generous with your kind persons, and forgive the disobedient among you. Any Muslim acts in a good manner with the People of Maqnā would be rewarded good, and anyone acts in a bad manner with them would be treated badly. You shall not have an *Amīr* [leader] except from

yourselves, or from the family of the Messenger of God, and peace [be to you].<sup>171</sup>

The researcher argues that Ibn Sa'd does not mention a specific source for his version of this assurance, quoting only a number of narrators of various documents. Unlike al-Balādhurī (1992: 70), for example, who clearly argues that he has copied this text from a copy taken from the original letter of the Prophet. However, it should be noted that Ibn Sa'd died in 230 AH / 845 CE, while al-Balādhurī died in 279 AH / 892 CE. Ibn Sa'd met al-Wāqidī and accompanied him for a long time, as is known from his biography (see Ibn Sa'd 1997: (1) 5). Thus, it is most likely that he could have taken this narration from al-Wāqidī himself, especially in that he quotes al-Wāqidī many times in his writings, and also uses the same style of al-Wāqidī in many of his narrations.

The researcher argues that this assurance is very important in identifying the relationship between this event and those that followed. Maqnā lies in a very important strategic location. It controls an important and almost central point in the Red Sea, where it divides into two branches. This means that winning this town over to the Muslim side could help control all the marine routes to both al-Shām and Egypt through controlling the south of Sinai, the southern gate to Islamic Jerusalem.

The researcher argues that the importance of the location of Maqnā seems not to be the only reason for this assurance. A condition is mentioned in the text with regard to

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أما بعد، فقد نزل علي أيتكم راجعين إلى قريبتكم فإذا جاءكم كتابي هذا فإنكم آمنون لكم ذمة الله وذمة رسوله لا ظلم عليكم ولا عدى، وإن رسول الله جاركم مما منع منه نفسه، فإن لرسول الله بركم وكل رقيق فيكم والكراع والحلقة إلا ما عفا عنه رسول الله أو رسول رسول الله، وإن عليكم بعد ذلك ربع ما أخرجت نخلكم وربع ما صادت عروكم وربع ما اغتزل نساؤكم وإنكم برئتم بعد من كل جزية أو سخرة، فإن سمعتم وأطعتم فإن على رسول الله أن يكرم كريمتكم ويعفو عن مسيئكم. أما بعد فإلى المؤمنين والمسلمين، من أطلع أهل مقنا بخير فهو خير له، ومن أطلعهم بشر فهو شر له، وأن ليس عليكم أمير إلا من أنفسكم أو من أهل رسول الله والسلام.

the ownership of *al-Ḥalqah*, which is interpreted by Ibn Sa'd (1997: (1) 212) as all what the house has of weapons or money.

It seems from the text that this assurance does not prevent the people of Maqnā from owning weapons or money. Another condition mentions their obligation to pay one quarter of their products. Making a condition that the people of Maqnā pay all their weapons and money and, further, pay one quarter of their products would be unlikely. Thus, the researcher argues, this condition most likely refers to any future needs taken from the people of Maqnā, and having such a condition would provide any future army with a financial and military station, especially since Maqnā lay on the coastal route between Arabia and al-Shām, which is longer than the usual route. This condition is crucial, as it means that the Prophet Muhammad formed a weaponry station near the coastal route on the way to Islamic Jerusalem.

Moreover, Maqnā could be considered, according to the conditions of this assurance, a major food-supplying station for any future army. The people of Maqnā had to pay one quarter of each of their products, not only one quarter of the products as a whole. Thus a sufficient supply of food and garments would be available for any future army.<sup>172</sup> This strengthens the argument that the Prophet Muhammad was actually applying a strategy that would serve the Muslims in the future towards the *Fath* of the North Western areas located on this route in particular, especially Islamic Jerusalem.

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<sup>172</sup> The researcher will not concentrate on the issue of the leadership of Maqnā, as being either one of its people, or a member of the Prophet's family. This issue is out of the scope of this research.

## Assurance to Adhruḥ

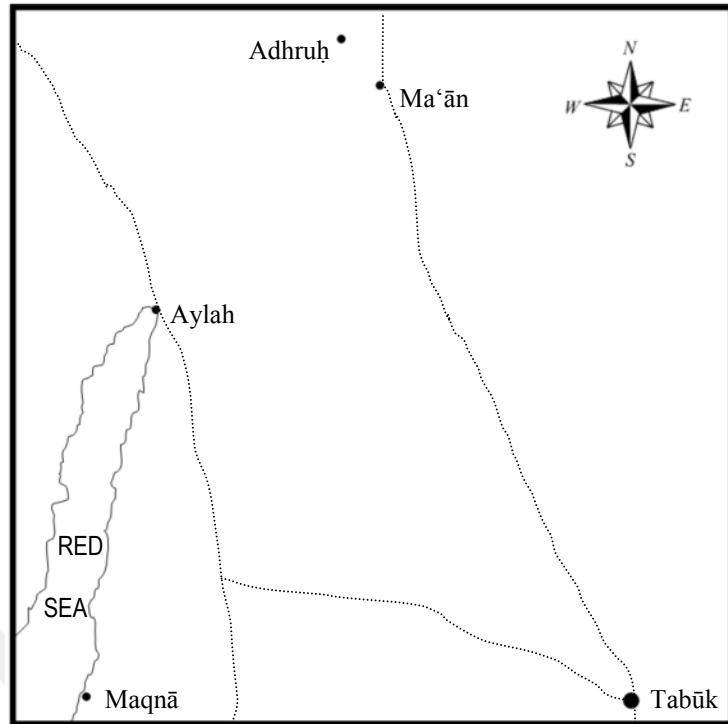
Adhruḥ has played a very important role in Muslim history, being the place where one of the most important events, namely the arbitration between ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib and Mu‘āwiyah Ibn Abī Sufyān, took place (see Ibn Sa‘d 1997: (2) 23). It seems that this town was well-known in the early Muslim history, and perhaps this was why the Prophet Muhammad had a special interest in it.<sup>173</sup>

Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (1990: (1) 157-158) mentions Adhruḥ and describes it as a town located near al-Sharāḥ Mountains, which today is in the Kingdom of Jordan.<sup>174</sup> Adhruḥ still has the same name, and is situated about 13 miles, i.e. about 21km, North West of the city of Ma‘ān, as can be seen from the following map:

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<sup>173</sup> The researcher argues that there is another town mentioned in the same context, namely Jarbā’. This town is rarely mentioned in the Muslim history except in connection with Adhruḥ. Both towns are mentioned in the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad. The *ḥadīth* that mentions Adhruḥ and Jarbā’ is mentioned by Muslim (2000: (2) 991). In this *ḥadīth*, the Prophet says: “In front of you (i.e. in the Day of Judgment) a trough (i.e. the trough of the Prophet Muhammad in the hereafter), between each of its sides is as much as the distance between Jarba and Adhruḥ” (إن أمامكم حوضاً ما بين ناحيتيه كما بين جربا وأذرح). One of the narrators, namely ‘Ubaydullāh, says: “I asked him (i.e. he asked the narrator Nāfi’ about the two towns); he said: two towns in al-Shām, between them is three days journey”.

<sup>174</sup> Al-Ḥamawī also mentions Jarbā’ (1990: (2) 137) as being only a small village that follows Adhruḥ. It seems that the two towns were linked together historically, the main one being Adhruḥ. It appears that the name of Jarbā’ has been changed; none of the villages and towns around Adhruḥ today have the name Jarbā’.



**Map (6):** The location of Adhruh and its relationship with the commercial routes

The researcher argues that it seems that Adhruh has a very important location. It is located near the desert route that connects al-Shām and the Arab Peninsula. This gives it great importance, as it lies almost on the borders between Arabia and al-Shām. It controls the route almost exactly on these borders. This gives a clearer picture of the importance of such an assurance to this town.

There is quite a significant confusion in the historical sources with regard to the assurance to Adhruh. Some mention that there was only one assurance to Adhruh, and others mention a joint assurance to both Adhruh and the neighbouring town, Jarbā'. Yet other sources mention two different assurances: one for Adhruh and the other for Jarbā'. The researcher has investigated this issue, and the various narrations and versions of this assurance. He found al-Wāqidī's version perhaps the most acceptable and authentic version of this document (see Appendix III). Al-Wāqidī

argues that there was only one assurance given to Adhruh, not Jarbā'. He clearly states that he saw that document. Therefore, the researcher will study this text only.

The text that al-Wāqidī narrates for this assurance is as follows (2004: (2) 410):

Al-Wāqidī said: I copied the document of Adhruh, and I found in it [the following]: By the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, from Muhammad the Prophet to the People of Adhruh, they are safe by the safeguard of God and the safeguard of Muhammad, and they have to pay 100 *Dinār* on every *Rajab*, complete and pure, and God is their guarantor that they would give advice and be kind to Muslims, and to any Muslim who seeks asylum to them, because of any fear, if they feel any danger threatens the Muslims. And they shall be safe [i.e. calm] until Muhammad informs them before he leaves [i.e. for any help in wars].<sup>175</sup>

This document holds a very important significance. Adhruh was located not far from the main commercial route coming from the Arab Peninsula into al-Shām, as the researcher explained earlier (Map 6).

It is worth mentioning that Ibn Sa'd (1997: (1) 220) argues that the people of Adhruh and Jarbā' were also Jews, which is the same for Maqnā. This gives a very important dimension to the two documents. It is noted that, in the document of Maqnā, the Prophet demanded its people to provide military supplies, i.e. armoury. In this document, the Prophet demands a supply of fighting forces when they are needed.

This document obligates the people of Adhruh to help the Muslims, in any future war, as can be understood from the text: "They shall be safe [calm] until Muhammad informs them before he leaves". This text is very interesting; it actually guarantees

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قال الواقدي: نسخت كتاب أذرح وإذا فيه: (بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، من محمد النبي لأهل أذرح، أنهم آمنون بأمان الله وأمان محمد، وأن عليهم مائة دينار في كل رجب وافية طيبة، والله كفيل عليهم بالنصح والإحسان للمسلمين ولمن لجأ إليهم من المسلمين من المخافة والتعزير إذ خشوا على المسلمين، وهم آمنون حتى يحدث إليهم محمد قبل خروجه).<sup>175</sup>

the Muslims a security station. This could be a result of the uniqueness of the location of Adhruh. It is located near the commercial route, not on it. It is also one of the closest towns to the boundaries of Islamic Jerusalem that the Prophet secured, and it can also be considered as almost the South Eastern gate to Islamic Jerusalem.

It is noted that this document in particular mentions giving asylum to any Muslim who needs it. This condition is not mentioned in previous documents within this region. This raises a question about the reason why the Prophet Muhammad put such a condition in this assurance in particular. The researcher argues that this condition means that Adhruh can be considered as a sanctuary, for the Muslims, in cases of wars in that region. This is very important because al-Shām is quite far away from Madīnah. In any war, it would have been very hard to secure any large army in that desert unless a point of security could have been supplied to them. This would certainly assist any Muslim army in the future, in case of their needing assistance, by being secure in Adhruh. The researcher, however, argues that it seems that these arrangements were all precautionary, since the text does not obligate any present actions.

In addition, the researcher points to a very important statement mentioned in this text, that is, the last statement: “until Muhammad informs them before he leaves”. The researcher argues that this statement shows a clear future intention to be back to that region going further north, since it clearly says that the People of Adhruh need to remain peaceful **until** the Prophet informs them before he leaves. There is no reason to argue that the Prophet would have mentioned this statement unless there were to be future aims and benefits. The researcher argues that this statement is clear in showing a future plan for this region, which needed to form such an important

station. It could mean that the Prophet Muhammad was preparing for another campaign in the future to be led by himself.

## **Conclusion**

The documents that the researcher has studied in this chapter show unique and active movements by the Prophet Muhammad towards achieving authority over the areas located on the northern borders of the Arab Peninsula. It is noted that most of these documents were devised in a late period in the life of the Prophet Muhammad, during or after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. This shows that there was an important strategic aim which led to the instigating of all these assurances and endowments during that time in particular.

In the case of the endowments; the Prophet Muhammad granted three main lands in that region. It is important to note that these three granted lands were the only ones that were outside the actual Muslim political control at the time of the granting. This shows the uniqueness of Islamic Jerusalem, and shows that there was a reason for granting them before putting them under the actual Muslim political control. The most important among these three endowments are the endowments to Banī Jaffāl and Tamīm al-Dārī. The first one not only represents his authority over the southern areas of Islamic Jerusalem, it also opened up the Negev Desert route to Islamic Jerusalem. This would help any future movements in that region towards Islamic Jerusalem. In other words, this endowment represents the first Muslim actual *Fatḥ* of the Negev Desert simply by winning the people of that area over to the Muslim side.

The endowment to Tamīm al-Dārī was indeed one of the most important signs of the Prophet Muhammad's authority over a part of Islamic Jerusalem. A leader may not grant a land in any place unless this place is under his authority. This could be interpreted as a Prophetic sign to the Muslims on his thoughts and plans for the *Fath* of this region. Not only this, but this endowment was also a crucial element in winning the people of that region over to the Muslim side. It means that some people of Islamic Jerusalem admitted the Prophet's authority over that region. This holds many meanings with regard to the future of that region, as the Prophet showed through this endowment. The researcher here also refers to the fact that the land which was granted to Tamīm was the land of Ibrāhīm (Abraham), considered the main reference point of the three main religions. This actually explains the Prophet's quick answer to the request of Tamīm al-Dārī.

Also, it can be said that the letter of the Prophet Muhammad to Heraclius was the first practical diplomatic step towards the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. This letter holds a lot of meaning especially in its time and place. It was delivered in the heart of Islamic Jerusalem, and before marching deeply into Byzantine territory. This leads the researcher to conclude that the Prophet was actually sending a very strong warning to Heraclius, before the start of a series of military operations on the borders of Islamic Jerusalem. Sending the letter to Heraclius in Islamic Jerusalem was very important since it showed that Islamic Jerusalem was actually the main purpose in sending this letter. It was sent to Heraclius since he was the controller of the whole region, and was sent to him at the peak of his victory; Heraclius understood the message, and this was reflected in his statement.

The researcher concludes that this letter was also important for the Muslims. It was a warning before the start of the actual campaign towards IslamicJerusalem. Perhaps this is why the Prophet Muhammad chose to send it at that time in particular, i.e. before the start of his military expeditions around the borders of IslamicJerusalem. This letter could solve many issues with regard to the justifications of the campaigns towards IslamicJerusalem, according to the Muslims.

With regard to the assurances that were granted by the Prophet Muhammad to different tribes, especially during Tabūk. The researcher argues that the locations of the towns chosen to which these assurances were given, namely Aylah, Maqnā, and Adhruh, gives rise to many meanings. One of the main aims, in forming these assurances, was actually to open up the route between the Arab Peninsula and IslamicJerusalem in particular. By linking these assurances with the above-mentioned endowments, one main target can clearly be seen, namely IslamicJerusalem. By looking at the assurances granted in Tabūk, one can note that the majority of the places were on or near the two routes connecting IslamicJerusalem with the Arab Peninsula. These were both the South Eastern desert route, close to Adhruh, and the South Western seaside route, near Maqnā and through Aylah. It is noted that the Prophet Muhammad granted two of the assurances to the Jews of Maqnā and Adhruh, and the other assurance to the Christians in Aylah. This shows that he did not have an exclusive vision, i.e. against Jews and Christians with regard to IslamicJerusalem but was counting on their support. Perhaps this is why the Prophet Muhammad's steps were accepted by both parties in this area.

The researcher argues that, through these assurances, the Prophet Muhammad was clearly able to secure supplies of weapons, emergency shelter, food, and water to any

future army. This can be clearly concluded when looking at the texts of these assurances, where arms are mentioned in his assurances to Adhruh and Maqnā. Food supplies are mentioned in the assurance to Maqnā, while water supplies are mentioned in the assurance with Aylah. The researcher concludes that mentioning food and water supply, especially in the assurances to Maqnā and Aylah, was very essential, due to the location of the two towns on the seaside route just before the Negev Desert, which route to IslamicJerusalem is longer than the other route.

Therefore, the researcher concludes that the Prophet Muhammad was preparing to send at least two armies; these were to enter this region and encircle IslamicJerusalem from the east and the south. The researcher notes that the west is closed by the Mediterranean Sea. The Prophet Muhammad also secured passages through for these armies, in addition to the necessary supplies. This is reflected in an actual campaign in the time of the Caliph Abū Bakr, who took these routes and made use of the conditions of these assurances prepared by the Prophet, especially the army of ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ. Thus these documents have a central importance in studying and identifying the nature of the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and IslamicJerusalem.

From this study of these documents, it seems that the Prophet Muhammad was well aware of the map of the alliances and loyalties within this region, which shows that there was a very important aspect that would clarify the strategic situation in that region and resulted in these documents, namely the military missions. These had a crucial role in identifying the situation in this region and the needs for any campaigns that would follow. The following chapter will study these military missions and their role in the future *Fath*.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### ***MILITARY ACTION***

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# Chapter Five

## Military Action

### Introduction

Military action represents the actual physical movement towards the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem by the Prophet Muhammad. Looking at the military actions taken by the Prophet during his lifetime could prove or disprove the hypothesis of his plan towards the *Fath* of that region. These military expeditions hold important significance in this context. W. Montgomery Watt (1962: 105) argues that ‘a study of the numbers involved in the various expeditions in the direction of Syria shows that the road north had a prominent place in Muhammad’s strategic thinking’. He also adds that the various sources that speak about the expeditions and military actions on the route of al-Shām ‘are tantalizingly reticent about details; and we are left to deduce from our general knowledge the reasons for this emphasis in strategy on the road to Syria’ (Watt 1962: 105). The researcher argues that Watt’s opinion is true to some extent. The military expeditions formed by the Prophet Muhammad can open up an understanding to the reality of the strategy of the Prophet towards al-Shām and Islamic Jerusalem in particular. Thus, they should be studied taking the reasons into consideration, beyond the various chronicles and details stated in the numerous historical sources.

This chapter aims to discuss the military movements that took place during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad, namely towards the north, in order to study the link between these actions and decide whether or not they can be considered the

actual movements of the Prophet Muhammad towards Islamic Jerusalem. In identifying this issue, it becomes easier to find a new dimension to interpret the physical military movements of the Prophet Muhammad during his lifetime and his relationship with Islamic Jerusalem may be also more easily identified.

However, it should be noted that military actions in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad were not towards a single destination, but were spread throughout the Arab Peninsula and north of it, depending on the developments of the Prophet Muhammad's relationships and aims. The researcher argues that the military actions of the Prophet Muhammad can be divided into two main stages: first, the defensive stage which went from the migration to Madīnah to the treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyah. Second, the expansion stage, going from the time of al-Ḥudaybiyah treaty until the death of the Prophet Muhammad. The researcher will clarify this issue and explain the motivations for this division in more detail throughout this chapter.

### **The Military *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* throughout the Prophet's life**

First, the researcher will collect the various *Sarāyā*<sup>176</sup> and *Ghazawāt*<sup>177</sup> that took place during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad, which began after his migration to Madīnah, chronologically. This will help give a clearer picture of the Prophet's military action strategy.

Many historians have gathered together these *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* of the Prophet Muhammad. One of the most important historians in this field is al-Wāqidī, who is considered the most important source in this field especially with his book *al-*

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<sup>176</sup> *Sarāyā*: Plural of *Sariyyah*, the military expedition that the Prophet Muhammad sent but did not participate in; this is also the same for the terminology *Ba'th*.

<sup>177</sup> *Ghazawāt*: Plural of *Ghazwah*, a military expedition led by the Prophet Muhammad.

*Maghāzī*. The researcher will mainly rely on him on this issue; he will also look at other sources such as Ibn Ishāq and others. It should be noted that most of these sources agree on the various *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt*. One of the most important contemporary historians to study the military movements of the Prophet Muhammad is al-Mubarakpuri, in that he attempts to investigate the exact dates of these events; this gives him reliability in the field. In addition to al-Mubarakpuri, the researcher relies on Shawqī Abū Khalīl, who investigates the locations of all these *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* in his Atlas of the *Sīrah*.

By investigating the numbers of *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* during the Prophet Muhammad's lifetime and their locations, excluding the ones that took the shape of killing a specific person,<sup>178</sup> all can be summarised as in the table below. Table (2) will be followed by a map showing the locations of these *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt*, which will show the directions of these events<sup>179</sup>:

| No. | Name / location                                                     | No. of men | Year (AH) | Direction from Madīnah |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------------------|
| 1.  | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Ḥamzah / Sayf al-Baḥr and al-‘Aṣ             | 30         | 1 AH      | South West             |
| 2.  | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Ubaydah Ibn al-Ḥārith / Thaniyyat al-Murrah | 60         | 1 AH      | South West             |
| 3.  | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Sa‘d Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ / al-Kharrār             | 20         | 1 AH      | South                  |
| 4.  | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Waddān or al-Abwā’                            | 70         | 1 AH      | South West             |
| 5.  | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Buwāṭ                                         | 200        | 2 AH      | West                   |
| 6.  | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Badr al-‘Ūlā / Safwān and Badr                | 70         | 2 AH      | South West             |
| 7.  | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of al-‘Ushayrah                                  | 150        | 2 AH      | West                   |
| 8.  | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Abdullāh Ibn Jaḥsh / Baṭn Nakhlah           | 12         | 2 AH      | South                  |

<sup>178</sup> Such as the killing of Ka‘b Ibn al-Ashraf and Salām Ibn Abī al-Ḥaqqīq. The researcher will briefly elaborate on this.

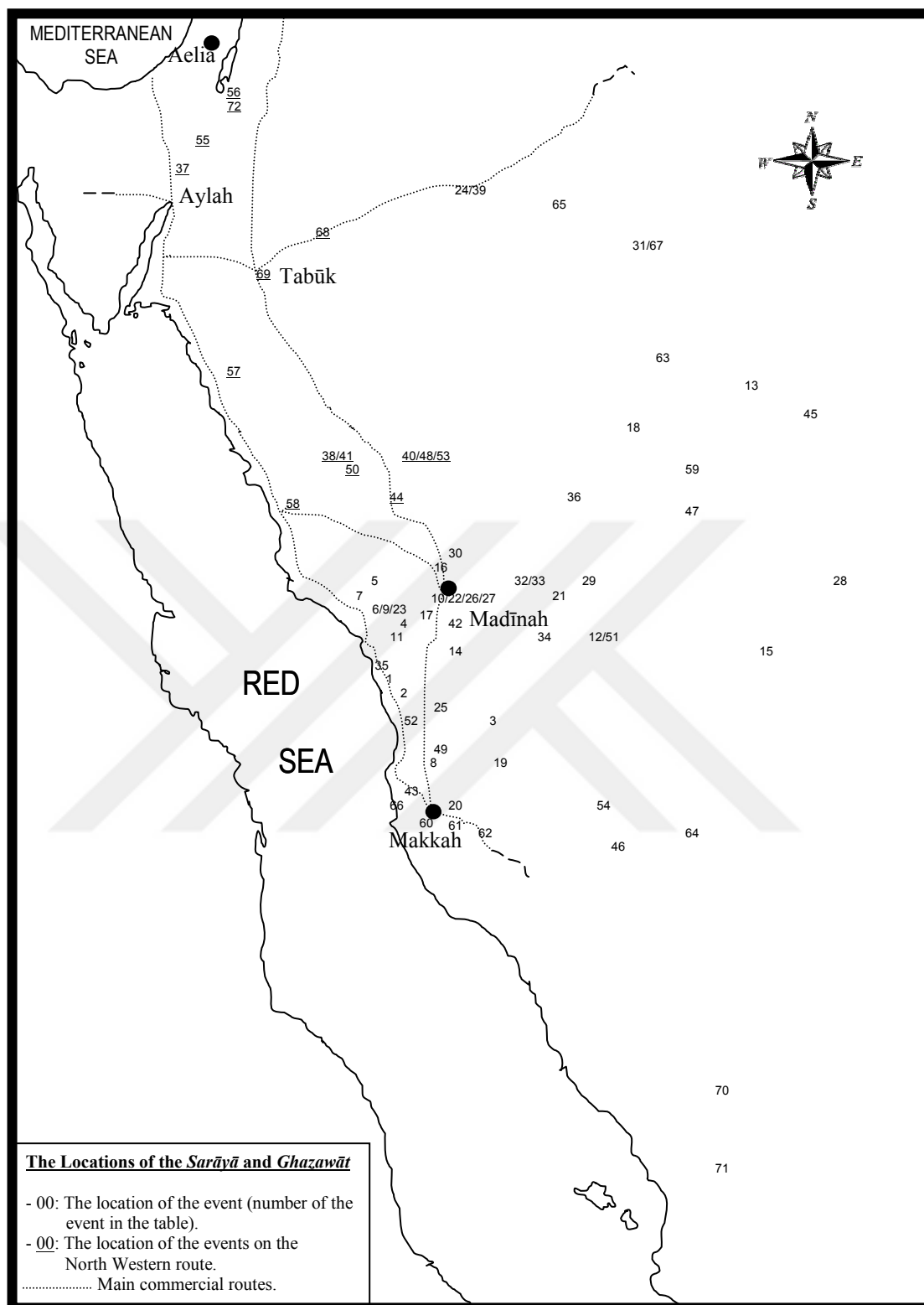
<sup>179</sup> The researcher took the numbers of men in the *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* from the elaborations of al-Mubarakpuri and Abū al-Rub. The locations of the *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* have been taken from the Atlas of the *Sīrah* by Shawqī Abū Khalīl.

|     |                                                                   |         |             |                             |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 9.  | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Badr al-Kubrā                               | 319     | 2 AH        | South West                  |
| 10. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Banī Qaynuqā‘                               | Unknown | 2 AH        | Within Madīnah              |
| 11. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of al-Suwayq                                   | Unknown | 2 AH        | South West                  |
| 12. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Sulaym / al-Kudr                            | 200     | 3 AH        | South East                  |
| 13. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Dhī Amar                                    | 450     | 3 AH        | North East                  |
| 14. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Buhrān                                      | 300     | 3 AH        | South                       |
| 15. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Zayd Ibn Hārithah / al-Qaradah             | 100     | 3 AH        | South East                  |
| 16. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Uḥud                                        | 700     | 3 AH        | North within Madīnah region |
| 17. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Ḥamrā’ al-Asad                              | 700     | 3 AH        | South West                  |
| 18. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Abī Salamah / Qaṭan                        | 150     | 4 AH        | North East                  |
| 19. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Abdullāh Ibn Unays / ‘Uranah              | 1       | 4 AH        | South                       |
| 20. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of al-Rajī‘                                   | 10      | 4 AH        | South West                  |
| 21. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of al-Mundhir Ibn ‘Amr / Bi’r Ma‘ūnah         | 70      | 4 AH        | East                        |
| 22. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Banī al-Naḍīr                               | Unknown | 4 AH        | Within Madīnah              |
| 23. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Badr al-’Ākhirah                            | 1,500   | 4 AH        | South West                  |
| 24. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Dūmat al-Jandal                             | 1,000   | 5 AH        | North East                  |
| 25. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Banī al-Muṣṭaliq / al-Muraysī‘              | Unknown | 5 AH        | South East                  |
| 26. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of al-Khandaq                                  | Unknown | 5 AH        | Within Madīnah              |
| 27. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Banī Qurayṣah                               | 3,000   | 5 AH        | Within Madīnah              |
| 28. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Muhammad Ibn Maslamah / al-Quraṭā’         | 30      | 6 AH        | East                        |
| 29. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Banī Liḥyān                                 | 200     | 6 AH        | East                        |
| 30. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of al-Ghābah / Dhī Qarad                       | Unknown | 6 AH        | North East                  |
| 31. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Ukashah / al-Ghamr                        | 40      | 6 AH        | North East                  |
| 32. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Muhammad Ibn Maslamah / Dhī al-Qaṣṣah      | 10      | 6 AH        | East                        |
| 33. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Abū ‘Ubaydah Ibn al-Jarrāḥ / Dhī al-Qaṣṣah | 40      | 6 AH        | East                        |
| 34. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Zayd Ibn Hārithah / al-Jamūm               | Unknown | 6 AH        | South East                  |
| 35. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Zayd Ibn Hārithah / al-‘Aṣ                 | 170     | 6 AH        | South West                  |
| 36. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Zayd Ibn Hārithah / al-Ṭarf                | 15      | 6 AH        | North East                  |
| 37. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Zayd Ibn Hārithah / Ḥismā</b>           | 500     | <b>6 AH</b> | <b>North West</b>           |
| 38. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Zayd Ibn Hārithah / Wādī al-Qurā</b>    | 12      | <b>6 AH</b> | <b>North West</b>           |
| 39. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn ‘Awf / Dūmat al-Jandal  | Unknown | 6 AH        | North East                  |
| 40. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib / Fadak</b>          | 200     | <b>6 AH</b> | <b>North West</b>           |
| 41. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Zayd Ibn Hārithah / Wādī al-Qurā</b>    | Unknown | <b>6 AH</b> | <b>North West</b>           |

|     |                                                                                                                 |         |             |                   |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------------|
| 42. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Kurz Ibn Jābir / ‘Uraynah                                                                | 20      | 6 AH        | South             |
| 43. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of al-Ḥudaybiyah                                                                             | 1,400   | 6 AH        | South             |
| 44. | <b>The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Khaybar</b>                                                                            | 1,400   | <b>7 AH</b> | <b>North West</b> |
| 45. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Dhāt al-Riqā’ / Najd                                                                      | 700     | 7 AH        | North East        |
| 46. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb / Turabah                                                           | 30      | 7 AH        | South East        |
| 47. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Abū Bakr / Najd                                                                          | Unknown | 7 AH        | East              |
| 48. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Bashīr Ibn Sa’d / Fadak</b>                                                           | 30      | <b>7 AH</b> | <b>North West</b> |
| 49. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Ghālib al-Laythī / al-Mayfa‘ah                                                           | 130     | 7 AH        | South West        |
| 50. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Bashīr Ib Sa’d / al-Jināb</b>                                                         | 300     | <b>7 AH</b> | <b>North West</b> |
| 51. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Ibn Abī al-‘Awjā’ / Banī Sulaym                                                          | 50      | 7 AH        | South East        |
| 52. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Ghālib al-Laythī / Kadīd                                                                 | Unknown | 8 AH        | South West        |
| 53. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Ghālib al-Laythī / Fadak</b>                                                          | 200     | <b>8 AH</b> | <b>North West</b> |
| 54. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Shujā’ Ibn Wahb / al-Say                                                                 | Unknown | 8 AH        | South East        |
| 55. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Ka’b Ibn ‘Umayr / Dhāt Aṭlāḥ</b>                                                      | 15      | <b>8 AH</b> | <b>North West</b> |
| 56. | <b>The Battle of Mu’tah</b>                                                                                     | 3,000   | <b>8 AH</b> | <b>North West</b> |
| 57. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ / Dhāt al-Salāsīl</b>                                                 | 300     | <b>8 AH</b> | <b>North West</b> |
| 58. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Abī ‘Ubaydah Ibn al-Jarrāḥ<br/>(The <i>Sariyyah</i> of al-Khabaṭ) / al-Qabaliyyah</b> | 300     | <b>8 AH</b> | <b>North West</b> |
| 59. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Abī Qatādah / Khaḍīrah                                                                   | 15      | 8 AH        | East              |
| 60. | The <i>Fath</i> of Makkah (and the <i>Sarāyā</i> that were connected with it)                                   | 10,000  | 8 AH        | South West        |
| 61. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Ḥunayn (started from Makkah)                                                              | 12000   | 8 AH        | South West        |
| 62. | The <i>Ghazwah</i> of al-Ṭā’if (started from Makkah)                                                            | 12,000  | 8 AH        | South West        |
| 63. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Uyaynah Ibn Ḥiṣn / Banī Tamīm                                                           | 50      | 9 AH        | North East        |
| 64. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Qutbah Ibn ‘Āmir / Tabālah                                                               | 20      | 9 AH        | South East        |
| 65. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of al-Ḍaḥḥāk al-Kilābī / Zujj Lāwah                                                         | Unknown | 9 AH        | North East        |
| 66. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Alqamah al-Mudlijī / Jiddah                                                             | 300     | 9 AH        | South East        |
| 67. | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib / Ṭayyī’                                                              | 150     | 9 AH        | North East        |
| 68. | <b>The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Ukāshah / ‘Udhrah and Bulī</b>                                                       | Unknown | <b>9 AH</b> | <b>North West</b> |

|                                                |                                                     |         |             |                   |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------------|
| 69.                                            | <b>The <i>Ghazwah</i> of Tabūk</b>                  | 30,000  | <b>9 AH</b> | <b>North West</b> |
| 70.                                            | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of Khālīd Ibn al-Walīd / Najrān | Unknown | 10 AH       | South             |
| 71.                                            | The <i>Sariyyah</i> of ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib / Yemen   | Unknown | 10 AH       | South             |
| THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE PROPHET WAS DURING 10 AH |                                                     |         |             |                   |
| 72.                                            | The Ba‘th of Usāmah Ibn Zayd / Ubnā                 | 3,000   | 11 AH       | <b>North West</b> |

**Table (2):** The *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* of the Prophet Muhammad



**Map (7):** The locations of the *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad

| Madanī era                                                   | Direction From Madīnah              |    |                    | Number |          |       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----|--------------------|--------|----------|-------|
|                                                              |                                     |    |                    | Sarāyā | Ghazawāt | Total |
| To the end of year 5 AH                                      | North                               | 3  | North East         | 1      | 2        | 3     |
|                                                              |                                     |    | North West         | 0      | 0        | 0     |
|                                                              | South                               | 16 | South East + South | 4      | 3        | 7     |
|                                                              |                                     |    | South West         | 3      | 6        | 9     |
|                                                              | East, West or within Madīnah Region |    |                    | 1      | 7        | 8     |
| Total until the end of the year 5 AH                         |                                     |    |                    |        |          | 27    |
| From year 6 AH                                               | North                               | 23 | North East         | 6      | 2        | 8     |
|                                                              |                                     |    | North West         | 13     | 2        | 15    |
|                                                              | South                               | 16 | South East + South | 9      | 1        | 10    |
|                                                              |                                     |    | South West         | 3      | 3        | 6     |
|                                                              | East, West or within Madīnah Region |    |                    | 5      | 1        | 6     |
| Total from year 6 AH until the death of the Prophet Muhammad |                                     |    |                    |        |          | 45    |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF SARĀYĀ AND GHAZAWĀT                          |                                     |    |                    |        |          | 72    |

**Table (3):** Comparison between the directions of the *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt*

The second table shows a very significant difference between the intensity of the *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* towards the north before the beginning of the year 6 AH / 627 CE, and those after that. This year represents the mid-point in the Madani period (i.e. of the Prophet Muhammad's migration to Madīnah until his death),<sup>180</sup> which gives it very important significance as a turning point. The researcher notes that at the halfway point in Madīnah, i.e. at the beginning of the year 6 AH, there were only 3 military missions towards the north, compared with 16 southern ones and 8 in other directions. Interestingly, none of those northern missions were towards the North

<sup>180</sup> This point was raised by Khalid El-Awaisi during an academic meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2007. The researcher is grateful to Khalid El-Awaisi for drawing his attention to this point.

West, which is the direction of the route to al-Shām region and Islamic Jerusalem. In other words, none of them were on the route connecting Madīnah and al-Shām.

On the other hand, it is noted that the number of northern military missions from the beginning of the year 6 AH rose to 23 missions, compared with only 16 southern missions and 6 in other directions. This can only be interpreted as a diversion of the Prophet Muhammad's interest towards the north. Not only this, but when the northern missions themselves are analysed, one can note that the majority of these northern missions were actually towards the North West, with 15 missions. Two of them were led by the Prophet Muhammad personally; one being the biggest campaign ever of his lifetime, and the furthest he ever went as a Prophet/leader. At that time there were only 8 missions towards the North East, which was in the direction of Iraq. In fact, the researcher argues that the military missions towards the North West were the majority among all military missions from the year 6 AH. This can only mean that the Prophet's attention had not only been turned towards the North since the year 6 AH, but in fact was turned towards the North West particularly, i.e. in the direction of Islamic Jerusalem.

Othman al-Tel (n.d.)<sup>181</sup> claims that the attention of the Prophet Muhammad had been drawn towards al-Shām since his first three *Sarāyā*, namely, the *Sariyyah* of Ḥamzah to Sayf al-Baḥr, the *Sariyyah* of 'Ubaydah to Thaniyyat al-Murrah, and the *Sariyyah* of Sa'd to al-Kharrār. In other words, these movements towards al-Shām started soon after his migration to Madīnah. Al-Tel further claims that the main aim of these *Sarāyā* was to open up the road to al-Shām, not to intercept the caravans' trade route

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<sup>181</sup> This argument is mentioned in an unpublished chapter in al-Tel's Ph.D. notes, consulted in the collection of papers in the Centre for Islamic Jerusalem Studies at the Al-Maktoum Institute in Dundee.

of Quraysh to al-Shām near Madīnah. The evidence that al-Tel provides is that these three *Sarāyā* were directed towards the same place and did not interfere with the caravans of Quraysh in any battles. The researcher, however, argues that this is not enough to claim that the main aim would have been to open up the route to al-Shām. There are many evidences within the historical sequences of these *Sarāyā* and the other *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* that came after it, until the *Ghazwah* of Badr, to show that the main aim of the Prophet Muhammad at that time was not to open up the route of al-Shām, but for other reasons, mainly to put financial pressure on the tribe of Quraysh by cutting off their important commercial route from Makkah to al-Shām. His aim could also have been to open up the route to Makkah, especially since the majority of *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* before the year 6 AH were towards South West, i.e. on the route from Madīnah to Makkah.

In addition, it is noted that the change of the *Qiblah* towards Makkah took place during this early Madani period, in the year 2 AH (see al-Ṭabarī 1998: (3) 17). This is interpreted by al-Mubarakpuri (1996: 209) as being of great advantage to the Muslims, as it “refers gently to a new role awaiting the Muslims to take up, and would start only after the repatriation of the Muslims to their Sacred City, Makkah, for it is not logical for the Muslims to leave their *Qiblah* at the mercy of non-Muslims”. The researcher argues that the change of the *Qiblah* represented in this very crucial time a new direction for the Muslims, i.e. towards Makkah. However, this does not mean abandoning Islamic Jerusalem, which was the first *Qiblah*, but rearranging the priorities, i.e. securing their backs before moving towards their first *Qiblah*.

In addition, and more importantly, the researcher argues that claiming that the early *Sarāyā* aimed to open up the route of al-Shām is unacceptable. This is simply because the route from Madīnah to al-Shām is in the opposite direction to these *Sarāyā*. It is true that these *Sarāyā* were directed towards places located on the route to al-Shām, but this was the route to al-Shām from Makkah, not from Madīnah. If the Prophet Muhammad was aiming to open up the route to al-Shām, at that stage, why would he direct his forces towards the South West, when al-Shām is located on the other opposite direction, i.e. the North West of Madīnah? The researcher argues that al-Tel did not differentiate between the route of al-Shām from the Arab Peninsula in general, and the location of Makkah and Madīnah themselves on that route. In fact, directing these *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* towards the South West strengthens the researcher's arguments, since Makkah itself is located towards the South West of Madīnah.

It is quite obvious that the Prophet Muhammad, from the year 6 AH, had begun a new strategy in his *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt*. It was the first time that the Prophet sent a *Sariyyah* not only towards the North West of Madīnah, but also on the route to al-Shām **from Madīnah**. This raises a very important question about the motivations that drew the Prophet's attention towards that direction particularly, and at this particular time. The researcher argues that it should be noted that the movements towards the North West started in a small way after the *Ghazwah* of al-Khandaq in 5 AH, and before the truce of al-Ḥudaybiyah in 6 AH, as will be elaborated upon shortly.

This time represented a turning point in the Prophet Muhammad's military actions and his relationship with Quraysh. Immediately after the end of the *Ghazwah* of al-

Khandaq, the Prophet declared to the Muslims that this *Ghazwah* was a crucial turning point. He said: “From now on, we attack them, they do not attack us, and we march towards them” (al-Bukhārī 2000: (2) 818). This means that the Muslims would take the initiative in war against Quraysh starting from this point. The researcher argues that this statement shows that Quraysh from that time was almost neutralised, and the *Fath* of Makkah was only a matter of time, awaiting the right opportunity. Perhaps this was why the Prophet went to Makkah for ‘*Umrah*’ (pilgrimage visit) at the time of al-Ḥudaybiyah with almost no weapons. This act marked the start of the end of Quraysh control over Makkah, and was the best time to start turning the attention back towards Islamic Jerusalem and beginning military action.

### **The *Sariyyah* of Ḥismā**

The first *Sariyyah* on the route from Madīnah, in the direction of Islamic Jerusalem, was the *Sariyyah* of Zayd Ibn Ḥārithah to Ḥismā (*Jamādā al-Ākirah* 6 AH / 627 CE). According to al-Wāqidī (2004: (1) 14), this area was located to the North West of Madīnah, between Wādī al-Qurā and Aylah very close to the al-Shām borders, while al-Ḥamawī (1990: (2) 298) argues that Ḥismā was a vast area located between Aylah and Sinai. The researcher argues that it looks as if Ḥismā was the name for the whole area located between Wādī al-Qurā until the borders of Sinai near Aylah. Therefore, it is hard to know exactly where this *Sariyyah* was in Ḥismā. Al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 53) argues that this *Sariyyah* came right after the Prophet Muhammad sent his letter to Heraclius. It is mentioned that Heraclius presented the messenger of the Prophet Muhammad, namely Diḥyah al-Kalbī, with a gift. However, Diḥyah was attacked at Ḥismā, on his way back to Madīnah, by people from the tribe of Judhām. The

Prophet sent Zayd leading a *Sariyyah* of 500 men to gain revenge for what happened to Diḥyah, as is argued also by Ibn Kathīr (1966: (3) 339).

The researcher argues that this reason here is not fully accurate; there is no record of any correspondence between the Prophet Muhammad and Heraclius before the treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyah as Abū Māyleh (2004: 80) argues. Abū Māyleh says that it seems that this *Sariyyah* took place after the treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyah, depending on the story of the correspondence between the Prophet and Heraclius. However, the researcher argues that one of the narrations concerning attacking of Diḥyah mentions that he was in trade when he was attacked (see Abū Mayleh 2004: 86). This gives another possibility to the reason why Diḥyah was attacked in Ḥismā, it was not necessarily because he was an envoy to Heraclius.

Even if the story of the correspondence were to be taken into consideration, it should be noted that Al-Wāqidī mentions that those who attacked Diḥyah were only two in number, namely, al-Hunayd Ibn ‘Āriḍ and his son, ‘Āriḍ. The rest of their tribe, as al-Wāqidī mentions, had a treaty with the Prophet Muhammad and they assisted Diḥyah (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 53). Whatever the reason for Diḥyah being attacked, it would have been illogical to send an army to attack the individuals who did it. In addition, the number of that army, namely 500 men, makes it difficult to accept revenge as being the main cause for this *Sariyyah*. It is extremely unlikely that the Prophet Muhammad would have sent 500 men to attack only two individuals, especially that the majority of their tribe respected the Prophet and would have helped his envoy.

The only possible reason whereby one can understand this sending of 500 men in this *Sariyyah* is by noting its direction and position. This *Sariyyah* was the first military expedition towards the North West in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad. Ḥismā is located on the direct route of al-Shām, very close to its borders. It was followed by almost neutralising of Quraysh after the *Ghazwah* of al-Khandaq, which is a significant element in understanding the role of this *Sariyyah*. The researcher argues that the *Sariyyah* with its numbers, location, and circumstances, can only be understood as a start of the actual military movement towards examining, exploring, and preparing the route toward Islamic Jerusalem. This would explain the huge number of participants in the *Sariyyah* since it has been the furthest on that route up until that time. It should be noted that the number of companions involved in the *Sariyyah* before it, i.e. al-Ṭaraf, contained only 15 men, with their leader, Zayd Ibn Ḥārithah.<sup>182</sup> It should also be noted that Zayd Ibn Ḥārithah was involved in 6 *Sarāyā* in the same year, i.e. 6 AH. The *Sariyyah* of Ḥismā was the furthest and largest, and was followed by smaller *Sarāyā* in the same direction, as will be seen. Yet these following *Sarāyā* were only half the distance away.

### **The *Sariyyah* of Um al-Qurā and the events following**

This new direction in military expeditions can also be marked with the second *Sariyyah* towards the North West of Madīnah, i.e. to Umm al-Qurā (*Rajab* 6 AH / 627 CE). This *Sariyyah* was also led by Zayd Ibn Ḥārithah. Then there was another *Sariyyah* led by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn ‘Awf to the North East, to Dūmat al-Jandal. Although Dūmat al-Jandal lay on the route to Iraq, not al-Shām, it may be argued

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<sup>182</sup> Zayd Ibn Ḥārithah (d. 8 AH / 629 CE) was one of the prominent companions of the Prophet Muhammad. He was adopted by the Prophet in Makkah before the rulings of adoption were restructured in Islam. He held the title “The Prophet’s Beloved One”. He was killed during the Battle of Mu’tah (see Ibn Sa’d 1997: (3) 29-34).

that the reason for this *Sariyyah* at this time was to neutralise any distractions that could be close to the route of IslamicJerusalem through cutting the route. Perhaps this is why the Prophet Muhammad ordered ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn ‘Awf not only to invite Dūmat al-Jandal to Islam, but also suggested his marrying the daughter of their king (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 58). This can confirm the new era of a relationship between the Muslims and Dūmat al-Jandal, and be marked as a step towards opening up the route of IslamicJerusalem with no distractions from any side of the route by safeguarding the eastern side of the route to IslamicJerusalem from any attacks by Iraq.<sup>183</sup>

### **The *Sariyyah* of Fadak**

The Prophet Muhammad then sent the *Sariyyah* of ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib to Fadak (*Sha‘bān* 6 AH / 627 CE), which was inhabited by Jews. Al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 60) mentions that this *Ghazwah* was the result of information, delivered to the Prophet Muhammad, that the Jews of Fadak were planning with Khaybar to attack Madīnah. The Prophet sent this *Sariyyah* to attack Fadak, which is around Khaybar. The researcher argues that al-Wāqidī’s narration shows there to be some instability between the Muslims and the Jews of Khaybar and thus Fadak. He argues that this argument is acceptable; the Jews of Khaybar were the main and most important element preparing for the attack on Madīnah during the *Ghazwah* of al-Khandaq (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 392-393). Thus, it is very possible that the Prophet Muhammad was

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<sup>183</sup> The Prophet, however, himself led an army towards Dūmat al-Jandal in the year 5 AH / 626 CE. Yet the location of Dūmat al-Jandal is quite far from the route of IslamicJerusalem, as the researcher mentioned earlier. Dūmat al-Jandal is actually located on the route of Iraq. In addition, the war between the Muslims and Quraysh was very active at that time. This makes the *Ghazwah* of Dūmat al-Jandal less significant, in this context, than the *Sariyyah* of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn ‘Awf. This is due to the timing and circumstances of each of the two campaigns. The Prophet Muhammad never acted beyond Dūmat al-Jandal, i.e. on the route to Iraq. This is quite different to his attitude towards the route to IslamicJerusalem, as will follow, where the Prophet went beyond the Arab Peninsula to inside al-Shām. This shows that the Prophet Muhammad was not interested in Iraq in the same way that he was interested in al-Shām direction.

waiting for the right opportunity to neutralise them. This makes the *Sariyyah* of ‘Alī to Fadak, mentioned by al-Wāqidī, justifiable; the Prophet needed to open the route towards al-Shām and IslamicJerusalem. This would necessitate the main obstacle there, i.e. the Jews of Khaybar, Wādī al-Qurā, Fadak, etc. to be neutralised and put aside. Yet as Khaybar was the largest obstacle, it was necessary to weaken the smaller areas around it before turning the attention to it.

### **The *Sariyyah* of Um Qirfah**

Perhaps this may disclose the reasons for the *Sarāyā* that followed Fadak, namely, the *Sariyyah* of Zayd Ibn Hārithah to Um Qirfah near Wādī al-Qurā (*Ramaḍān* 6 AH / 628 CE), (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (1) 14). It is very likely that this *Sariyyah* was sent as a follow-up to the *Sariyya* of ‘Alī to Fadak.<sup>184</sup>

The *Sarāyā* that were directed to Wādī al-Qurā and Fadak, where many of the inhabitants were mainly Jews, show that the Prophet Muhammad was concentrating on the Jewish towns in the North West of Madīnah, i.e. those on the route to IslamicJerusalem. This concentration could have been due to the importance of removing any obstacles on that route. However, it could be argued that the involvement of the Jews of that region in the war against the Muslims in Madīnah, particularly during the *Ghazwah* of al-Khandaq, played a significant role in urging

<sup>184</sup> Two other *Sarāyā* are mentioned after Um Qirfah. The first was led by ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Utayk and was sent to Khaybar, in order to kill one of its leaders, namely Salām Ibn Abī al-Ḥaḳīq. He was one of the biggest enemies there. The second one aimed to kill Usayr Ibn Rāzim, the successor of Salām Ibn al-Ḥaḳīq, in a *Sariyyah* led by ‘Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥah in *Ramaḍān* 6AH / 628 CE (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 430-432). It should also be noted that there is disagreement as to the time of this *Sariyyah*. Ibn Ishāq (2004: 430) argues that it occurred immediately after al-Khandaq, i.e. at the end of the year 5 AH or the beginning of the year 6AH / 627 CE. Ibn Sa’d (1997: (2) 70), and Abū Khalīl (2003: 148) argues that it occurred in *Ramaḍān* 6 AH / 628 CE. Al-Wāqidī (2004: (1) 330) argues that this *Sariyyah* happened in *Dhu al-Ḥijjah* 4AH / 626 CE. Al-Ṭabarī (1998: (3) 57) argues that it took place in the middle of the year 3AH / 624 CE, while al-Mubarakpuri (1996: 325) argues that it was at the end of the year 5 AH / 627 CE. However, the researcher argues that these two-mentioned *Sarāyā* require historical investigation, in order to establish their authenticity. There could be doubt about the possibility of the Prophet Muhammad ordering Muslims to kill anyone in this way.

the Prophet to act fast. This is why shortly after the al-Ḥudaybiyah treaty with Quraysh, which happened at the end of the year 6 AH / 628 CE (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (1) 14), the Prophet himself led an army towards Khaybar. Al-Ḥudaybiyah treaty could be considered a very important milestone in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad; it almost neutralised Quraysh and guaranteed that the Muslims would not be attacked from the south by the Quraysh tribe. This also opened the way to sending letters to leaders around the world, such as Heraclius, opening the way widely to invite the Arabs of the Peninsula to Islam. Not only this, it also marked a very important step to opening up the route to al-Shām and Islamic Jerusalem, namely the North Western route from Madīnah. This can be understood when noting the first military action that the Prophet led immediately after this truce, namely the *Ghazwah* of Khaybar.

### **The *Ghazwah* of Khaybar**

The *Ghazwah* of Khaybar took place at the beginning of the year 7 AH / 628 CE (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 470). The researcher argues that many elements mark the importance of this *Ghazwah*. The most important is that it was the first *Ghazwah* led by the Prophet Muhammad, in person, on the North Western inland route from Madīnah, i.e. the route towards Islamic Jerusalem. Thus the researcher argues that Khaybar can be considered one of the main steps towards opening up the route of al-Shām.

Many Muslim sources do not mention the direct reason for this *Ghazwah*; most, such as Ibn Ishāq (2004: 470), al-Ṭabarī (1998: (3) 144), al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 113) and Ibn Sa‘d (1997: (3) 81), mention the start of this *Ghazwah* without giving specific reasons. The researcher argues that this *Ghazwah* should not be cut off from the sequence of *Ghazawāt* and *Sarāyā* during that time, especially the previous ones. Al-

Mubarakpuri (1996: 366) argues that this *Ghazwah* came to punish the Jews of Khaybar for their role in previous attacks on the Muslims, especially during the *Ghazwah* of al-Khandaq, when they played the main role in forming the allied army that attacked Madīnah. He also argues that the Jews, at that time, were one of the ‘Anti-Islam tripartite coalition’, and that when the Prophet had made the treaty of al-Hudaybiyah, he marched towards the other two wings: the Jews and the Najd tribes. Thus, the Prophet led the *Ghazwah* of Dhāt al-Riqā’ after the *Ghazwah* of Khaybar.<sup>185</sup> This supports al-Mubarakpuri’s opinion about the motivation of the *Ghazwah* of Khaybar.

However, the researcher argues that, if the Prophet wanted only to revenge the role of the Jews of Khaybar in al-Khandaq, he would not have sent the armies to the Jews of Um al-Qurā, Taymā’ and Fadak before this (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 165-168). The only town mentioned as assisting Khaybar was Fadak, as the researcher

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<sup>185</sup> Al-Mubarakpuri argues that the *Ghazwah* of Dhāt al-Riqā’, which was towards Najd, took place after Khaybar (al-Mubarakpuri 1996: 376). However, there is a significant disagreement among the historians on the date of Dhāt al-Riqā’. The majority of historians, such as al-Wāqidī (2004: (1) 333), al-Ṭabarī (1998: (3) 91) and Ibn Ishāq (2004: 387), argue that this *Ghazwah* took place in the year 4 AH / 625 CE. However, al-Mubarakpuri argues that this *Ghazwah* cannot have happened so early, due to the attendance of Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī in this *Ghazwah* (see al-Mubarakpuri 1996: 376). This is also the opinion of al-Bukhārī (2000: (2) 821). Yet it is noted that, although al-Bukhārī gave his opinion on the date of this *Ghazwah*, he ordered it, in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* before the *Ghazwah* of Khaybar. This means that al-Bukhārī is hesitant in his opinion about the date of this *Ghazwah*. It seems that he could not have had strong evidence for his argument. Thus he put this *Ghazwah*, in his book, before the *Ghazwah* of Khaybar, ordering the *Ghazawāt* in his book according to his opinion on their dates. Al-Bukhārī’s hesitation is due to the *ḥadīth* of Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (2000: (2) 821), in which he mentions that he went with the Prophet for a *Ghazwah*, and they had to walk such a long way that their feet hurt, and they had to cover them with rags. Thus the *Ghazwah* was called Dhāt al-Riqā’ (the *Ghazwah* with the rags). The researcher argues that al-Wāqidī’s opinion, on the name of this *Ghazwah*, is more acceptable in this issue. He mentions that this *Ghazwah* was named so because the land to which it went, in Najd, contained many coloured spots on the ground, resembled rags, due to the topography of that region. While Ibn Hishām argues that it was named Dhāt al-Riqā’ due to a tree there, which was worshipped by the Arabs, and was known as Dhāt al-Riqā’, since they used to tie rags in it (Ibn Hishām 2005: (pt.3) 107). Many other less important reasons are also mentioned. The researcher argues that al-Mubarakpuri’s opinion is more reliable than the others. Al-Bukhārī’s narration from Abū Mūsā is not the only one that supports al-Mubarakpuri’s opinion. There is another *ḥadīth* mentioned by al-Bukhārī (2000: (2) 823) narrated from Abū Hurayrah, who came to the Prophet after Khaybar, and attended the “*Ghazwah* of Najd” with the Prophet. The Prophet led no army towards Najd, after Abū Hurayrah embraced Islam, except this one. It is mentioned by Abū Hurayrah as being called Dhāt al-Riqā’. This means that this *Ghazwah* occurred most likely after Khaybar.

mentioned earlier. If the Prophet wanted revenge for al-Khandaq only, he would not have sent any armies to reach even Wadī al-Qurā and Taymā', since they had no direct relationship with al-Khandaq. Thus, the researcher argues that the more acceptable motivation of the *Ghazwah* of Khaybar is that it was part of a series of steps the Prophet took in that direction. This can be concluded when connecting this *Ghazwah* to the ones before it, and the military expedition that came after it.

By neutralising the Jews of the North West, the Prophet Muhammad had a good opportunity to continue working on that route. Thus, in the year after the *Ghazwah* of Khaybar, the Prophet sent different *Sarāyā* towards the North West, i.e. the route to al-Shām. He also sent a number of other *Sarāyā* in other directions, yet it is to be noted that the majority of his *Sarāyā* were directed towards the North West, especially towards the Jewish areas which were under Muslim control after Khaybar, such as Fadak. The researcher argues that these different *Sarāyā* could have aimed to examine the loyalty of the Jews of those regions, especially since the Prophet had accepted leaving them in their regions after Khaybar.

### **The second *Sariyyah* of Fadak, and the *Sariyyah* of al-Jināb**

It should be noted that, in one of these *Sarāyā*, namely the *Sariyyah* of Bashīr Ibn Sa'd, the loyalty of the Jews of Fadak was examined, when the leader of this small *Sariyyah*, Bashīr, was hurt and remained in Fadak for a while until he was healed (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 178). In addition, the *Sariyyah* of Bashīr again to al-Jināb on the same route was sent to attack some of the tribes of Ghaṭafān, who were about to attack Madīnah (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 182). They met near Khaybar, and the Jews did not assist Ghaṭafān. This turn in the attitude of the Jews of Khaybar was significant. It should be noted that the Jews of Khaybar were in coalition with

Ghaṭafān during the *Ghazwah* of al-Khandaq. This means that the Prophet Muhammad had ensured the neutralisation of the Jews of the North West and had secured the route from their side. Perhaps this is why the *Sarāyā* of the Prophet Muhammad went further to the North West after this, namely towards Dhāt Aṭlāḥ.

### **The *Sariyyah* of Dhāt Aṭlāḥ**

Moshe Gil (1997: 21) argues that Dhāt Aṭlāḥ<sup>186</sup> was the first incursion on Palestine during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad. This, according to Gil, was due to “the Byzantines’ inherent weakness” which led the Prophet Muhammad to send this *Sariyyah* hoping “to lure the Arab tribes dwelling along the Palestinian borders to his side” (Gil 1997: 12-22). Palestine here is the Byzantine Palestine III as Khalid El-Awaisi argues (2007: 26).

The researcher argues that if one could depend on Gil’s argument in general, this would mean that this *Sariyyah* was the first military action within al-Shām. Yet the researcher argues that this *Sariyyah* cannot be considered a military campaign, since it contained only 15 men as al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 202) and al-Ṭabarī (1998: (3) 155) argue. It cannot be logical that the Prophet would have sent only 15 men to form a military campaign in a land that they were to enter for the first time. Therefore, the argument that they were sent to lure Arab tribes and not fight makes sense. This is supported by al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 202) and al-Ṭabarī (1998: (3) 155), who mention that the Prophet sent this *Sariyyah* in order to invite the people of that region to Islam, i.e. as preachers of Islam. Such a reason is logical and acceptable. It seems that the Prophet Muhammad, through this *Sariyyah*, started the actual direct aiming

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<sup>186</sup> Al-Ḥamawī (1990 (1) 259), however, does not specify the exact location of Dhāt Aṭlāḥ, he only says that it lays beyond Wādī al-Qurā, which is located on the route from Madīnah to al-Shām.

of this region in his strategy. Sending this delegation to invite the people of that region to Islam holds many different meanings.<sup>187</sup> The Prophet needed to begin his actual movement inside al-Shām, and it was his habit to invite people to Islam before any military action. Also, the Prophet needed to investigate that region before sending any armies there. These elements can be understood from the timing and the overall circumstances that surround this *Sariyyah*.

This *Sariyyah* came after the Prophet had secured the Jewish population on that route after the various *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt*, mainly the *Ghazwah* of Khaybar, which neutralised them. It can therefore be argued that it was a final examination of their commitment to the relationship with Madīnah. Also, the Prophet Muhammad needed to examine the northern tribes living in that region before taking any further step. This agrees with Gil's argument concerning those tribes to some extent (Gil 1997: 22). In addition, the nature of the *Sariyyah* of Dhāt Aṭlāḥ was that of a mission to invite people to Islam. This can be considered as evidence of the Prophet's special interest in the region at that time in particular. There is no record of sending similar missions to spread Islam in Iraq, at that time, for example.<sup>188</sup>

The *Sariyyah* to Dhāt Aṭlāḥ ended with a tragedy as many historians mention. It was attacked by the inhabitants of that area, and 14 of the members of the *Sariyyah* were killed. This may have been a direct reason for the Battle of Mu'tah, which took place shortly after.

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<sup>187</sup> There are no specific accounts about the inhabitants of Dhāt Aṭlāḥ at that time, but it is likely they were Arabs.

<sup>188</sup> This excludes the letters of the Prophet. The researcher here concentrates on the *Sarāyā* that were sent in order to preach for Islam.

## The Battle of Mu'tah

This battle took place in the year 7 AH. Al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 202) argues that the Prophet decided not to revenge the Dhāt Aṭlāḥ tragedy, since he received news that the tribes that had attacked the members of the *Sariyyah* of Dhāt Aṭlāḥ had migrated to another place. The researcher argues that, despite al-Wāqidī's argument, this appears unacceptable. It can be accepted that the Prophet did not send the army of Mu'tah to revenge the killing of the members of the *Sariyyah* of Dhāt Aṭlāḥ. It is not logical that the Prophet would have sent an army of 3000 men to Mu'tah to revenge the killing of his companions; especially that the army to Mu'tah was not directed to Dhāt Aṭlāḥ, rather it was further North in al-Shām (see al-Ṭabarī 1998: (3) 160). No records exist that show the tribes in Dhāt Aṭlāḥ to have migrated that deep inside al-Shām. Al-Wāqidī's narration does not specify any location as to where they migrated. In addition, one should note that the Prophet Muhammad did not send large armies to revenge the killing of the members of his *Sarāyā*, or else he would have sent a large army to revenge the killing 70 of his peaceful delegation during the tragedy of Bi'r Ma'ūnah (see al-Mubārāḥūrī 1996: 299-301), which was much closer and his doing so would have been more feasible.

However, al-Wāqidī points out another reason for forming the army towards Mu'tah. He argues that the Prophet Muhammad sent a messenger, al-Ḥārith Ibn 'Umayr al-Azdī, to the king of Buṣrā.<sup>189</sup> However, the messenger was killed by the leader of al-Balqā', Shuraḥbīl Ibn 'Amr al-Ghassānī. So the Prophet sent the army to Mu'tah to revenge the killing of his messenger (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 205-206). Al-Wāqidī is the only one who mentions this story as being the reason for the Battle of Mu'tah.

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<sup>189</sup> Buṣrā is located in the Damascus district in al-Shām (see al-Ḥamawī 1990: (1) 522)

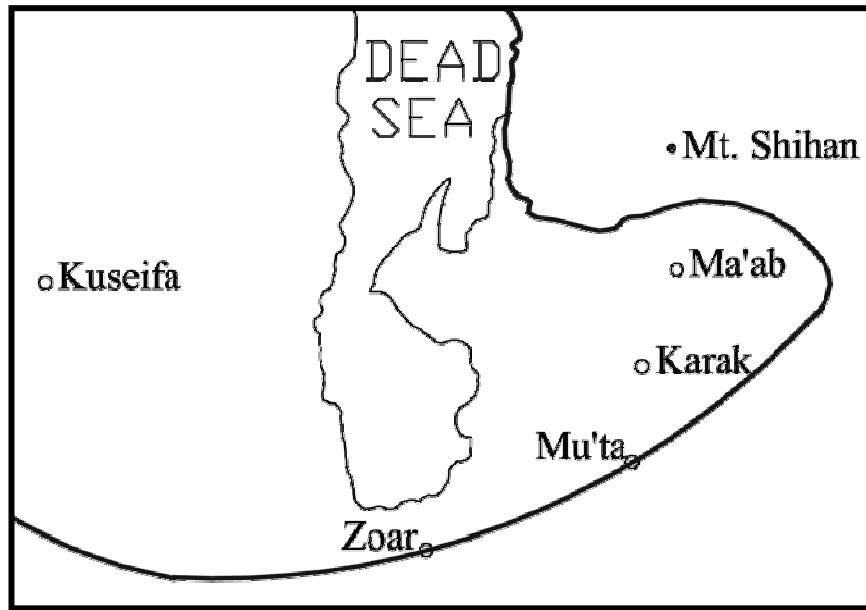
Most historians depend on this narration and consider it to be the actual and direct reason for this Battle, as Breik Abū Māyleh argues (2004: 248).

However, Akram Diyā' al-'Umarī (1994: (2) 467) claims that "Looking at the direct reasons for invading the Arab tribes on al-Shām borders does not affect the interpretation of the events much. This is since the legislation of *Jihād* requires continuing subjugating the Arab tribes and expanding the Islamic State's land, disregarding the direct reasons". The researcher strongly disagrees with al-'Umarī in his claim, which shows that al-'Umarī studied the Battle of Mu'tah in isolation from the sequence of events that took place during that time. The researcher argues that this battle cannot be isolated from the other events that came before and after it. These events show that the Prophet Muhammad was not aiming to subjugate the tribes living in that part, otherwise he would have not asked the army to Mu'tah not to attack any civilians or even the armies before inviting them to Islam (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 207-208, al-Manṣūrfūrī 1989: (2) 284). This attitude removes the event away from the idea of revenge and subjugation.

The researcher argues that the reason mentioned by al-Wāqidī, i.e. the assassination of the messenger of the Prophet Muhammad, cannot be accepted. It is known that the Prophet Muhammad sent his envoy to the leader of Buṣrā, who delivered the letter to Heraclius personally (see al-Bukhārī 2000: (1) 5). It seems that al-Wāqidī, or most likely one of his sources, was confused on the issue of this letter. The researcher notes that, when al-Wāqidī mentions this narration, he refers clearly to his source, namely Rabī'ah Ibn 'Uthmān, who quotes 'Umar Ibn al-Ḥakam (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 205). Al-Wāqidī does not usually specify a single source, which gives the impression that he himself was not fully certain about this narration. It should be

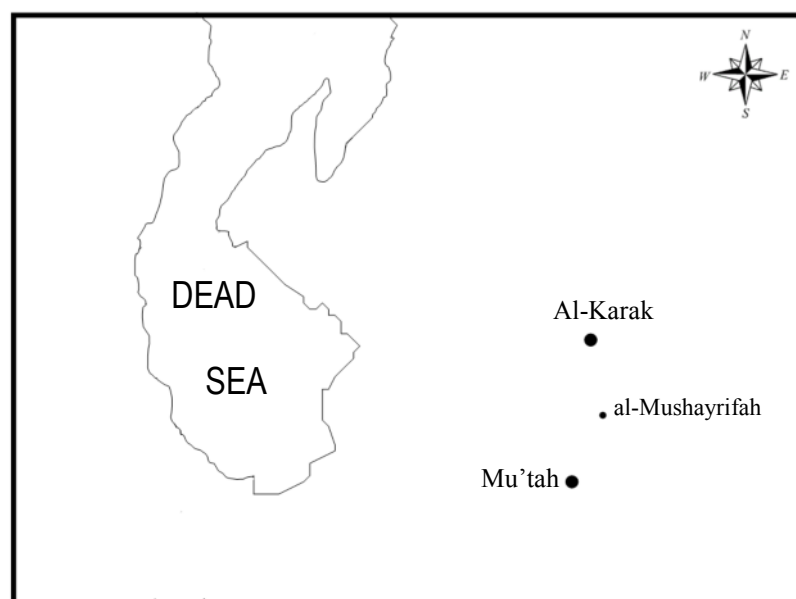
noted that the name of the companion mentioned in al-Wāqidī's narration, al-Ḥārith Ibn 'Umayr al-Azdī, is not known among the companions, and has been mentioned only in this narration. Scholars of biographies, such as al-'Asqalānī (n.d: (1) 286) and Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630 AH / 1233 CE) (1994: (1) 628), depend only on this narration by al-Wāqidī in mentioning this name as being one of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad. This gives the strong impression that the narration mentioned by al-Wāqidī might not have taken place.

Linking this event to the other surrounding events, especially the *Sariyyah* to Dhāt Aṭlāḥ, and the reasons behind it, leads the researcher to conclude that the *Sariyyah* of Mu'tah was most likely sent to open up and investigate a route immediately into al-Shām. It took the route going straight inside al-Shām from near Tabūk, not the coastal route. This was possibly because the inner route was shorter and went directly into the heart of al-Shām, while the coastal route passed through Aylah, and then entered the desert (see the Map 7). Going to Mu'tah can be considered the first Muslim physical movement within not only al-Shām, but also Islamic Jerusalem in particular. Mu'tah is situated on the exact boundaries of Islamic Jerusalem, as Khalid El-Awaisi argues (2007: 274); see Map 8.



**Map (8):** The location of Mu'tah on the boundaries of the Islamic Jerusalem region  
**Source:** Khalid El-Awaisi (2007: 274)

The researcher argues that there are no records to indicate that the army was directed to go to Mu'tah in particular. Al-Ya'qūbī (d. 284 A.H / 862 CE), for example, argues that this army was actually directed to al-Shām in general, not particularly to Mu'tah (see al-Ya'qūbī (n.d): (2) 72). The researcher notes that the army went further north inside the Islamic Jerusalem region to a town called "Mashārif", which is most likely the town known today as al-Mushayrifah; see Map 9.



**Map (9):** The location of al-Mushayrifah

This adds to the reasons for rejecting al-Wāqidī's claim about why this battle took place. If it was for revenge, then the Prophet would have ordered the army to go specifically to that site,<sup>190</sup> which shows that the Prophet Muhammad had other motivations for sending this *Sariyyah*. 'Athāminah (2000: 93) argues that the army to Mu'tah was actually directed there in order to do the physical *Fath* of that region. This was, according to 'Athāminah, since the Prophet Muhammad had ordered the army to invite the people of that region to Islam before engaging them in battle (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 207-208). However, the researcher argues that 'Athāminah's argument might not be wholly accurate since inviting the people to Islam was the policy of the Prophet Muhammad. This policy took place in most of the *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* and was never neglected, except in limited events such as the *Ba'th* of Usāmah, as will follow. It is unlikely that the Prophet Muhammad would have launched a campaign towards the physical *Fath* of that region without having a full and clear idea about the enemy's abilities and numbers. This is what 'Athāminah

<sup>190</sup> The researcher will not go through the details of the events that took place in this battle since they are out of the scope of this research.

himself also concludes when he argues that this battle would have shown the Prophet that fighting the Byzantines would need a huge number of men, and that the Arab tribes in the South of al-Shām were a very important element in guaranteeing the victory of any campaign (‘Athāminah 2000: 93). The researcher argues that the analysis of ‘Athāminah, concerning the significance of the Battle of Mu’tah, is very interesting. Yet his previous argument, that this battle marked a physical initiation of the *Fath* campaign, is not accurate since it neglects many elements mentioned earlier by the researcher. However, this is not to ignore the fact that this battle in particular was unique.

The Prophet made this *Sariyyah* unique in various aspects, such as nominating three leaders of the Muslim army. The researcher notes that the Muslim leaders of this army, Zayd Ibn Ḥārithah, Ja‘far Ibn Abī Ṭālib and ‘Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥah, represented the three main components of Muslim society in Madīnah: the migrants from Makkah, represented by Zayd and Ja‘far; the *Anṣār* (inhabitants of Madīnah), represented by ‘Abdullāh; Āl al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet) represented by Ja‘far; and the Arabs originally from Makkah and Madīnah, also represented by Zayd. This unique mixture of army leaders could have specific significance due to the significance of the destination itself. Not only this, but the researcher also notes that the first leader of the Muslim army, namely Zayd, was also the first leader that the Prophet Muhammad sent to the North West route from Madīnah. He was the leader of the *Sariyyah* of Ḥismā and the two *Sarāyā* that were sent first to Wādī al-Qurā. El-Awaisi argues that this could mean that the Prophet Muhammad was preparing Zayd to lead the army of Ma’tah by leading the first *Sarāyā* on the North

West route.<sup>191</sup> In addition, it was his son who was to lead the following battles in the region.

It can be argued also that the appointment of the three leaders was also due to the numbers of this army, and the expectation of facing a huge one; they knew therefore that they were not out to revenge but were to face a massive army. Many Muslim sources, such as al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 209) and Ibn Ishāq (2004: 504), mention that the Byzantine army contained two hundred thousand soldiers. The researcher argues that this could be an exaggeration. Such a number could have been mentioned as a huge campaign in other sources, such as by Theophanes. Yet there is nothing about such a huge army. The researcher argues that, although the number of the Byzantine army might not have been as mentioned in some Muslim sources, it seems that there was a very large army in general. This issue, however, does not change the fact that the Muslim army clashed with a massive Byzantine army.

After the Muslim army had faced the huge Byzantine army, with their Arab Allies (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 209, al-Ṭabarī 1998: (3) 160), it withdrew under the leadership of Khālīd Ibn al-Walīd, who had been appointed after the killing of the three leaders (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 212). This withdrawal was considered, by the Muslims of Madīnah, to be a defeat. Some historians, such as al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 212), agree on this and consider that the battle ended with the defeat of the Muslim army. Yet the Prophet Muhammad had another opinion as seems clear from various narrations.

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<sup>191</sup> This argument was mentioned by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi during an academic discussion on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2007 at Al-Maktoum Institute in Dundee.

The Prophet was on the pulpit in Madīnah speaking about this battle as it was taking place, and he told the Muslims that the three leaders had been killed. He then commented on Khalid Ibn al-Walīd's leadership of the army, as al-Bukhārī (2000: (2) 848) narrates:

Then, one of God's swords [i.e. Khālīd] took the banner of the army, until God granted them the *Fath*.<sup>192</sup>

Not only this, Ibn Ishāq (2004: 510) mentions that the Prophet Muhammad defended the army of Mu'tah after it arrived in Madīnah, since the Muslims there considered them "runaways" from the battlefield. The Prophet said on that occasion: "They are not escapers; they are to turn back and resume fight by the will of God". The researcher argues that these two statements by the Prophet Muhammad reveal the actual circumstances that surrounded the Battle of Mu'tah, its nature, and its role in the history of the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. It is clear that they were soon to return as is clear from the Prophet's statement.

This battle took place at a time when the Persians had lost control over the whole region to the Byzantines, particularly Islamic Jerusalem in 628 CE, as was noted in chapter 1 in this research. This was the time when the Prophet Muhammad decided to send the army deep into al-Shām and into Islamic Jerusalem. This leads the researcher to conclude that the Prophet was very aware of the political situation in that region between the two powers of the time, namely the Persians and the Byzantines. Although the latter were victorious on this occasion the Prophet decided to send the army to Mu'tah to encounter it. This means that the Prophet wanted to take exploit the generally weak position of the Byzantines, because of the long wars

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<sup>192</sup> حتى أخذ الراية سيف من سيوف الله حتى فتح الله عليهم

with the Persians, and start marching towards Islamic Jerusalem. Despite Watt's claims (1962: 106), it is most likely that the Prophet Muhammad was aware of the whole situation in that region, and chose the right time to order the Muslims to march towards it to test the Byzantine force.

Usāmah al-Ashqar (2006: 32) argues that this battle clarified the actual strength of the Byzantines, for the Prophet Muhammad. In addition, it revealed a clear picture of the alliances between the Byzantines and the Arab tribes in that region. The researcher agrees with al-Ashqar; this can be understood from studying the *Sariyyah* that directly followed Mu'tah, namely, that of Dhāt al-Salāsīl in *Jamādā al-Ākhirah* 8AH / 629 CE. The destination of this *Sariyyah* was a region where there were some of the strongest allies of Byzantium, namely 'Udhrah, Ballī, Lakham and Judhām, as al-Bukhārī argues (2000: (2) 868).

### **The *Sariyyah* of Dhāt al-Salāsīl**

The reason for this *Sariyyah*, according to al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 216-217), is that the Prophet knew that Ballī and Quḍā'ah (who lived there) were about to attack Madīnah. Therefore, the Prophet sent them a *Sariyyah* of 300 men led by 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ to attack them before they attacked Madīnah. 'Amr asked for more forces as the number of the enemy was huge, so the Prophet sent him another 200 men led by Abū 'Ubaydah Ibn al-Jarrāḥ.

The researcher argues that, in most cases al-Wāqidī claims that the reasons for any *Sariyyah* or *Ghazwah* were due to information about an imminent attack. Yet there are no records to prove that there was any imminent attack to be launched on Madīnah by these tribes. However, it should be noted that Ballī, 'Udhrah, and

Lakham and Judhām were the major forces that collaborated with the Byzantines in Mu'tah. Thus, it is reasonable to argue that the Prophet sent this army to neutralise these tribes. Yet the researcher argues that the appointment of 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ, as leader of this army, has a specific significance. Al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 218) mentions that 'Amr's mother was from Ballī, and thus the Prophet aimed to attract the tribe to Islam through him.

The researcher adds to this that 'Amr was the best person to lead this army since he knew that region, as it was the location of his mother's family. It can be argued that after the major experience in Mu'tah, the Prophet took lessons from this battle into consideration and started to work on making new allies and removing any forces that would distract. Since those tribes were the closest allies of the Byzantines in the Muslim lands in the Arab Peninsula, it was more appropriate to start with them. This shows that the Battle of Mu'tah, and what followed it, marked the actual movement inside the region of al-Shām.

However, after this *Sariyyah*, the Prophet stopped moving towards the North West and concentrated on Makkah and the region around it as it was now the appropriate time to take this over. The researcher argues that this is logical since it was the time for the *Fath* of Makkah in *Ramaḍān* 8 AH / 630 CE, which marked the end of the clashes between the Prophet and Quraysh. The Prophet then went himself to neutralise all the other forces around Makkah such as Ghaṭafān and Thaqīf.

After almost taking control over the Arab Peninsula, after the *Fath* of Makkah and the *Ghazwah* of Ḥunayn and al-Ṭā'if that followed, the Prophet concentrated mainly on the North Western route to al-Shām. This can be seen very clearly when looking

at the first *Sariyyah* which was sent to that route after the control of the Arab Peninsula; it was the *Sariyyah* of ‘Ukāshah Ibn Miḥṣin to al-Jināb where the tribes of Udhrah and Ballī were located.

### **The second *Sariyyah* of al-Jināb**

Although this *Sariyyah* is not noted by al-Wāqidī, it is mentioned by his student Ibn Sa’d (1997: (2) 124). It took place, according to Ibn Sa’d, in *Rabī‘ al-Thānī* 9 AH / 630 CE). Yet, no records give about a specific reason for this *Sariyyah* or even its events. This leads the researcher into thinking that the *Sariyyah* of ‘Ukāshah was a part of the Prophet’s strategy towards the North West. It cannot be argued that the Prophet was reacting to any offence or attack, but it should be noted that these two tribes were among the strong Byzantine allies in the north of the Arab Peninsula. However, connecting this *Sariyyah* to the major military action that followed, i.e. the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, leads the researcher to argue that it could have been a preparation for that *Ghazwah* in particular. This *Sariyyah* did not engage in fighting, as it seems from the account of Ibn Sa’d, which describes its role most likely that of intelligence gathering and discovering the route. This can be considered as preparation for a major campaign, namely, the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, which took places only two months after the *Sariyyah* of ‘Ukāshah, i.e. in *Rajab* 9AH / July 630 CE.

### **The *Ghazwah* of Tabūk**

The *Ghazwah* of Tabūk can be considered the largest and one of the most important *Ghazawāt* in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad. Not only because it was the largest in number, but because it went further and lasted longer than any other directly led by the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet had earlier led a small army to Dūmat al-Jandal to the North East of Madīnah, however this was not as huge a

campaign as the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. It is worth noting here that the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk came after he had secured all Arabia, and now had his back protected. Also, it is to be noted that the Prophet had given strong order to all the Muslims to participate in this *Ghazwah*, i.e. it was made obligatory on all the Muslims, except those with serious excuses, to participate in this *Ghazwah*. This is what actually happened; all the Muslims participated in this *Ghazwah* except those weak or unable, and those who were considered *Munāfiqīn* (hypocrites). Only three companions, considered truthful, did not participate; they were boycotted for fifty days until their forgiveness was revealed in the Qur’ān (9:117-118) (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 609-615).

The *Ghazwah* of Tabūk is usually mentioned in most of the historical sources, without specifying a reason for it (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 595, See al-Ṭabarī 1998: (3) 196). Al-Ya‘qūbī notes that the Prophet ordered the Muslims to march towards Tabūk in order to revenge the killing of his cousin, Ja‘far bin Abī Ṭālib, in Mu’tah (al-Ya‘qūbī (n.d): (2) 67). The researcher argues that this reason cannot be accepted since there is a huge historical gap between the two events, i.e. Mu’tah and Tabūk. In addition, mentioning Ja‘far alone in this argument seems most likely due to al-Ya‘qūbī’s background as a Shiite, which influences many of his writings.

However, Ibn Kathīr (1966: (4) 3) gives another opinion on the reasons for this *Ghazwah*. He says:

Narrated by Ibn ‘Abbās ... and others: when God ordered that the polytheists must be prohibited from visiting al-Ḥarām mosque (in Makkah) either during pilgrimage or any other occasion, the tribe of Quraysh said: Now all the markets and trades during the pilgrimage will be stopped, and though we will lose what we used to gain from them. Therefore, God compensated them with ordering them to fight the people of the book until they become

Muslim or pay the *Jizyah*. I [Ibn Kathīr] said: so, the Prophet determined to fight the Byzantines, since they were the closest to him, and the first that deserve to be invited for the truth since they were the closest to Islam and Muslims.<sup>193</sup>

The researcher argues that though this analysis of Ibn Kathīr is interesting, at the same time it cannot be accepted for different reasons; first, it seems that there is no relationship between the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk and the narration that Ibn Kathīr quotes. Second, this narration mentions the prohibition of the polytheists from visiting al-Ḥarām mosque (in Makkah) either during pilgrimage or on any other occasion, as being the main reason for the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. Yet this prohibition actually was instigated after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. This *Ghazwah*, as mentioned earlier, took place in *Rajab* 9 AH / October 630 CE, while the prohibition of the polytheists came while Abū Bakr led the pilgrimage at the end of the same year (*Dhulḥijjah* 9 AH / March 631 CE). This means that, in the time of Tabūk, the Polytheists were not prohibited from entering Makkah. This invalidates the entire narration and analysis of Ibn Kathir.

In addition, ‘Athāminah (2000: 89) argues that not only Tabūk but every military action by the Prophet Muhammad resulted from the Prophet Muhammad’s desire to divert the “fighting capabilities” of the Arab tribes towards the Byzantines rather than their fighting each other. He also argues that these *Ghazawāt* and *Sarāyā* were all due to financial causes. The researcher finds this opinion unjustifiable. It is unlikely that the Prophet Muhammad sent his military *Sarāyā* and led different *Ghazawāt* with the aim only of distracting the Arab tribes who were embracing Islam

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روي عن ابن عباس ومجاهد وعكرمة وسعيد بن جبير وقتادة والضحاك وغيرهم: أنه لما أمر الله تعالى بأن يُمنع المشركون من قربان المسجد الحرام في الحج وغيره، قالت قريش: لتنتقض عنا المتاجر والأسواق أيام الحج وليذهبن ما كنا نصيب منها. فعوضهم الله عن ذلك بالأمر بقتال أهل الكتاب حتى يسلموا أو يعطوا الجزية عن يد وهم صاغرون. قلت: فعزم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على قتال الروم لأنهم أقرب الناس إليه وأولى الناس بالدعوة إلى الحق لقربهم من الإسلام وأهله.

rather than fighting each other. This is unlikely, especially since he had led many *Ghazawāt* during his lifetime against Arab tribes in the Arab Peninsula and out of it. The researcher argues that ‘Athāminah could have understood this from Ibn Kathīr’s statement mentioned earlier. Yet it is noted that ‘Athāminah, in this argument, neglects the character of the Prophet Muhammad, i.e. Prophethood, leading ‘Athāminah to apply financial reasons as the only ones for this *Ghazwah* and the other *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt* around it.

Al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 379) mentions another reason for this *Ghazwah*. He narrates that the Prophet heard that the Byzantines had gathered a great army in al-Shām, and that Heraclius had supplied this army enough for a year. Lakham, Jidhām, ‘Āmilah and Ghassān accompanied Heraclius also, and their armies reached *al-Balqā’* in southern al-Shām. This is why, according to al-Wāqidī, the Prophet Muhammad had gathered the huge army of Tabūk from all the Arab Peninsula to attack the Byzantines. However, al-Wāqidī is the only historian who mentions this event as being the main reason for this *Ghazwah*. He says, afterwards, that this information was not true, i.e. that the Byzantines did not gather an army to attack the Muslims (al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 379). Most historians who mention this event as being the direct reason for the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, such as Ibn Sa‘d (1997: (2) 125), depend on al-Wāqidī’s narration.

Al-Mubarakpuri (1996: 422-424) elaborates upon this argument, arguing that the main reason for this *Ghazwah* was that there was a serious threat on Madīnah by the

king of the Arab-Ghassanides.<sup>194</sup> This was caused by the Battle of Mu'tah two years earlier. Al-Mubarakpuri depends here on one *ḥadīth* narrated by al-Bukhārī (2000: (3) 1206-1207) from 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. This *ḥadīth* speaks mainly about the incident where the Prophet Muhammad *Ālā* (i.e. left but did not divorce) his wives for one month; the Muslims thought that he had divorced them all. In this narration 'Umar says:

...During that time, those around the Messenger of God came under his control, and no one was left except the king of the Ghassanides in al-Shām, whom we were afraid to come and attack us. Out of a sudden, one of the *Anṣār* came to me and said: "something has happened!" I said: "what is it? Did the Ghassanaide come?" He replied: "No, it's greater than this! The Messenger of God has divorced his wives" ...<sup>195</sup>

This *ḥadīth* shows – according to al-Mubarakpuri – that the Muslims in Madīnah were considered under threat of the Ghassanides, when the Prophet left his wives. This narration is considered the cause for revealing chapter 66 of the Qur'ān, namely *al-Taḥrīm*, as numerous scholars such as al-Wāḥidī (n.d: 243-245) argue. However, there is significant disagreement among the scholars of *ḥadīth* and *Tafsīr* with regard to the timing of this narration, whether it took place before or after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. The researcher will not go deeply into this disagreement among the scholars in this issue as it is out of the scope of this research. However, the narration mentions that all those around the Prophet, i.e. within the Arab Peninsula, came under the Prophet's control. Chapter 66 was revealed after the revelation of the chapter 49, namely *al-Hujurāt*. This is mentioned by most of the sources of the Qur'ānic studies such as al-Suyūṭī in *al-Itqān* (n.d: (pt.1) 11) There is no disagreement on this issue

<sup>194</sup> The Arab-Ghassanides were the rulers of a part of al-Shām, and were allied with the Byzantine Empire. They used to have their own kings, but the Byzantines ruled them indirectly (see al-Mubarakpuri 1996: 27).

<sup>195</sup> وكان من حول رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قد استقام له فلم يبق إلا ملك غسان بالشأم كنا نخاف أن يأتينا فما شعرت إلا بالأنصاري وهو يقول إنه قد حدث أمر قلت له وما هو أجاء الغساني قال أعظم من ذاك طلق رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم نساءه...

among the scholars. Chapter 49 was revealed during the *‘Ām al-Wuḡūd* (the delegation year), when one of the delegates raised their voices over the Prophet Muhammad while calling him, as many sources mention such as al-Wāḥidī (n.d: 215-217) This means that chapter 66, and thus the above-mentioned narration, also occurred during the *‘Ām al-Wuḡūd* (the delegation year) (10 AH / 631 CE), i.e. after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk.

Ibn Ishāq (2004: 637) clearly states that the visits of the majority of the delegations, which arrived at Madīnah to surrender to the Prophet, took place after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. The narration of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb shows that this threat came after the surrender of those around the Prophet. It mentions clearly that the only one who was left was the King of the Ghassanides. This also leads to the conclusion that this incident took place after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk.<sup>196</sup> Thus, it seems that there were no extreme threats on Madīnah, at the time of the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, to the extent of launching a huge campaign to defend it. This is why the researcher argues that the reason mentioned by al-Wāqidī and its elaboration by al-Mubarakpuri cannot be fully accurate since it seems that the threat of the Ghassanides came after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk and not before it.

However, al-Suyūṭī, in his book *Lubāb al-Nuqūl* (n.d: 276), mentions another very interesting narration with regard to the reason for this *Ghazwah*. This narration was first mentioned by Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 327 AH / 940 CE) (2006: (6) 125):

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<sup>196</sup> The researcher argues that the Ghassanide threat on Madīnah could have happened after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, and most likely close to the *Ba‘th* of Usāmah Ibn Zayd, which will be studied shortly.

Narrated by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān bin Ghunm: the Jews came to the Prophet and said: If you are the Prophet for real, then you shall go to al-Shām. As al-Shām is the land of gathering and the land of the Prophets PBUT. He accepted their statement. Therefore, he carried out the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, intending nothing but al-Shām. When he arrived at Tabūk, God revealed verses of Chapter 17 [*al-Isrā’*, verse 76] of the Qur’ān, after it was finished: (And they were about to estrange you from the land..) until (..Change). God ordered the Prophet to go back to Madīnah and said: “in it shall be your life and death, and from it you shall be resurrected” [i.e. in the Day of Judgment].<sup>197</sup>

This narration is weak as al-Suyūṭī himself argues (n.d: 277). Al-Suyūṭī also mentions that there are other similar weak narrations that can strengthen this one. In fact, there is only one similar narration; this is by al-Ṭabarī (1999: (8) 121). Yet al-Ṭabarī’s narration does not mention Tabūk, and it does not say that the Prophet Muhammad accepted the Jews’ statement. The narration of al-Ṭabarī comes while discussing the interpretation of this verse, namely verse (17:67). He notes two opinions on this verse, first that this verse was revealed in Madīnah, and second that this verse was revealed in Makkah. The first narration says:

Narrated by Muhammad Ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā, from al-Mu‘tamir Ibn Sulaymān, from his father [Sulaymān Ibn Ṭarkhān], said: A Ḥaḍramī [i.e. person from Ḥaḍramawt in Yemen]<sup>198</sup> claimed that he heard that some Jews said to the Prophet: ‘al-Shām is the land of the Prophet, and this (i.e. Madīnah) is not the land of Prophets’, so a verse was revealed: (And they were about to estrange you from the land with a view to driving you away from it).<sup>199</sup>

<sup>197</sup> عن عبد الرحمن بن غنم أن اليهود أتوا النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقالوا: إن كنت نبياً فالحق بالشام فإن الشام أرض المحشر وأرض الأنبياء عليهم الصلاة والسلام. فصدق رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ما قالوا، فغزا غزوة تبوك لا يريد إلا الشام، فلما بلغ تبوك أنزل الله عليه آيات من سورة بني إسرائيل بعدما ختمت السورة: " وإن كادوا ليستفزونك من الأرض " إلى قوله " تحويلا " فأمره بالرجوع إلى المدينة وقال: فيها محياك ومماتك ومنها تبعث.

<sup>198</sup> It seems that Sulaymān Ibn Ṭarkhān (d. 143 AH / 761 CE) did not specify the name of the person who claimed the story of what the Jews said to the Prophet Muhammad, he only referred to him as a person from Ḥaḍramawt. Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī (d. 748 AH / 1374 CE) (2001: (6) 195-196) states the names of all the persons whom Sulaymān narrated from; no one among them is named Ḥaḍramī or has the title of Ḥaḍramī. Al-Dhahabī (2001: (25) 140) mentions only four persons with the name or title Ḥaḍramī; all died centuries after Sulaymān. Therefore, it is most likely that Sulaymān’s statement is taken from an unknown person, especially that Sulaymān mentions it in an uncertain way saying: a Ḥaḍramī **claimed** that he **heard**... etc. This makes this narration very weak and unreliable.

<sup>199</sup> حدثنا محمد بن عبد الأعلى ثنا معتمر بن سليمان عن أبيه قال: زعم حضرمي أنه بلغه أن بعض اليهود قال للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: إن أرض الأنبياء أرض الشام، وإن هذه ليست بأرض أنبياء. فأنزل الله: (وإن كادوا ليستفزونك من الأرض ليخرجوك منها).

Al-Ṭabarī then mentions four narrations that contradict this one. These four argue that the mentioned verse speaks about the people of Makkah, namely Quraysh, not the Jews of Madīnah. After al-Ṭabarī notes these narrations, he goes back to this one and rejects it, depending on the sequence of the verses around that verse, and depending on the narrations that he mentions. Ibn Kathīr (1994: (3) 74) also rejects al-Suyūṭī's narration totally depending on the weakness of the narration and its *Isnād* (chain of narrators).

The only exegete to accept the idea that this verse was revealed in Madīnah is al-Qurṭubī (1998: (5) 185). He argues that chapter 17 of the Qur'ān, namely *al-Isrā'*, is Makkan except of three verses; one of them is this verse, that is, verse (17:76). He claims that this verse was revealed when the delegation of Thaḳīf tribe came to Madīnah in order to embrace Islam. The researcher argues that this claim is more controversial, since the delegation of Thaḳīf came to the Prophet Muhammad in Madīnah after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 615, al-Ṭabarī 1998: (3) 193-195, Ibn Kathīr 1966: (4) 53). Had al-Qurṭubī's claim been accepted, it cannot refer to the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, since it would have happened after it.

All of the above-mentioned arguments and claims show that there is significant confusion about the main reason for this *Ghazwah* in particular. The researcher argues that the actual reasons could be hidden in the events that took place within it. While the researcher deeply investigated these events, two main points drew his attention.

First, the Prophet used the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk to write numerous letters and documents in which he guaranteed any future Muslim armies arms supply, as was the

case with Maqnā and Adhruḥ, and food and drink supplies, as the case was with Aylah in particular. In other words, he stayed in Tabūk until he had secured the Muslims with the supplies needed for any future campaigns. Not only that, these documents marked the end of the alliance between those tribes and the Byzantine Empire. This means that the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk marked a new stage in the relationship between the Muslims and the people of that region.

Second, al-Bukhārī (2000: (2) 621) narrates this *ḥadīth* which was said in Tabūk:

Narrated by ‘Awf bin Mālīk: I came to the Messenger of God, during the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, while he was sitting in a small tent made of leather. The Prophet said: Count six things before the Day of Judgment: My death, and the *Fath* of Bayt al-Maqdis...<sup>200</sup>

The researcher argues that this *ḥadīth* could be the clearest in identifying the aims of the Prophet Muhammad in this *Ghazwah*. It should be noted that this was the first time in the life of the Prophet Muhammad where he specified the time of this statement: “*Fath* of Bayt al-Maqdis” as being after his death.<sup>201</sup> The most important

<sup>200</sup> عن عوف بن مالك قال: أتيت النبي في غزوة تبوك وهو في قبة من آدم فقال: اعدد ستاً بين يدي الساعة: موتي ثم فتح بيت المقدس...

<sup>201</sup> There is another *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet mentioned the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. This *ḥadīth* was narrated by Shaddād Ibn Aws (d. 58 AH / 678 CE), who says that the Prophet Muhammad visited him while he, i.e. Shaddād, was ill, and the Prophet said to him:

“Indeed, al-Shām will be subject to the Muslim *Fath* (*Yuftah*), and Bayt al-Maqdis *Yuftah*. And you and your descendents will become Imams in them by the will of God.”

إن الشام يفتح، ويفتح بيت المقدس، وتكون أنت وولدك أئمة فيهم إن شاء الله.

This *ḥadīth* was mentioned by al-Muttāqī al-Hindī (d. 975 AH / 1567 CE) (1998: (7/14) 69). Although it is generally weak due to the lack of information about some of its narrators, it has another similar narration that could strengthen it (see al-Ṭabarānī 1985: (7) 289). Yet the date when this *ḥadīth* is mentioned is not known. Therefore, the researcher cannot argue that it was said after or before the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. El-Awaisi (2006: 50) argues that this *ḥadīth* was most likely mentioned before the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, and al-Ashqar (2006:23) even argues that this *ḥadīth* was most likely said before the migration to Madīnah. Yet the researcher argues that al-Ashqar’s argument is not accurate since Shaddād Ibn Aws was *Anṣārī* (from the people of Madīnah); therefore it is not accurate to claim that the Prophet visited him during his illness while the Prophet was still in Makkah. In addition, there is no evidence of El-Awaisi’s argument. However, this *ḥadīth* does not specify a time or give any hint about the timing of the *Fath*. This is the uniqueness of the *ḥadīth* of ‘Awf in Tabūk. It specifies a time limit to the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem, i.e. shortly after the death of the Prophet. On the *ḥadīth* of the

thing here is that the Prophet chose Tabūk, very close to the borders of al-Shām. Not only that, it should be noted that ‘Awf did not ask the Prophet Muhammad about this issue before stating this *ḥadīth*. This means that the Prophet mentioned this to ‘Awf intentionally, very likely soon after he knew, i.e. after a revelation on the matter. This statement could be the clearest and strongest aspect in identifying the aims and reasons for the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk as opening the route to IslamicJerusalem in particular. Baydūn (1997:95) claims that this *Ghazwah* aimed to open the route to al-Shām in general, yet the researcher disagrees with him, basing his argument on this explicit narration.

It could be argued that the Prophet Muhammad led the army to Tabūk in order to initiate the actual campaign towards the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. There is no reason to reject this idea, especially when it is noted that al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 400) quotes the Prophet Muhammad consulting his companions whether to go further North or retreat to Madīnah:

The Prophet consulted his companions whether to march further or not. ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said: “if you were ordered to march, then march”. The Prophet said: “I would not have consulted you if I had been ordered to do so”. ‘Umar said: “O Messenger of God, the Byzantines have large army. There are no Muslims there [i.e. in al-Shām], and you came close to them as you have seen, and this

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*Fath* of IslamicJerusalem, during Tabūk, Khalid El-Awaisi argues that this *ḥadīth* could meet the narration of al-Suyūṭī on the Jews coming to the Prophet and asking him to leave for al-Shām. Khalid El-Awaisi claims that this could mean that the Prophet accepted the Jews’ statement, as al-Suyūṭī’s narration suggests, and went to Tabūk. Yet after he arrived there, he could have known, through revelation, that he would not be able to fulfil the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem, and therefore he said this *ḥadīth* to ‘Awf Ibn Mālīk, and perhaps this is why Ibn Kathīr (1997: (1/1) 279) said that the Prophet Muhammad’s march to Tabūk and his preparation of the *Ba‘th* of Usāmah, afterwards, were similar to the Prophet Moses’ march towards the Holy Land; both wanted to go to that region but could not. Khalid El-Awaisi’s argument was given during an academic meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2007. The researcher argues that this claim cannot be accepted, since the narration of al-Suyūṭī cannot be considered as evidence, as the researcher clarified earlier. In addition, Ibn Kathīr himself rejects that narration; it is unlikely that he would have rejected it and then relied on it. Ibn Kathīr’s statement cannot support Khalid’s claim since it is an elaboration by Ibn Kathīr of the reasons why the Prophet went to Tabūk and then sent the *Ba‘th* of Usāmah Ibn Zayd after it. Yet there is no relationship between Ibn Kathīr’s statement and al-Suyūṭī’s narration.

frightened them. So, it would be better if you return this year and see, and perhaps God will then guide you to something.<sup>202</sup>

Al-Ashqar (2006: 36) argues that this narration shows how eager the Prophet Muhammad was to reach al-Shām. This narration seems to contradict the *ḥadīth* of ‘Awf Ibn Mālīk about the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. That *ḥadīth* suggests that the Prophet Muhammad knew that the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem would have been after his death. Yet his consultation shows that he did not know this. The researcher argues that there is no contradiction between the *ḥadīth* and this narration simply because the time when the Prophet said the *ḥadīth* to ‘Awf, during Tabūk, is not identified. It seems that the Prophet Muhammad marched to Tabūk in order to initiate the actual campaign towards the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem and prepared himself with all means for this *Fath*. This can clearly be seen from the huge army and the way the Prophet addressed the Muslims during the preparations for this *Ghazwah*. After the Prophet Muhammad arrived at Tabūk, he consulted his companions; when the conclusion of the consultation took place he formed the assurances of safety to the tribes and the cities on the inner and the coastal route to IslamicJerusalem preparing the route and perhaps preparing himself to return the next year as he mentioned for example in the assurance to the people of Adhruh. He then had a revelation informing him that the *Fath* would be after his death, and therefore he said the *ḥadīth* of the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem to ‘Awf Ibn Mālīk. Thus, the preparation of the route turned to be for the Muslims who would come after his death; then the Prophet went back to Madīnah.

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وشاور رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في التقدم فقال عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه: إن كنت أمرت بالمسير فسر. قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لو أمرت به ما استشرتكم فيه. قال: يا رسول الله فإن للروم جموعاً كثيرة وليس بها أحد من أهل الإسلام وقد دنوت منهم حيث ترى ، وقد أفرعهم دنوك ، فلو رجعت هذه السنة حتى ترى ، أو يحدث الله عز وجل لك في ذلك أمراً.

### **The *Ba'th* of Usāmah**

The *Ghazwah* of Tabūk was followed by another *Sariyyah* toward the same region. This was the last and final military mission to be commissioned during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad, the *Ba'th* (Mission) of Usāmah Ibn Zayd, which was assembled after the Prophet came back from the pilgrimage at the beginning of the year 11 AH / 632 CE (see: al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 473). However, it did not actually take place until after the Prophet died.

The only primary historical sources that clearly give a direct reason for this *Ba'th* are al-Ya'qūbī (n.d: (2) 113), al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 473), and Ibn Sa'd (1997: (2) 145). They mention that this *Ba'th* aimed to take revenge for the killing of the Muslims leaders in Mu'tah. However, al-Mubarakpuri argues that this *Sariyyah* was formed in order to frighten the Byzantines, as they killed anyone who embraced Islam in Byzantium, such as Farwah al-Jidhāmī, the governor of Ma'ān. In addition, it was, as al-Mubarakpuri elaborates, to restore confidence to the Arab tribes, on al-Shām borders, in the face of the Byzantines (see al-Mubarakpuri 1996: 470). Ibn Kathīr (1997: (1/1) 279) has a very interesting opinion, namely, that the Prophet Muhammad was intending to march towards al-Shām. Therefore he sent Usāmah to start up a campaign, led by the Prophet, that was to follow after this *Ba'th*. However, this opinion contradicts the *ḥadīth* of 'Awf Ibn Mālik which was said in Tabūk, and therefore it cannot be accepted.

The researcher argues that it seems that a number of circumstances could have led to this *Ba'th*, one of them for example was the threat of the Ghassanides over Madīnah after Tabūk as the researcher studied earlier. Yet this cannot be considered the only and main reason for this *Ba'th*, since the narration in which the Prophet Muhammad

identified the targeted place of this *Ba'th*, as it will follow shortly, makes considering this *Ba'th* explicitly a response to the Ghassanide threat over Madīnah doubtful although it can be considered an important motive of this *Ba'th*. If this was the only reason for this *Ba'th*, the Prophet Muhammad would have acted differently towards this *Ba'th*, as it will be elaborated shortly, or could have ordered the army to go to a different direction.

Al-Wāqidī, al-Ya'qūbī and Ibn Sa'd's arguments could have emerged because of the Prophet Muhammad's statement, which is mentioned in al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 473), where the Prophet Muhammad said to the army commander, Usāmah Ibn Zayd<sup>203</sup>:

O Usāmah, March by the name of God and His *Barakah*, until you reach the Place where your father was killed.<sup>204</sup>

However, the specification of the location of this *Ba'th* is not only noted by historians, it is also mentioned in the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad. Abū Dawūd (2000: (2) 446) narrates this *ḥadīth*:

‘Urwah said: Usāmah told me that the Messenger of God ordered him saying: attack Ubnā by morning, and burn some sites in it.<sup>205</sup>

This *ḥadīth* does not mention Zayd's name or any other Muslim leader killed in Mu'tah. Yet it does not neglect the possibility of the addition of al-Wāqidī's narration, i.e. mentioning the place where Zayd was killed. In order to conciliate the two texts, the researcher points out that, if it is to be argued that the Prophet

<sup>203</sup> Usāmah Ibn Zayd (d. 54 AH / 674 CE) was the son of Zayd Ibn Hārithah, the first commander of the Muslim army in Mu'tah. He was titled 'The Beloved, son of the Beloved' since he was very beloved by the Prophet Muhammad, as was his father (see Ibn Sa'd 1997: (4) 45)

<sup>204</sup> يا أسامة، سر على اسم الله وبركته حتى تنتهي إلى مقتل أبيك

<sup>205</sup> قال عروة: فحدثني أسامة أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان عهد إليه فقال: أغر على أبنى صباحاً وحرّق

mentioned the statement: “the place where your father was killed”, then it would be in order to specify the place, not the reason. The reason mentioned by al-Wāqidī cannot be taken into consideration in this case, since there is quite a gap between the time of the Battle of Mu’tah and this *Ba’tḥ*, specifically, 3 years. In addition, there were other events in between the two events in the area.

It is acceptable logically that the Prophet could have specified the place to Usāmah by saying where his father, Zayd, had been killed. This could have been in order to identify the area for Usāmah and motivate him. It may be noted that there is disagreement and confusion among some of the historians, who do not accept al-Wāqidī’s narration about the exact place of this *Ba’tḥ*. Some mention Ubnā, and others Yubnā, in addition to other opinions. The researcher earlier gathered together these opinions (see Omar 2006: 88-90), which opinions can be summarised in the following table:

| No. | Scholar / Historian                        | Opinion                  | Notes                                                                                                                             |
|-----|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Al-Ya‘qūbī<br>(n.d: (2) 113)               | Yubnā                    | He narrates the <i>ḥadīth</i> of Usāmah as (Yubnā), not (Ubnā)                                                                    |
| 2   | Al-Wāqidī<br>(2004: (2) 473-474)           | - Ubnā<br>- Mu’tah       | He names his chapter about this <i>Ba’tḥ</i> (the <i>Ghazwah</i> of Usāmah Ibn Zayd to Mu’tah), but he states that it was to Ubnā |
| 3   | Ibn Sa’d<br>(1997: (2) 145) <sup>206</sup> | Ubnā                     |                                                                                                                                   |
| 4   | Al-Ṭabarī<br>(1998: (3) 244-269)           | - Al-Balqā’ and al-Dārūm | He states two opinions                                                                                                            |

<sup>206</sup> Ibn Sa’d mentions that Ubnā is on the sea coast. He could have mixed the name Ubnā with the name Yubnā.

|    |                                                |                          |                                                                                                      |
|----|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                                                | - Ābul al-Zayt           |                                                                                                      |
| 5  | Ibn Ishāq (2004: 673)                          | Al-Balqā' and al-Dārūm   |                                                                                                      |
| 6  | Ibn Hishām (2005: (pt.4) 170)                  | Al-Balqā' and al-Dārūm   |                                                                                                      |
| 7  | Al-Suhaylī (n.d: (4) 385)                      | Ubnā                     |                                                                                                      |
| 8  | Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (1990: (1) 101)                | - Ubnā<br>- Ābul al-Zayt | He states two opinions                                                                               |
| 9  | Al-Bakrī (d. 487 A.H / 1094 CE) (1998: (1) 91) | Ubnā                     |                                                                                                      |
| 10 | Abū Dāwūd (2000: (2) 446)                      | Ubnā                     |                                                                                                      |
| 11 | Abū Mus-hir                                    | Yubnā                    | A narration in Abū Dāwūd's book (2000: (2) 446)                                                      |
| 12 | Al-Sahāranfūrī (n.d: (11) 124-125)             | Yubnā                    |                                                                                                      |
| 13 | Al-Kāndahalwī                                  | Ubnā                     | He states his opinion in his editing of al-Sahāranfūrī's book (n.d: (11) 124-125)                    |
| 14 | Ibn Ḥanbal (1995: (16) 96)                     | Ubnā                     |                                                                                                      |
| 15 | Ibn Mājah (2000: 415)                          | Ubnā                     |                                                                                                      |
| 16 | Al-Bannā (n.d: (13) 66-67)                     | Ubnā                     | He also mentions that Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī said that it is near al-Karak at the borders of al-Shām |
| 17 | Ibn 'Asākir (1995: (8) 46-64)                  | - Ubnā<br>- Mu'tah       | He states two opinions                                                                               |
| 18 | Ibn Kathīr (1966: (4) 440)                     | Al-Balqā' and al-Dārūm   |                                                                                                      |

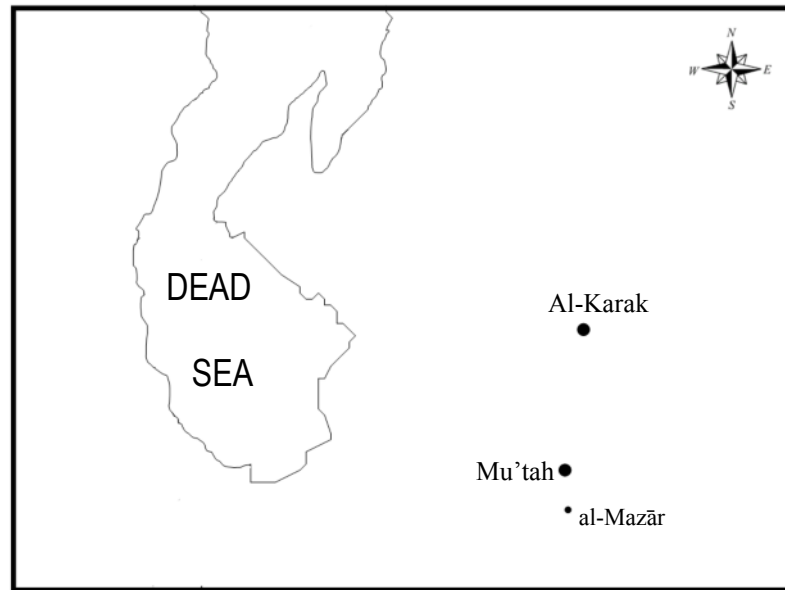
**Table (4):** Scholars and historians' opinions on the destination of the *Ba'th* of Usāmah

| The Location           | Number of Opinions |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Ubnā                   | 11                 |
| Al-Balqā' and al-Dārūm | 4                  |
| Yubnā                  | 3                  |
| Mu'tah                 | 2                  |
| Ābul al-Zayt           | 2                  |

**Table (5):** Summarising the opinions on the destination of Usāmah

These two tables show that the majority of scholars and historians mention Ubnā as being the location of this *Ba'th*. It seems that the confusion could have been due to the fame of Yubnā, while Ubnā seems to be unknown during that time.<sup>207</sup> Yubnā is still known today in Palestine, while there is no place known as Ubnā. The researcher argues that the narration of al-Wāqidī and al-Ya'qūbī shows that the place called Ubnā was most likely very close to the location where Zayd Ibn Ḥāritha was killed. Today, the three Muslim leaders of Mu'tah are not buried in the town of Mu'tah, where that battle took place, but nearby it in the village of al-Mazār, which can be seen on the following map:

<sup>207</sup> With regard to the opinion on al-Balqā' and al-Dārūm, al-Ḥamawī clarifies that the first is located between al-Shām and Wādī al-Qurā (in the Arab Peninsula, and its capital is 'Ammān (Amman) (1990: (1) 579-580), this means that it is east of the Jordan valley. Al-Dārūm is located near Gaza (see al-Ḥamawī 1990: (2) 483). There is a very long distance between them. However, al-Ḥamawī (1990: (2) 483) argues that there is another place, near the Dead Sea, called Dārūmā. The researcher argues that this could be the place mentioned in these opinions also. Ābul al-Zayt is also located near the Jordan valley according to al-Ḥamawī (1990: (1) 68). Therefore, it seems that it does not make a significant difference to the argument. The researcher notes that the name of Ābul al-Zayt is mentioned only by 2 scholars with no evidence. The strong evidences and arguments are, therefore, all around Ubnā. This means that the other mentioned places, except Yubnā, are all very close to Ubnā, which is mentioned by al-Ḥamawī (1990: (1) 101) as being in al-Balqā' and around Mu'tah. Thus, the confusion is actually between Ubnā and Yubnā. This confusion comes from a narration that attempts to clarify the *ḥadīth*, by Abū Mus-hir (see Abū Dawūd 2000: (2) 446). Yet Abū Mus-hir does not give any clarification as to why he changes Ubnā into Yubnā although it is clear in the *ḥadīth*. This weakens his opinion, especially in the presence of the account of al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 473), which specifies the place as the location where Zayd was killed. This strengthens the opinions that identify Ubnā as being located east of the Jordan valley and near, or within, al-Balqā' region.



**Map (10):** The location of al-al-Mazār

This investigation leads one to conclude that the destination of Usāmah during this *Ba'th* was around Mu'tah and al-Mazār of today.<sup>208</sup> It may be argued that this place was then called Ubnā.<sup>209</sup> It seems it was known to the Muslims very well at that time in association with the Battle of Mu'tah, and this could be why the Prophet identified it as being the place or being close to the place where Zayd died when he was speaking of the *Ba'th* of Usāmah, not as al-Wāqidī, al-Ya'qūbī and Ibn Sa'd argue.

The researcher argues that the elements mentioned by al-Mubarakpuri and Ibn Kathīr, with regard to the motivations of this *Ba'th*, may not be far from the situation in the region at that time. He argues that the *ḥadīth* of 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, in al-Bukhārī (2000: (3) 1206-1207), about the Muslims feeling afraid of the king of the Ghassanides, is very logical in strengthening this fact.

<sup>208</sup> Al-Mazār is only 3 Km away from Mu'tah.

<sup>209</sup> The terminology *al-Mazār* means "The place to be visited", in Arabic. It was known by this name later by the Muslims. There are no records of this name earlier.

The Byzantines were in a superior position at that time after they defeated the Persians a few years before this, despite the general weakness that affected them as a result of their war with Persia, as was discussed earlier. Therefore, it is logical that the Byzantines and their Arab allies would have been a threat to Madīnah, especially after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, where thousands of men were marching from Arabia towards them. Yet this does not neglect al-Mubarakpuri and Ibn Kathīr's arguments. The Prophet could have had a number of factors and elements that led him to form this *Sariyyah* and assemble the army. Yet his order to Usāmah, to burn some sites in Ubnā, reveals many of his motivations that led to this *Ba'th*, as will follow.

The researcher here refers to a very interesting argument by Khalīl 'Athāminah (2000: 96), who argues that this *Ba'th* reflected the Prophet's desire to examine to what extent the leaders of the southern side of al-Shām were trustworthy and committed to the treaties that the Prophet held with them. The researcher argues that this argument explains the possible reasons for sending the *Ba'th* in this time particularly. However, there is a very important historical narration mentioned by Ibn 'Asākir (1995: (8) 63), about the significance and the impact of this *Ba'th* on the Byzantines, i.e. the rulers of al-Shām at that time:

The news of the death of the Prophet reached Heraclius together with the news of the attack of Usāmah on a side of his [Heraclius] land. The Byzantines said: those [the Muslims] were not affected by the death of their leader; on the contrary, they attacked our lands!<sup>210</sup>

This important narration shows one of the most significant results of the *Ba'th* of Usāmah. It means that the aim of burning some sites in Ubnā was that the inhabitants

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<sup>210</sup> فقدم بنعي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على هرقل وإغارة أسامة في ناحية من أرضه خيراً واحداً، فقالت الروم: ما بالي هؤلاء بموت صاحبهم أن أغاروا على أرضنا.

of the area see this and report it to the Byzantines. This was to protect the Muslim reputation in that region, and perhaps this is why there are no records of any rebellions or any abandoning of the treaties held between the Muslims and the tribes in the southern areas of al-Shām after the death of the Prophet Muhammad.

This also explains why the Prophet Muhammad, according to al-Wāqidī's narration, asked Usāmah to march very quickly and secretly to Ubnā before any news reached the enemy. Not only this, but the Prophet ordered Usāmah not to stay long in that area after the attack (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 473). These strict orders reveal that the Prophet Muhammad wished to protect his achievements during Tabūk in that region. There was a need to a military action in that region in order to protect the Muslim reputation there, and therefore protect the achievement of the Prophet during the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk and all the previous *Sarāyā* and *Ghazawāt*.

This reveals the huge significance and importance of the *Ba'th* of Usāmah. This understanding justifies the insistence of the Prophet to send this *Ba'th* at that time in particular, as Ibn Ishāq (2004: 707-708) notes. Until the last minutes of the Prophet's life, and on his death-bed he was ordering the Muslims to send the *Ba'th* of Usāmah Ibn Zayd. This shows to what extent the Prophet Muhammad considered the *Ba'th* of Usāmah to be important and crucial. In addition, the orders of the Prophet to Usāmah, which resulted afterwards in the stability of the North West route to Islamic Jerusalem, show not only a foresight by the Prophet Muhammad, but actually a sense of revelation. There are many accounts and narrations by the Prophet Muhammad, which show that he felt that he was close to death.<sup>211</sup> He ordered

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<sup>211</sup> Such as the Prophet's statement during the Pilgrimage in the narration of al-Dārimī (d. 255 AH / 869 CE): "Listen to me, I might not meet you after this year" (see al-Dārimī 1996: (1) 79) and his

Usāmah to march on the North West route particularly, in a specific way, and to do specific actions. These actions and orders seem to have revelation signs; the Prophet Muhammad acted with clear foresight of what would happen immediately after his death. This is, perhaps, why the Prophet Muhammad insisted very much on sending the *Ba'th* of Usāmah until his death. He ordered the sending of this army very strongly, stating many times while he was ill: “Send the *Ba'th* of Usāmah”<sup>212</sup> (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 707). The Prophet was thus eager for his strategy to be applied; perhaps this is what Abū Bakr was aware of, when his first action after the death of the Prophet and his appointment as a successor, was to send the army of Usāmah as the Prophet had strictly ordered (see al-Wāqidī 1990: 51). This was even carried out in the same month of the Prophet’s death.

## Conclusion

This chapter comes to many important conclusions; the researcher notes that the majority of the authors look at each of the events, particularly the military actions, which took place in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad in isolation from the rest of the events that came before and after it. The researcher was able to look at these military actions and events as one whole strategy, which shows a unique picture of the Prophet Muhammad’s attitude and strategy manifested in these military actions. It seems clear that the Prophet Muhammad took a number of very important military steps that led in the end to open up the route from Arabia to al-Shām. The researcher noted, in this chapter, that the majority of the Prophet Muhammad’s military expeditions and campaigns were directed towards the North West, which is the route

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statement to Mu‘ādh Ibn Jabal (d. 18 AH / 639 CE) when he sent him to Yemen: “O Mu‘ādh, you might not see me after this year, and you might then visit my Mosque and my grave” (see Ibn Ḥanbal 1995: (16) 179-180). Also his statement in Tabūk mentioned earlier the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem after his death.

<sup>212</sup> أنفذوا بعث أسامة

to IslamicJerusalem, especially in the second half of his lifetime in Madīnah. This reveals the very important significance of IslamicJerusalem in the Prophet's mind, and his determination to open the route towards the *Fath*.

However, it cannot be argued that the Prophet Muhammad began these military steps and actions once he arrived at Madīnah, as al-Tel argues. This was simply because the Prophet was confronted with a very important obstacle, namely, the majority of the tribes in Arab Peninsula were against him, particularly those of Makkah. It cannot be argued that the Prophet would have left the great danger, i.e. Makkah, behind him, and drawn up the plan to the north. This is why the researcher concludes that the military starting point was when the Prophet Muhammad took the first direct military step towards IslamicJerusalem. This was after the *Ghazwah* of al-Khandaq. This *Ghazwah* was, indeed, a turning point in the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and the tribe of Quraysh in Makkah. It marked the start of the end of the domination of Quraysh over Makkah. Starting from that point, the Prophet Muhammad did not waste any time, but sent the first Muslim *Sariyyah* towards the route of IslamicJerusalem, i.e. the *Sariyyah* of Zayd to Ḥismā. This marked the start of a large and long campaign involving many places and tribes living in that region.

The Prophet Muhammad then continued working in different directions, concentrating on weakening Quraysh's strength in order to secure his back. At the same time, the Prophet continued sending more *Sarāyā* on the route of IslamicJerusalem to some extent. However, the truce of al-Ḥudaybiyah marked a turning point in the clash between the Prophet Muhammad and the people of Makkah, and at the same time of his struggle to open up the North Western route to IslamicJerusalem. This is why the Prophet launched the large campaign to Khybar

under his own leadership. The Prophet Muhammad knew that the largest barrier on the route to Islamic Jerusalem was Khybar, and this is why he concentrated on that area, particularly at that stage, and sent the largest *Sariyyah* in Muslim history out of the Arab Peninsula, namely: to Mu'tah. Indeed, Mu'tah was a very important experience needed by the Muslims in order to examine the Byzantine force and the region itself. This is why the Prophet declared clearly, in his comment on the result of the Battle of Mu'tah, that this was the start of a huge campaign, and that it would be followed by more actions and campaigns.

However, this was interrupted by the *Fath* of Makkah and the region around it, which marked the final stage of the struggle to the *Fath* of Makkah. Therefore, the majority of the *Sarāyā* after the *Fath* of Makkah were on the route to Islamic Jerusalem, and in response to the results of the Battle of Mu'tah. The Prophet sent different armies on that route; each was directed to the tribes that had collaborated with the Byzantines during Mu'tah.

The largest and most significant campaign the Prophet launched towards Islamic Jerusalem was the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. This *Ghazwah* can be considered the clearest and most important military step taken by the Prophet in that direction, not only because it was the largest and went furthest, but also due to its obligatory nature. The *Ghazwah* of Tabūk can be considered the clearest evidence to reveal the real aim of the Prophet Muhammad in this context, namely, the conquest of Islamic Jerusalem, not al-Shām in general as Baydūn argues (1997:83-84). The *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad in Tabūk, about the timing of the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem, can be considered the clearest evidence of the relationship between the strategy of the Prophet Muhammad as leader and the revelation that influenced

his plans and actions. The documents that the Prophet Muhammad wrote during Tabūk were important evidence concerning the aims of this *Ghazwah* as preparation for the future campaigns for the actual *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem.

Finally, the *Ba'th* of Usāmah Ibn Zayd was the final step that the Prophet Muhammad was to take in this plan. It marked the final examination of the route and its atmosphere before the application of the plan. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, it was crucial to protect the previous treaties and arrangements held in Tabūk, and also the whole Muslim state in the face of the superior power in that time, namely, the Byzantine power. The researcher concludes that this *Ba'th* was not to take part of the region of IslamicJerusalem, but to secure the plan and confirm it. This is why it was not towards Yubnā but towards Ubnā, which lies around Mu'tah and al-Mazār in the Kingdom of Jordan today.

It could be said that the Prophet Muhammad took two types of military action towards IslamicJerusalem: minor actions, which aimed to study the route and train the leaders of the Muslim armies. Most of the *Sarāyā* that had a small number of participants can be classified under this category. The second type was major actions, and these aimed to remove huge obstacles and prepare the ground, on a large scale, for the forthcoming campaigns. The *Ghazwah* of Khaybar, the Battle of Mu'tah, the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk, and the *Ba'th* of Usāmah can be classified here. These four events may be considered the most important military steps towards IslamicJerusalem, indeed, and their results were reflected in preparing the ground for the *Fath*.

Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad had a very clear vision about future events, and he prepared the Muslims for the forthcoming campaigns. This can only be interpreted as being part of a plan also supported by revelation. It was very crucial to set such a plan, since the forthcoming clashes would take place with the strongest power at that time, namely the Byzantine Empire. This is why it was logical to make these long preparations and take steps one by one. This, indeed, reveals a very important and unique relationship between the military actions of the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic Jerusalem.





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***CONCLUSIONS  
& RECOMMENDATIONS***

## Conclusions

The main aim for this research was to elaborate the hypothesis of El-Awaisi (2006:50), which suggests that the Prophet Muhammad drew up a strategic plan in his lifetime for the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem. The whole issue of the steps taken by the Prophet Muhammad towards that region, and the nature of his relationship with it, has been under discussion and has encountered disagreement among scholars. Where some scholars such as ‘Athāminah (2000: 88), Shurrāb (1994:74), Baydūn (1997: 8), Gil (1997: 21), Abū al-Rub (2002: 96), Cohen (1990:8) and al-Ashqar (2006:23), are in favour of the presence of such steps and the relationship, others such as Lazarus-Yafeh (1990: 42), S. D. Goitein (1986: (5) 323) and Ofer Livne-Kafri (2005: 216) argue the exact opposite; that this region had no clear significance in Islam during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad. The researcher finds that Islamicjerusalem had a very clear significance during the lifetime of the Prophet as was illustrated through the various chapters of this thesis. Indeed, the researcher agrees with El-Awaisi and the first group, and adds a further dimension to this hypothesis. He finds that well-before any plan was in place, many incidences took place preparing and drawing the attention of the Prophet Muhammad, and the Muslims, to the centrality of this region and its importance.

In the following sections, the researcher will present the main findings of this research and tie-in the various arguments looking at the wider picture of this strategic plan. This will come in the form of a re-reading of the *Sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad; revealing a unique relationship between him and Islamicjerusalem. This relationship has been interpreted in a number of aspects and events that drew the

route for the actual *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem, which took place five years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. It revealed a unique strategy that was formed into a plan towards the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. The researcher will here identify the different aspects of this strategic plan.

### **Explaining the Plan of the Prophet**

Throughout this thesis, the researcher was able to identify and reveal the aspects of the strategic plan of the Prophet Muhammad for the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. It could be argued that although this plan was divinely orientated, it is attributed to the Prophet Muhammad because he was the one who delivered it to the Muslims. This matter could be seen in this way since the actions of the Prophet were generally divinely orientated and directed – except the actions that he said otherwise – as the Qur’ān states: “And he does not speak out of his own [desire], it is but a [divined] revelation that is revealed” (53:3). This is the same as the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad, which is attributed to the Prophet, although it is considered divinely revealed as the Qur’ān also clarifies (53:3). Conversely, the Prophet Muhammad clarified when certain actions were not divinely directed, such as the positioning of the Muslim army during the *Ghazwah* of Badr (see Ibn Hishām (2005 (pt. 2) 143)).<sup>213</sup>

The strategic plan of the Prophet Muhammad for Islamic Jerusalem can be identified and elaborated as following:

### **The Aim**

As this plan is part of a strategy, it could be called a strategic plan. The main strategy of the Prophet Muhammad was to reach global level to deliver spiritual guidance to

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<sup>213</sup> The researcher will not go further in this issue as it goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

the world, and apply his role as that of mercy for all humankind. The Qur'ānic revelation had informed him: "We sent you not, but as a Mercy *Lil'ālamīn* (for all the living)"<sup>214</sup> (21:107). As the Prophet Muhammad's strategy was to reach out to the world with guidance, he needed both a starting point and a time to develop his message to that level; Islamicjersalem was the ideal starting point, therefore, his strategic aim at that stage was the *Fath* of Islamicjersalem, yet after he knew in Tabūk, by divine, that he will not be alive until this *Fath*, his aim became to prepare the land and the circumstances for the Muslims to fulfil this *Fath* after him.

### **The Starting Point**

The starting place to deliver global guidance, that Makkah represents, and expand it from there world-wide, applying the expression "*Lil'ālamīn*" (for all the livings), was Islamicjersalem. This is because this region represents the centre of the *Barakah*, which represents expansion *Lil'ālamīn* as the researcher studied in the second chapter of this thesis. Thus it was necessary that the Prophet Muhammad should control Islamicjersalem in order to reach global level. The Night Journey, in the middle of the Prophet Muhammad's Prophethood, marked the starting point, in time, to reach this conclusion. It signified the start of thinking about the need to form a plan for the *Fath* of Islamicjersalem. The Prophet Muhammad realised this fact when he tasted the 'hope' that Islamicjersalem represented, especially after all the hardship that he had experienced prior the Night Journey which, as he himself stated, was the hardest time in his life.

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<sup>214</sup> وما أرسلناك إلا رحمة للعالمين

## **The Means**

Starting from this point, the Prophet began to plan, supported by divine revelation and using the necessary means, for the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem and controlling the region. He was guided throughout by revelation. From the beginning of the Prophethood, his way was marked by praying towards Islamicjerusalem, in order to set its importance in Muslim minds and hearts. During this time, the Prophet migrated to Madīnah, needing to work towards the point of reference, i.e. Makkah. There he continued with his plan for the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem. This took the form of a number of peaceful and military steps, throughout which the Prophet Muhammad set the means and prepared the ground for the *Fath* if Islamicjerusalem. He was aware, through continuous revelation, that this *Fath* would not be fulfilled in his lifetime. Thus, he prepared all the necessary means for the Muslims to continue his plan after his death; one of his final statements on his deathbed was to urge the Muslims to do this.

## **The Conclusions**

Through these means used by the Prophet Muhammad, he prepared the ground for the *Fath*, and paved the route for the Muslims to fulfil his plan. The Muslim armies marched along the route that the Prophet Muhammad had prepared for them before his death; some armies took the route of Tabūk, and others took the coastal route through Aylah (see Ibn ‘Asākir (1995: (2) 69). This was concluded by the actual *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem about five years after the death of the Prophet.

## **The Details**

This research elaborated upon a number of events, as well as the actions taken by the Prophet Muhammad, both in Makkah and in Madīnah, which had a direct or indirect

relationship with IslamicJerusalem. The researcher found that this series of events and actions that form the plan could be put into three main stages:

- 1- Preparation and moral Mobilisation of the Muslims for the importance and the significance of IslamicJerusalem. This was through Qur'ānic direct and indirect references to IslamicJerusalem and its significance, and praying towards IslamicJerusalem.
- 2- Turning point, which was the link between the mobilisation of the Muslims and the practical steps of the Prophet Muhammad. This was through the Night Journey, which turned the attention of the Prophet Muhammad towards the importance of controlling IslamicJerusalem as a part of the strategy of delivering the guidance, represented by Makkah, to the globe.
- 3- Practical steps, which were taken by the Prophet Muhammad backed by the divine. These took place through forming numerous documents and sending military expeditions on the route of IslamicJerusalem and preparing the route for the forthcoming *Fath*.

### **Preparation and Mobilisation**

This started from the beginning of the Prophet Muhammad's Prophethood through praying towards IslamicJerusalem. This played a very important role in establishing the importance of IslamicJerusalem in Islam, and in the eyes of the Prophet and Muslims in particular. Throughout the research, the researcher was able to identify the importance of IslamicJerusalem set out by prayer. The Prophet Muhammad prayed towards IslamicJerusalem more than he prayed towards Makkah. In fact, the researcher found that the majority of exegetes and historians did not give the prayer towards IslamicJerusalem its importance and status. Praying towards

IslamicJerusalem was, indeed, one of the most important aspects that established the spiritual link between the Muslims and that region. This connection was very important for Muslims in Makkah, due to the long distance between them and IslamicJerusalem. Praying towards IslamicJerusalem for more than 14 years was truly a core aspect in linking the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims with that region as was discussed in the third chapter of this thesis.

Not only did the Muslims need to be connected with IslamicJerusalem as a spiritual holy place, they also needed to form a livingly relationship with the region. They needed to live with the events that took place in that far region as this was to be the first step to move towards it physically. Here lay the role of the Islamic core primary source, namely the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān connects the Muslims with that region from a very early stage; it directly refers to it numerous times linking it with Makkah and other holy places, and speaks of its importance and significance as a place of *Barakah*. No only this, but the Qur'ān also links the Muslims with the events that took place in IslamicJerusalem through an early Qur'ānic revelation, namely Chapter 30 (*al-Rūm*) as the researcher elaborated in the first chapter of this thesis. The researcher concludes that this chapter of the Qur'ān marks the first actual livingly link between the Muslims and IslamicJerusalem. This chapter gave the Muslims the first indication of the political situation in IslamicJerusalem and the first hint of the future of that region. Chapter 30 of the Qur'ān was the first to draw Muslim attention to IslamicJerusalem in a political context. It is full of hints and indirect references to the importance and the future of IslamicJerusalem.

This chapter was revealed during one of the hardest times in the history of IslamicJerusalem, in the seventh century, which was a time of bloodshed and

exclusion. Yet it came with a future hint, which can only be interpreted as a 'hope' for Muslims and for the region itself.

It is not strange, therefore, to find this chapter refers to the events in IslamicJerusalem in a kind of prophecy of two parts: the first showing them the future power which will take over the region, namely the Byzantines. The second showing them that, in the end, the Muslims would rejoice through the victory of God. This could have been interpreted in many ways such as being victorious over their enemies in the Arab Peninsula or the powers that ruled the region at that time as some exegetes argue. This was a very important hint in this chapter, and it supplied the Muslims with the encouragement and hope they needed. This atmosphere of prophecy was the first political link with IslamicJerusalem. The verses of this chapter show the divine support of the future steps and plans to be taken by the Prophet Muhammad, since they all depended on a prophecy in the first place.

The researcher was also able to identify the relationship between this Qur'ānic text and the historical sequence of the events that took place in reality. These verses reveal the starting point of the application of this prophecy, i.e. the defeat of the Byzantines and then the Persian occupation of IslamicJerusalem. However, it is not accurate to claim that the verses specify the time of the return of the Byzantine power into IslamicJerusalem within less than 10 solar years after losing it to the Persians in 614 CE. The verses actually identify the time of the first victory of the Byzantines over the Persians, and the chapter states that this would happen within 10 solar years, which took place in reality.

## Turning Point

The researcher concludes that it seems that, since then, a unique relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and IslamicJerusalem was formed, though it was not fully established until the Night Journey. This miraculous journey can be considered the turning point and the source for the practical motivation for the Prophet Muhammad into taking actual steps towards the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. While chapter 30 of the Qur'ān was the hope for the region, the Night Journey was the hope for the Prophet Muhammad. It came at a very crucial and hard time for the Prophet, and gave him the necessary signs of hope that he needed to reach his aim, i.e. guidance for the whole world, as he always used to stress. The Night Journey could be considered a major milestone not only in Muhammad's life, but also in the history of Islam, and in the history of IslamicJerusalem also.

While the verses of chapter 30 of the Qur'ān mark the first political connection with the future *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem, the Night Journey was the first practical link with that *Fath*. It opened the Prophet Muhammad's eyes to the symbolism of that region. One of the major aspects that led to this was his leading all the Prophets in prayer in al-Aqṣā Mosque, the heart of IslamicJerusalem. This act can be considered one of the most important events to take place during that Journey. It cannot be considered other than a symbolic gesture for taking on the leadership from the previous Prophets as the researcher studied in the second chapter of this thesis. The researcher concludes that this opens up many horizons to understanding the nature of the relationship between the Muslims and IslamicJerusalem and can clarify their vision towards that region.

This journey gave an ever-lasting high status for IslamicJerusalem as al-Natsheh argues (2006: 66): “even if anyone tried to change the reality and claim that the change of the *Qiblah* was a symbol of decreasing the status of IslamicJerusalem, the Night Journey and the verse of the Night Journey [in the Qur’ān] come to defend this status”. The Night Journey was, therefore, a crucial element in setting and strengthening the status of IslamicJerusalem in the minds and hearts of Muslims.

IslamicJerusalem was the place that gave the hope for gaining success to the Prophet Muhammad. It was also the place where he marked the start of a new era for humankind, starting from that region. This is also symbolised in the Qur’ān by placing the chapter that mentions the Night Journey, namely chapter 17, almost in the middle of the Qur’ān, almost exactly as is the chronology of the Night Journey just before the half-way mark of Muhammad’s Prophethood.

This unique Journey also connected the two ancient Mosques, al-Ḥarām Mosque in Makkah and al-Aqṣā Mosque in IslamicJerusalem, in a very unique way. This is besides the other connections the Prophet Muhammad reported in his *aḥādīth*. It connected the global characters of the two Mosques as elaborated in the second chapter of this thesis. Al-Ḥarām Mosque’s main global character, according to the Qur’ān, is guidance which is *Lil’ālamīn*. While Al-Aqṣā’s main global character is the *Barakah*, which is also *Lil’ālamīn*. Guidance shrinks toward al-Ḥarām Mosque, while the *Barakah* expands from al-Aqṣā Mosque. This can be understood when noting that Makkah became exclusive, while IslamicJerusalem remained inclusive. Thus, this Journey drew the Prophet Muhammad’s attention to IslamicJerusalem as being the place where the guidance that Makkah represents could be taken to the

global level. The researcher was able to identify this unique relationship and the role of the Night Journey in identifying it, mainly, with the Prophet Muhammad.

According to El-Awaisi, the Prophet Muhammad started planning for the *Fath* of Islamicjerusalem from the Night Journey and it became a priority for him. This was because the Prophet Muhammad understood that the way to global growth should pass through Islamicjerusalem as it represented *Barakah*, i.e. growth and expansion. Connecting this with the Night Journey, the researcher concludes that the Prophet started from Makkah, i.e. guidance, and arrived at Islamicjerusalem, i.e. *Barakah*, where he led the Prophets in prayer, which symbolises the inheritance of the entire Prophets' legacy. It should be noted that the Qur'ānic expressions on the nature of the Prophet Muhammad's call change after the Night Journey towards speaking of the global nature of the Prophet Muhammad's call. It can be understood, on this basis, that the Night Journey was the main element that made the Prophet make a plan of two stages after the migration: first, he secured the place that represents guidance for the world, since this was the main base of his call, i.e. Makkah, and then he turned to secure the second place representing growth and expansion, i.e. Islamicjerusalem, in order to deliver this guidance to the whole world.

This was confirmed by the revelation of the Qur'ān to the Prophet Muhammad, after his migration to Madīnah, which was the change of the *Qiblah* of prayer from Islamicjerusalem to Makkah, which was a starting point towards the *Fath* of Makkah. This was a very important movement, since it marked the global nature of the Prophet Muhammad's call. Had the Prophet Muhammad been interested only in building an inner society in Madīnah, he would not have started to work towards the *Fath* of Makkah. Makkah represents global guidance. Thus, the change of the *Qiblah*

was essential for the Prophet Muhammad before dedicating his attention to IslamicJerusalem.

As Watson argues, this cannot be considered a change of heart (1912: 132); rather it was an essential step towards the *Fath* of Makkah then IslamicJerusalem. The *Fath* of Makkah would have secured the main aim of Islam, namely guidance, which would have been then taken to the next expansion level through the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. The researcher concludes that the change of the *Qiblah* was not the main issue in this context. On the contrary, the reason for appointing IslamicJerusalem in the first place, as *Qiblah*, should be the right question. It would have not been useful for the Prophet Muhammad to gain IslamicJerusalem without first gaining Makkah.

### **Practical Steps**

This was, then, interpreted into various peaceful and military steps towards the *Fath* of Makkah and then the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. From the time of the migration to Madīnah, which happened shortly after the Night Journey, the main aim of Muhammad was the *Fath* of Makkah or at least neutralising that area. This had begun from the first year after Muhammad's migration to Madīnah. Once Makkah was neutralised, the Prophet was able to start planning and moving practically towards the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem.

The researcher noted, throughout this research, that there were no military actions towards the route of IslamicJerusalem before the year 6 AH, namely, before the *Ghazwah* of al-Khandaq. Yet the majority of military expeditions since that year were directed towards the North West of Madīnah, where IslamicJerusalem is

located. This leads the researcher to conclude that the actual turning point in the military strategy of the Prophet Muhammad was the *Ghazwah* of al-Khandaq. This is what the Prophet himself decided when he stated that this *Ghazwah* was the turning point in his war against the tribe of Quraysh, the rulers of Makkah.

The year 6 AH marked the midpoint of the Prophet's life in Madīnah, between his migration and his death. The turning point in this context was, therefore, in the middle of his life in Madīnah. Interestingly, this is the same as the situation of the Night Journey in the Prophet Muhammad's Prophethood. The Night Journey, which was a true turning point in Muhammad's life, occurred almost in the middle of his Prophethood. After it, the Prophet's attention was turned significantly towards the importance of the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem, in order to reach out to the world. The same was for the year 6 AH, which marked the middle of his life in Madīnah. This year witnessed the beginning of physical movement towards IslamicJerusalem, in order to apply what the Night Journey had established, in the Prophet Muhammad's life, concerning the importance of the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem.

The researcher found that the majority of the military expeditions undertaken by the Prophet Muhammad, during his lifetime, were directed to the route of IslamicJerusalem. This leads to the conclusion that IslamicJerusalem occupied a very high priority for the Prophet Muhammad. This can be connected to the Prophet's vision towards that region, which was firmly created throughout the Makkan period, through the direction of prayer, the Qur'ānic revelation and, most importantly, the Night Journey. This means that the Prophet looked at the securing of Makkah as only the first step towards the global expansion of his guidance to humankind, which could reach this level through IslamicJerusalem.

This marked the first military expedition on the route to Islamic Jerusalem, namely, the *Sariyyah* of Ḥismā. Yet all the *Sarāyā* cannot be considered as a launching of a huge military campaign. They were only expeditions on that route and to the tribes surrounding it. Indeed, the first military expedition on that route was a very important move toward that region due to the long distance between the Prophet's capital, i.e. Madīnah, and Islamic Jerusalem. However, it seems that divine support of this plan was clear, when the truce of al-Ḥudaybiyah, which was caused by a revelation in the first place, took place in the end of year 6 AH. This truce marked a significant, but not full, neutralisation of Makkah, which led to the start of working on a large scale to prepare for the coming campaign towards the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem.

As soon as the Prophet neutralised Makkah, after the truce of al-Ḥudaybiyah, he started to form military campaigns on a large scale. The Prophet was interested in weakening one of the main obstacles on that route, i.e. the Jews and the Arab tribes settled there. This is why in a large campaign he moved to Khaybar, where he destroyed their strength and neutralised all the Jewish settlements on that route, such as Fadak and Wādī al-Qurā. Yet the researcher found that the Prophet did not wipe out the Jews from that route at all. Rather, the Prophet gave a historical example of applying the Qur'ānic concept of *Tadāfu*' (counteraction), and transformed them from being an obstacle into being neutral. Perhaps this was to make use of their negative historical relationship with the Byzantines in Islamic Jerusalem and win their support, in case the Byzantines should refuse the peaceful *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. By this strategy, the Prophet reduced the numbers of his enemies and secured his back.

During this process of securing the main powers on the route to IslamicJerusalem, the Prophet took the first diplomatic step towards the *Fath* inside the region of IslamicJerusalem. This was represented by his letter to Heraclius, the most important pre-war step. The researcher concludes, after studying the text of that letter, that the Prophet was aiming towards a peaceful *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. This letter also reflected a strong determination, by the Prophet Muhammad, first on the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem, and second on decreasing as much as possible the loss of lives and properties. This letter gave the Prophet Muhammad a legitimate reason, according to the Muslims, to start military work deep inside the territories on the borders of IslamicJerusalem.

This was marked first by a number of *Sarāyā* on the route to IslamicJerusalem, mainly, to the Jewish areas that had ended war with the Muslims, in order to examine the security of those far areas. After this the Prophet penetrated the Byzantine stronghold by sending the first *Sariyyah* very near to the borders of the Byzantines, namely, the *Sariyyah* of Dhāt Aṭlāḥ. This *Sariyyah* marks the determination of the Prophet to confirm the peaceful nature of his call and intentions. Yet this *Sariyyah* ended with a tragedy, caused by the Arabs allied to the Byzantines. There was no other way but to start military action on a large scale against the Byzantines and their Arab allies.

A large army was formed and sent to Mu'tah. This army, however, cannot be considered a full campaign, but an experimental *Sariyyah* to the borders of IslamicJerusalem; this is why the Prophet did not name a specific target for the army. It seems that the Prophet wanted the army of Mu'tah to examine the region and be a

significant warning to the Byzantines and the tribes of the region around it. This is what the Prophet himself clearly declared, when he commented on the results of that battle, that this army would go back and resume fighting.

However, it seems that the Byzantines and their Arab allies misunderstood the message that the army of Mu'tah represented. Indeed, the battle of Mu'tah succeeded in opening the Prophet's eyes to a new force that needed to be weakened and secured before a large campaign, namely the Arab tribes that had allied with the Byzantines. This is why the Prophet sent a number of *Sarāyā* towards the areas of these tribes and concentrated on weakening their force. However, it was not at that point wise to launch a new large-scale campaign, because Makkah was not yet fully secured and the Muslims could easily be attacked.

The situation was changed entirely to the benefit of the Muslims, when the Prophet Muhammad succeeded in peacefully taking over Makkah, and fulfilling the *Fath* of Makkah and the regions around it, namely Ḥunayn and al-Ṭā'if. This marked full control over the Arab Peninsula, and opened wide the way for the main military step to take place, namely, the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk.

The *Ghazwah* of Tabūk marked the largest and most important military step towards the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem. The Prophet Muhammad declared this *Ghazwah* as compulsory for all Muslims to join; this opened their eyes to Islamic Jerusalem and its future. The revelation's support was also clear in this *Ghazwah*, when the Prophet drew attention to the main and real aim of this *Ghazwah* by speaking of a prophecy on the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem, by name, and its time, for the first time in his life. This revealed the main and most important aspect that led to all these steps. This

*ḥadīth* can truly be considered one of the most important events to take place in Tabūk, since it revealed the nature and the aims of that campaign. This solves the long and complex disagreements among historians on the reasons for and aims of the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk and the other *Ghazawāt* and *Sarāyā* on that route.

The *ḥadīth* that the Prophet mentioned, in Tabūk, about the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem shows that he became aware of the time of the forthcoming *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem through revelation. Yet this does not mean that this *Ghazwah* was not a main aspect in the preparations for the forthcoming *Fath*. On the contrary, the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk reveals many of the preparations that the Prophet Muhammad took in order to prepare the ground for a large campaign that would follow. Thus, he corresponded with a number of the main forces and most important stations on the route to IslamicJerusalem while he was in Tabūk.

His documents written to Aylah, Maqnā, and Adhruḥ can be considered among the most important achievements of the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. The researcher was able to analyse these different documents in depth in the fourth chapter of this thesis, and found that they were very crucial and important milestones on the way to the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. Through these three documents, the Prophet Muhammad was able to provide the forthcoming campaigns, towards IslamicJerusalem, with supplies of arms, food and water. In addition, the documents marked the opening up of the routes to IslamicJerusalem from both the south and the south east, the main routes towards that region from the Arab Peninsula. It cannot be claimed that the Prophet was aiming towards al-Shām as a whole; Aylah's document proves that the Prophet's aim was the southern areas of IslamicJerusalem rather than the Syrian Desert. This, in

addition, can be seen clearly in the *aḥādīth* that mention Islamicjersalem and its *Fath* in that period.

The Prophet was able, through these three documents, to establish three main stations for the forthcoming campaigns: first the armoury station, namely Maqnā, which was near the long coastal route to Islamicjersalem, but not on the route itself. This may have also marked an emergency shield needed for any withdrawals. Second the food and drink supplying station, namely Aylah, which also marked the opening of the main coastal route towards the Negev Desert deep into southern Islamicjersalem. Third was a strategic emergency withdrawal station, namely Adhruh, which was needed also for forthcoming armies who were to break into the South Eastern areas of the region. The researcher noted that the two towns that were used for the armoury emergency withdrawal were mainly Jewish settlements, while the food and drinks supply mainly depended on Aylah, the Christian town. This means that the Prophet Muhammad dealt openly with other religious communities with regard to Islamicjersalem. The Prophet also used the religious and historical factors well, especially when dealing with the Jews, who had a history of clashing with the Christian Byzantines.

Also, the researcher was able through this research to identify and characterise these three documents as assurances of safety documents, not treaties between equal powers. This is very important in showing the peaceful intentions of the Prophet Muhammad towards the inhabitants of that region, his will to spread his control peacefully over that region.

However, the Prophet was also eager to translate his spiritual authority over IslamicJerusalem, marked by the Night Journey, into facts on the ground (within and around IslamicJerusalem). This took shape in a number of endowments made by the Prophet. The Prophet granted lands around IslamicJerusalem and in those leading to it, such as his endowment to Banī Jaffāl. The Prophet also presented an endowment to Abū Th‘labah, granting him land in al-Shām. However, the clearest example of translating his spiritual authority was his endowment to Tamīm al-Dārī; this probably took place just after the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk. By granting Tamīm a central part of IslamicJerusalem, which has spiritual importance dating back to the time of the Prophet Abraham, the Prophet Muhammad was able to strengthen his spiritual authority over IslamicJerusalem. This endowment came at a crucial time, and marked one of the main political steps towards confirming the Prophet’s control of and authority over IslamicJerusalem.

Not only this, this endowment cannot be separated from the divine support of the Prophet Muhammad’s practical steps towards the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. This endowment marked a prophecy that later helped the Muslims to march towards that region with a strong determination to fulfil it along with the other prophecy mentioned in Tabūk concerning the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem. Through this endowment, the Prophet Muhammad not only stated a prophecy, he also practised it which, again, helped to serve the forthcoming campaign towards the *Fath* of IslamicJerusalem.

### **The Final Step**

The *Ba‘th* of Usāmah Ibn Zayd marked the final military order in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad. The researcher noted in this thesis that this *Ba‘th* was one of

the main features of the final moments of the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet ordered Usāmah to march towards the frontiers of Islamic Jerusalem, namely Ubnā, around the towns today of Mu'tah and al-Mazār. This shows the Prophet's determination to turn Muslim attention towards Islamic Jerusalem.

In addition, the Prophet Muhammad's unique orders to Usāmah on the nature of this *Ba'th* clearly shows that this *Ba'th* aimed first, to look into the final arrangements for the *Fath* by examining previous understandings with the tribes on the route. Second, to protect the previous arrangements by establishing the needed stability and calmness along that route. This is clearly marked by the statement of the Byzantines mentioned by Ibn 'Asākir (1995: (8) 63). Third, to pave the final way towards the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem.

The insistence of the Prophet Muhammad to send this *Ba'th* at that time, in particular, was a very crucial step and one that pointed to the importance of this *Ba'th*. It showed the centrality of the *Ba'th* of Usāmah in this context. It seems the person who was most aware of the Prophet's intentions was his closest companion Abū Bakr. His very important statement reveals this when he dictated the decision to send the army of Usāmah, immediately after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, despite the situation and the major opposition to his decision, saying (al-Wāqidī 1990: 51):

Even if I knew that the animals will eat me in this city, I would send the army of Usāmah Ibn Zayd, as the Prophet commanded: "Dispatch the Army of Usāmah".<sup>215</sup>

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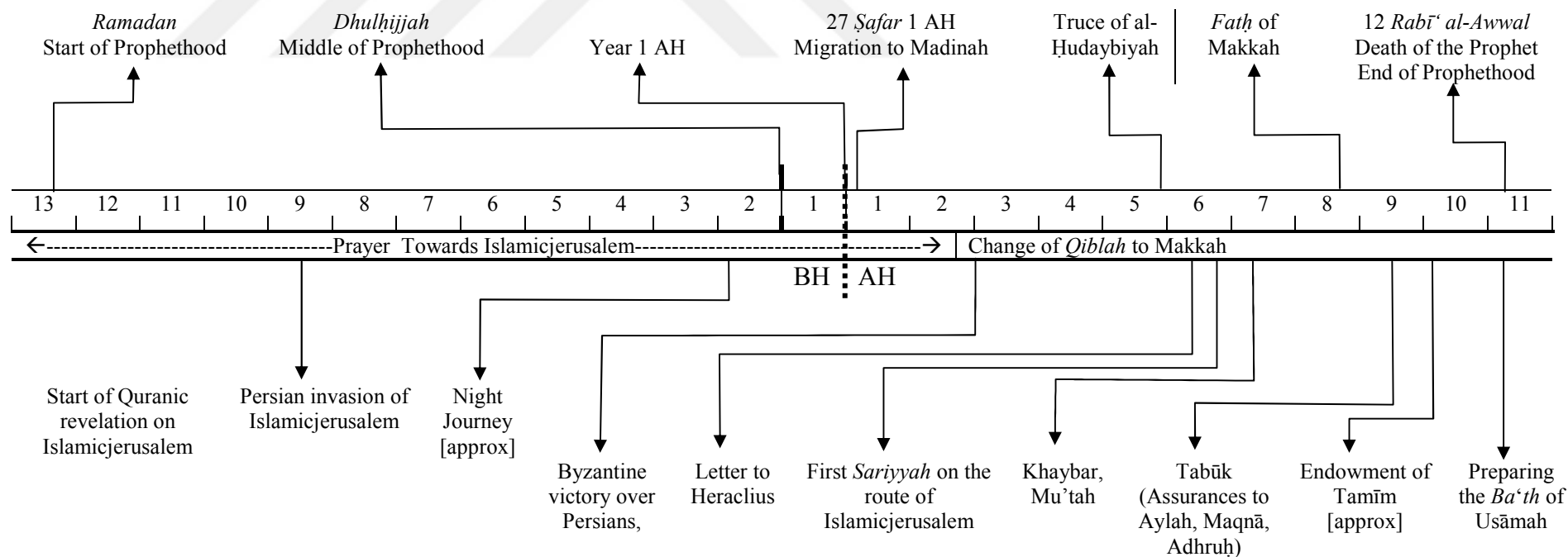
لو علمت أن السباع تأكلني في هذه المدينة لأنفذت جيش أسامة بن زيد كما قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: أنفذوا بعث أسامة<sup>215</sup>

Not only this, Abū Bakr clearly showed the intentions of the Prophet Muhammad towards the forthcoming *Fath*, when he not only applied the Prophet's strategy, but revealed that he was simply applying a clear and detailed plan drawn up by the Prophet Muhammad, when Abū Bakr marked the launching of the Muslim campaign towards the *Fath* of Islamic Jerusalem by declaring (al-Wāqidī (n.d): 5):

You should know that the Messenger of God intended to focus his energy towards al-Shām, but he died before that. I intend to send the heroes of the Muslims to al-Shām with their families and money. Truly, **the messenger of God informed me about this before his death.**<sup>216</sup>

This statement reveals that the attention of the Prophet Muhammad was drawn clearly towards Islamic Jerusalem until the end of his life. All the steps taken by the Prophet Muhammad were part of a strategic plan. The Prophet Muhammad dealt with the issue of the importance of this region many times in his life at various levels, from the beginning of his Prophethood, until the day he died: praying towards Islamic Jerusalem as a *Qiblah*; the Night Journey; dealing with Islamic Jerusalem in the Qur'ānic text; and pointing to the importance of Islamic Jerusalem and the time of its *Fath*. All this, and many other factors, clearly show that the role of revelation in this plan cannot be ignored. The figure below illustrates the chronology of these events in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad:

واعلموا أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان عوّلاً أن يصرف همته إلى الشام فقبضه الله إليه، ألا وإنني عازم على أن أوجه<sup>216</sup> أبطال المسلمين إلى الشام بأهليهم ومالهم فإن رسول الله أنبأني بذلك قبل موته



**Figure (4):** The chronology of the main events related to Islamic Jerusalem during Muhammad's Prophethood

The researcher hopes that this thesis helps in revealing a new dimension and perspective into the *sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad; one that has been long ignored. It is also hoped that this study highlights a further dimension to the relationship between Islamicjerusalem and Muslims, besides adding a new understanding of this epoch in the history of Islamicjerusalem.

### **Recommendations**

Finally, the researcher would like to make a number of recommendations for the future development of the research and this academic field:

- ☐ To develop further research on the nature of the actions of the Prophet and its relationship to the divine.
- ☐ To develop the teaching courses of the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem Studies, in the light of the findings of this research. The researcher recommends, for example, changing the title of the workshops on the relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and Islamicjerusalem from “The preliminary steps of the Prophet Muhammad” to “The Preparation and the Strategic Plan of the Prophet Muhammad for Islamicjerusalem”.
- ☐ To develop research on the relationship between al-Harām Mosque in Makkah and al-Aqṣā Mosque in Islamicjerusalem, looking to the new findings of this research, particularly the relationship between the concept of ‘*Barakah*’ and the concept of ‘*Hudā*’ (Guidance).

- To gather together the historical documents dating to the Prophet Muhammad into a global centre and including the various versions of these documents, and copies of the manuscripts of these documents. And to order these chronologically, so as to make them available to researchers into the Prophet Muhammad's *sīrah* and the history of that region in the seventh century. In addition, the researcher notes that these important documents and manuscripts should be made accessible to researchers.
- To develop a research on the hidden and controversial period in IslamicJerusalem under Persian rule. This is needed in order to answer the many questions raised about the Night Journey, and to reconcile the various, and sometimes controversial, narrations about the Night Journey.
- To investigate further the meanings of the various verses of the Qur'ān that tackle IslamicJerusalem and its historical relationship with Muslims. Also, to critically study and edit the various Muslim historical sources, in order to clear them of controversies and historical inaccuracies.

It is hoped that this research will open up the horizon for further developments and a new understanding of the uniqueness of IslamicJerusalem and its huge impact on history and on the future.



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## ***APPENDICES***

## Appendix I: Endowment of Tamīm al-Dārī

### Version (1)

This version is narrated by Ibn Sa‘d (1997: (1) 205), Abū Yūsuf (n.d: 216) and other historians later on.

By the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful; this is a document from Muhammad, the Messenger of God, to Tamīm Ibn Aws al-Dārī: He [i.e. Tamīm] is granted the towns of Hebron and Bayt ‘Aynūn, including their valleys and mountains [i.e. all the land around them], their water and farms, and their *Anbāt* and cows. [This grant is given] to his descendents after [his death]. No one shall claim any right in it [i.e. the granted land], and no one shall harm them [i.e. Tamīm and his descendent] in this land. Anyone harms them or takes anything from them may be cursed by God.<sup>217</sup>

The researcher argues that this version shows a clear granting of that area; it mentions that the region granted is only Hebron and Bayt ‘Aynūn. Hebron is known today as al-Khalīl in Islamic Jerusalem, and Bayt ‘Aynūn is a small village near it. The language of this text is very similar to the one used in many of the Prophet Muhammad’s letters and documents, and thus is very likely to be an authentic text. Yet it is noted that the two narrators of this version do not claim to have seen the original document; in addition, neither mentions a clear reference to their version, except for Abū Yūsuf’s narration, who narrates it from al-Zuhrī. It could be argued, though, that this narration is considered weak since Abū Yūsuf does not say who was between him and al-Zuhrī in the chain of narrators. The researcher argues that this could thus weaken this narration as a *ḥadīth*, though this is no reason for it to be weakened as a historical narration. this narration cannot be considered a *ḥadīth* since

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، هذا كتاب من محمد رسول الله إلى تميم بن أوس الداري: إن له قرية حبرون، وبيت عينون، قرئتهما  
كلهما، وسهلتهما وجبلتهما، وماءهما وحرثتهما، وأنباطهما وبقرهما، ولعقبه من بعده، لا يحاقه فيهما أحد، ولا يلجها عليهما أحد بظلم.  
فمن ظلم وأخذ منهم شيئاً فإن عليه لعنة الله.

the chain of narrators is not connected to the Prophet Muhammad through a companion and it stops at al-Zuhrī. Thus, it should be treated as a historical narration and not a *ḥadīth*. The researcher finds this version very convincing as there is nothing that weakens it, such as its language, unless stronger evidence in another version can be found.

## **Version (2)**

This version of the text could be considered the most common one; it is mentioned in many different sources, yet most of them come later than the sources of the first version of this text. One of the first sources to note this version was Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 571 AH / 1176 CE) (1995: (11) 66), who mentioned it with another version, which will follow later. This version is also noted by Ibn Faḍlullāh al-‘Umarī (d. 749 AH / 1392 CE) (2003: (1) 226).

Al-‘Umarī’s narration is unique, since it is the first time an author clearly argues that he have seen the original document and copied it in the same form. Al-‘Umarī argues that he saw this document with the servant of the *Waqf* of Tamīm al-Dārī, namely Nāṣir al-Dīn Muhammad Ibn al-Khalīlī al-Tamīmī al-Dārī, and he describes the cloth in which the document was wrapped. He mentions that the document was written on a piece of leather, and that the writing was almost erased. He also says that there was another sheet with this document with the exact text of the document. The sheet was written by the Abbasid caliph al-Mustaḍīr Billāh (d. 575 AH / 1179 CE). The researcher notes that al-‘Umarī mentions that he was able to see the writing on the original leather document although it was very black, old and almost erased; he says the original text was written in “good and strong *Kūfī* font”.

Al-‘Umarī is very accurate in his statement of this text and mentions it exactly the same as it was in the manuscript that he saw. Thus, the researcher will note al-‘Umarī’s narration of this document, keeping in mind that al-‘Umarī took the text not from the original but from the sheet of al-Mustaḍīr, which he compared with the original:

By the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. This is what Muhammad, the Messenger of God, has granted Tamīm al-Dārī and his brothers: Hebron, al-Marṭūm, Bayt ‘Aynūn, and Bayt Ibrāhīm, and what is in them. [This is] a definite grant for them, forever, and I decreed and handed this to them, and for their descendants. Whoever harms them, God will harm him. Whoever harms them, God will curse him. Witnessed by ‘Atīq Ibn Abū Quḥāfah, ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān, and written and witnessed by ‘Alī Ibn bū Ṭālib.<sup>218</sup>

The researcher argues that although this version is taken directly from a very old piece of leather said to be the original document, it is still problematic. There is much debate about some wording difficulties in this text, namely in the names “Abū Quḥāfah”, which should have read “Abī Quḥāfah”, and “Bū Ṭālib”, which should have read “Abī Ṭālib”; in other words, the issue here is grammatical and linguistic. This issue has been under discussion for a long time with many scholars such as al-‘Umarī (2003: (1) 227). The researcher argues that this matter may not, however, be considered problematic as there are many opinions on the possibility of using these names in this way in the early Muslim period, as many authors argue such as Ḥamīdullāh (1987: 33-34).

However, the researcher refers here to other issues related to this text beside the grammar. First, the researcher notes that al-‘Umarī mentions that the original

<sup>218</sup> بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، هذا ما أنطى محمد رسول الله لتميم الداري وإخوته، حبرون والمرطوم وبيت عينون وبيت إبراهيم وما فيهن، نطية بت بدمتهم، ونفذت وسلمت ذلك لهم ولأعقابهم، فمن آذاهم آذاه الله، فمن آذاهم لعنه الله، شهد عتيق بن أبو قحافة، وعمر بن الخطاب، وعثمان بن عفان، وكتب علي بن بو طالب وشهد

document is written in the *Kūfī* font, he also describes the calligraphy as “good and strong”. This is problematic since this font was not known in the shape that is understood from al-‘Umarī’s description in that early period. The *Kūfī* font was unknown until after the conquest of Iraq.<sup>219</sup>

The other problematic issue in the text is the language. Noting some terminologies such as *Naffadhtu* (I decreed) and *Sallamtu* (hand it) indicates lack of authenticity, especially when comparing it with other historical narrations that mention texts of other endowments granted by the Prophet Muhammad. The researcher compared this text with numerous texts of other endowments mentioned by Ibn Sa‘d (1997: (1) 205-206) and other historians,<sup>220</sup> and he found that the various endowments given by the Prophet Muhammad have a similar style.<sup>221</sup>

The researcher also notes that the text of this version, not the endowment itself, began to appear (noted by Ibn ‘Asākir and then al-‘Umarī) after the crusades. It had never been mentioned by any historians as having copied the original text before al-‘Umarī. This thus raises many doubts about the authenticity of the document that al-‘Umarī saw. In addition, Abū Yūsuf (n.d: 216) narrates that Abū Bakr gave Tamīm another document to renew this endowment, yet in this document he mentions only Hebron and Bayt ‘Aynūn and not al-Marṭūm mentioned only in this version.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> This can also be noted when studying the remaining documents dating from that period.

<sup>220</sup> Many texts of similar endowments are also mentioned by Ḥamīdullāh.

<sup>221</sup> The witnesses of this endowment and their order might be problematic as well; this is the first document witnessed by ‘Uthman Ibn ‘Affān. Mentioning the four guided caliphs in this endowment in particular and in the same order they were in the caliphate could be problematic, although less problematic perhaps than other issues related to this one.

<sup>222</sup> Although al-Marṭūm is considered as part of the whole area, and would be part of this endowment even if it were not mentioned, the researcher refers here to the text itself for the sake of comparing it with the first version of the endowment.

### Version (3)

This version was mentioned for the first time by Ibn ‘Asākir (1995: (11) 65-66); other historians noted it later and in almost the same wording. This version of the story of the endowment of Tamīm is quite different from the others, since it says that Tamīm came twice, and not just once, to the Prophet Muhammad with his family: the first time was to Makkah, and the second to Madīnah where the Prophet renewed their endowment. This means that this narration notes two texts of the endowment.

The researcher will recount the story with the text and then comment on it:

Narrated by Abū Hind al-Dārī: ...The Messenger of God asked for a piece of leather and wrote us a document which says:

**By the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful: This is what Muhammad, the messenger of God, granted the *Dāriyyīn* [i.e. the Dārī family] when God will give him the land. He grants them what is between ‘Ayn Ḥabrūn and Bayt Ibrāhīm, including what is within them. It shall be theirs forever. Witnessed by al-‘Abbās Ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib and Jahm Ibn Qays, and Written and witnessed by Shuraḥbīl Ibn Ḥasnah.**

Then he took the document to his house and did something in the corner of the sheet [of leather], and covered it with an unknown thing. Then he tied it from outside with two knots, and he came out to us holding the document and saying: “Verily, The nearest of kin to Abraham are those who followed him, as are also this Prophet, and those who believe [in him]. And God is the protector of the believers” [Qur’ān 3:68], and he said: Leave now until you hear that I migrated [from Makkah]. Abū Hind said: then we [i.e. the Dārī family] left. When the Messenger of God migrated to Madīnah, we came back again and asked him to renew the document for us, so he wrote us...<sup>223</sup>

The continuation, which is the text of the other document in Madīnah, is the second version of this endowment, which was studied earlier. It is clear that this event, according to the text, occurred in Makkah before the migration, since it mentions the

عن أبي هند الداري قال: ...فدعا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بقطعة جلد فكتب لنا فيها كتاباً نسخته: "بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، هذا ذكر ما وهب محمد رسول الله للداريين إذا أعطاه الله الأرض، وهب لهم بين عين حبرون وبيت إبراهيم بمن فيهن، لهم أبداً، شهد عباس بن عبدالمطلب، وجهم بن قيس، وشرحبيط بن حسنة وكتب"، قال: ثم دخل بالكتاب إلى منزله، فعالج في زاوية من الرقعة وغشاه بشيء لا يُعرف، وعقد من خارج الرقعة بشيء عقدين وخرج إلينا مطوياً وهو يقول: (إن أولى الناس بإبراهيم للذين اتبعوه وهذا النبي والذين آمنوا، والله ولي المؤمنين). ثم قال: انصرفوا حتى تسمعوا بي أنني قد هاجرت. قال أبو هند: فانصرفنا، فلما هاجر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى المدينة قدمنا عليه فسالناه أن يجدد لنا كتاباً فكتب لنا كتاباً نسخته...

Prophet Muhammad's migration to Madīnah after mentioning the story of the first endowment.

The researcher argues that one of the most obvious problems in the narration is the verse of the Qur'ān mentioned in the text. This verse is part of chapter 3 (Āl 'Imrān); no source disagrees with the fact that it was revealed in Madīnah. Shurrāb (1990: 126) argues that this verse is evidence that this visit actually happened in Madīnah, and that the entire narration of the tribe of al-Dārī's visit to Makkah is weak. The researcher says that it cannot be argued that this same story happened in Madīnah, since it clearly mentions that they came to the Prophet again after his migration and asked him to renew their endowment. This means that the whole structure of the narration is questionable. Therefore, the investigation leads not only to the argument that this narration is weak, as Shurrāb says, but also to a rejection of it and its text, since it is very problematic and contains contradictions. Also, this narration is mentioned in late sources and is not supported by any early historical source.

Following this investigation, the researcher argues that the version of this endowment closest to authenticity is the first version, since it is the earliest, and because its language is clearer and more well-structured than the second one. As well, it does not contain contradictions in the contents or in the names.

## Appendix II: Assurance to Maqnā

### Version (1)

This text is mentioned for the first time by al-Wāqidī who narrated an abbreviated text of this assurance. The same text is quoted by many historians such as Ibn Sa‘d (1997: (1) 221), al-Miqrīzī (d. 845 AH / 1442 CE) (n.d.: (1) 469) and others:

They said: He [the Prophet] wrote to the people of Maqnā [informing them that] they are safe by the safety of God and the safety of Muhammad, and that they have to pay one quarter of what they spin and one quarter of their fruit [as tax].<sup>224</sup>

It might be argued that al-Wāqidī here mentions this text in a weak manner, which is clear at the beginning of the text when he says: (They said). The researcher argues that this way is used many times in al-Wāqidī’s *Maghāzī*, since he often quotes various people at the same time and gathers their narrations all into one quotation. For example when he starts speaking about Khalid Ibn al-Walīd’s mission to Dūmat al-Jandal (see al-Wāqidī 2004: (2) 405). This should not be considered a reason for the narration to be weakened. However, it seems that al-Wāqidī does not narrate the exact text of the assurance, but only the content, since he mentions neither a start nor an end to the assurance, such as praising God, or greeting, etc., which indicates that al-Wāqidī was unable to get or see a specific text, so he quotes the content that he receives from the narrators he relies on. Yet mentioning an exact one quarter of the production of Maqnā gives this narration some reliability, since it shows that al-Wāqidī, even though he could not obtain the exact words of the assurance, was able

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<sup>224</sup> قالوا: وكتب لأهل مقنا إنهم آمنون بأمان الله وأمان محمد وإن عليهم ربع غزولهم وربع ثمارهم

to preserve the content of the assurance and the specifications of the amount of tax, which Maqnā was supposed to pay annually.<sup>225</sup>

### Version (2)

The second version of this assurance is the text of Ibn Sa‘d (1997: (1) 212) and al-Balādhurī (1992: 70). Al-Balādhurī mentions an Egyptian man who said that he saw the original text of the Prophet’s assurance in a “red leather sheet” and copied it, and then al-Balādhurī re-copied it from that man’s copy. This text gives a detailed assurance, of which some details cannot be found in al-Wāqidī’s version. The text is as follows:

By the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. From Muhammad, the Messenger of God, to *Banī Ḥabībah* [the tribe of Ḥabībah] and the People of Maqnā. Peace on you, it has been revealed to me that you are returning to your town. So when you receive this assurance [know that] you are safe, and you have the guarantee of God and His messenger. The messenger of God has forgiven your sins, and [forgave] every blood that you shed. You have no partner in your town except the Messenger of God, or the messenger of the Messenger of God, and you shall not be harmed or oppressed. The messenger of God PBUH protects you from whatever he protects himself from. To the Messenger of God belongs *Bazzukum* [i.e. clothes] and your slaves and *al-Kurā’* [i.e. weapons or cattle] and *al-Halqah* [i.e. what is inside the house of money or weapons] except what the Messenger of God, or his messenger, excuses. You have to pay one quarter of your palm trees’ products, one quarter of your fishing, and one quarter of what your women spin. You are not supposed to pay more after this, and the Messenger of God PBUH exempted you from the *Jizyah* and the *Sukhrah* [i.e. to work without pension]. If you hear and obey me, the Messenger of God shall be

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<sup>225</sup> It should be mentioned that al-Wāqidī is rejected by some historians and scholars of *ḥadīth* and is accused of weakness in all his narrations. Yet the researcher argues that it seems from studying al-Wāqidī’s own biography that he was considered one of the most authentic historians in the *Maghāzī* of the Prophet Muhammad. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (1974: (1) 17-21) gathered the various opinions of scholars and historians with regard to al-Wāqidī and defended him. In addition, Rizwi S. Faizer studied al-Wāqidī’s authenticity in his book *al-Maghāzī* and concludes that al-Wāqidī can be considered an authentic source with regard to the *Maghāzī* of the Prophet Muhammad (see Faizer 1999: 106). The researcher, therefore, accepts al-Wāqidī as an authentic source of history for the biography of the Prophet and his *Maghāzī* and argues that al-Wāqidī’s narrations should not be treated in the *ḥadīth* methodology as it deals with the *sīrah* of the Prophet and not with his teachings, as the *aḥādīth* usually do.

generous with your kind persons, and forgive the disobedient among you. Any Muslim acts in a good manner with *Banī Ḥabībah* and the People of Maqnā would be rewarded good, and anyone acts in a bad manner with them would be treated badly. You shall not have an *Amīr* [leader] except from yourselves, or from the family of the Messenger of God PBUH. Written by ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib, in the year Nine.<sup>226</sup>

The problematic issue with al-Balādhurī’s text is in the final statement in his version, i.e. saying that ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib is the writer of this document. One of the editors of the book of al-Balādhurī, namely Muhammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn ‘Asākir, says in *Hāshiyah* (footnote), in al-Balādhurī’s book (1992:70-71):

Whoever looks deeply in this text knows that it is fabricated, and there are two evidences for that, first: that ‘Alī was the one who invented grammar in order to avoid the mixing between the Arab and the Nabatean tongues. It is unlikely that he would avoid something then write in a problematic way [i.e. that the language of this text is problematic linguistically]. Second: the assurance of the Prophet to the people of Maqnā was in the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk as it is mentioned in this assurance, yet there is no disagreement that ‘Alī did participate in the *Ghazwah* of Tabūk [as the Prophet asked him to stay in Madīnah], so how would this assurance be ascribed to him?<sup>227</sup>

The researcher agrees and adds to this that using the *Higri* Calendar started most likely in the year 17 AH (see El-Awaisi 2005:38), and thus it is very unusual to use the year 9 AH in a assurance seven years before this system was being used. Thus,

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، من محمد رسول الله إلى بني حبيبة، وأهل مقنا. سلم انتم، فإنه أنزل علي أنكم راجعون إلى قريبتكم، فإذا جاءكم كتابي هذا فإنكم آمنون ولكم ذمة الله و ذمة رسوله، وإن رسول الله قد غفر لكم ذنوبكم، وكل دم اتبعتم به، لا شريك لكم في قريبتكم إلا رسول الله، أو رسول رسول الله، وإنه لا ظلم عليكم ولا عدوان، وإن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يجبركم مما يجبر منه نفسه، فإن لرسول الله بزيتم ورقيتكم والكراع والحلقة، إلا ما عفا عنه رسول الله، أو رسول رسول الله، وإن عليكم بعد ذلك ربع ما أخرجت نخيلكم وربع ما صادت عرككم، وربع ما اغتزلت نساؤكم، وإنكم قد ثريتم بعد ذلك ورفعكم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن كل جزية وسخرة، فإن سمعتم وأطعتم فعلى رسول الله أن يكرم كريمكم ويعفو عن مسيئكم، ومن انتم في بني حبيبة، وأهل مقنا من المسلمين خيرا فهو خير له، ومن أطلعهم بشر فهو شر له، وليس عليكم أمير إلا من أنفسكم أو من أهل بيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Arabic meanings of *Bazzukum*, *al-Karā’*, *al-Ḥalqah* has been taken from both Ibn Mazūr (1999: (3) 290-291) and Ibn Sa’d (1997: (1) 212).

وفي هذا نظر لذي فهم بتأمله يبين له أن هذا الكتاب مفتعل والدليل على ذلك من وجهين أحدهما: أن علياً كرم الله وجهه هو الذي اخترع الكلام في علم النحو خشية من اختلاط كلام العرب بكلام النبط، فما كان عليه السلام ليخشى من شيء ويعتمد ما يؤدي إلى الالتباس، والثاني أن صلح رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لأهل مقنا إنما كان في غزوة تبوك على ما هو مذكور في هذا الكتاب ولا This statement is خلاف في أن علياً لم يكن مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في غزوة تبوك فكيف ينسب هذا الكتاب إليه؟ mentioned in the footnote of al-Balādhurī’s book. The writer of this footnote, i.e. Muhammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn ‘Asākir, is not ‘Alī Ibn al-Ḥasan Ibn ‘Asākir who wrote the famous “The History of Damascus”.

the researcher concludes that the copy that the date mentions at the end of al-Balādhurī's copy was most likely added by either the source of al-Balādhurī's, i.e. the Egyptian copy, or the original assurance from which the Egyptian man claimed that he copied the text.

In addition, mentioning the cancellation of the *Jizyah* in this text could be problematic. There is an obvious mix-up in the text with claiming all the cloth, slaves, weapons or cattle, and everything inside the houses of the people of Maqnā for the Prophet, then obligating them to pay one quarter of all of their products, and then claiming the cancellation of the *Jizyah*.

### Version (3)

This version is mentioned by Ibn Sa'd (1997: (1) 212). The text is very close to al-Balādhurī's, but has some differences:

Your messengers came to me and informed that you are returning to your town. So when you receive this assurance [know that] you are safe, and you have the guarantee of God and His messenger. The messenger of God has forgiven your sins, and you have the guarantee of God and his Prophet, you shall not be harmed or oppressed. The messenger of God PBUH protects you from whatever he protects himself from. To the Messenger of God belongs *Bazzukum* [i.e. clothes] and your slaves and *al-Kurā'* [i.e. weapons or cattle] and *al-Ḥalqah* [i.e. what is inside the house of money or weapons] except what the Messenger of God, or his messenger, excuses. You have to pay one quarter of your palm trees' products, one quarter of your fishing, and one quarter of what your women spin. You are not supposed to pay *Jizyah* or *Sukhrah* [i.e. to work without pension] after this. If you hear and obey me, the Messenger of God shall be generous with your kind persons, and forgive the disobedient among you. Any Muslim acts in a good manner with the People of Maqnā would be rewarded good, and anyone acts in a bad manner with them would be treated badly. You shall not have an *Amīr* [leader] except from

yourselves, or from the family of the Messenger of God, and peace [be to you].<sup>228</sup>

As can be seen, while this version is similar to that of al-Balādhurī, it has some differences. For example, Ibn Sa‘d’s narration mentions the terminology “*Wassalām*”, i.e. “and Peace be to you”, at the end as a form of final greeting. One of the most important differences is that the text of Ibn Sa‘d does not give the name of the writer and the year of the document at the end, unlike al-Balādhurī, who clearly mentions that the writer is ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib, and that the document was written in the year 9 AH.

The researcher argues that Ibn Sa‘d does not mention a specific source of his version of this assurance but a number of narrators from whom he quotes various documents. This is unlike al-Balādhurī, who argues clearly that he copied this text from a copy taken from the original assurance of the Prophet. Yet it should be noted that Ibn Sa‘d died in 230 AH / 845 CE, while al-Balādhurī died in 279 AH / 892 CE. In other words, Ibn Sa‘d was earlier than al-Balādhurī. Also, Ibn Sa‘d met al-Wāqidī and accompanied him for a long time, as is known from his biography. Therefore, it is most likely that he could have taken this narration from al-Wāqidī himself, especially since he quotes al-Wāqidī many times in his writings; he also uses the same style as al-Wāqidī in many of his narrations, i.e. quoting various historians at the same time in the same text.

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أما بعد، فقد نزل علي أيتكم راجعين إلى قريبتكم فإذا جاءكم كتابي هذا فإنكم آمنون لكم ذمة الله وذمة رسوله لا ظلم عليكم ولا عدى، وإن رسول الله جاركم مما منع منه نفسه، فإن لرسول الله بركم وكل رقيق فيكم والكراع والحلقة إلا ما عفا عنه رسول الله أو رسول رسول الله، وإن عليكم بعد ذلك ربع ما أخرجت نخلكم وربع ما صادت عروكم وربع ما اعتزل نساؤكم وإنكم برئتكم بعد من كل جزية أو سخرة، فإن سمعتم وأطعم فإن على رسول الله أن يكرم كريمكم ويعفو عن مسيئكم. أما بعد فالإي المؤمنين والمسلمين، من أطلع أهل مقنا بخير فهو خير له، ومن أطلعهم بشر فهو شر له، وأن ليس عليكم أمير إلا من أنفسكم أو من أهل رسول الله والسلام.

Ibn Sa‘d’s text shows a very significant difference in the issue of the *Jizyah*, since al-Balādhurī’s text mentions that it has been exempted, yet in Ibn Sa‘d’s text, it seems that the *Jizyah* here **is** actually the one fourth of the Products of Maqnā, and it could mean that this amount is the only *Jizyah* to be asked from Maqnā.

#### **Version (4)**

Another version of this assurance was discovered in Cairo Genizah and was translated and published for the first time in 1903 by Hartwig Hirschfeld (1903: 167-181). This version is more detailed than the former versions of the assurance. Hirschfeld (1903: 172) argues that this manuscript is a copy of the original assurance.

The text of this manuscript is written in the Arabic language but in Hebrew script, and it is written on paper (Hirschfeld 1903:169). It can be divided into two parts: a preface written by an unknown person who claims to be a Jew converted to Islam. It appears that this writer is the same one who wrote the other part, i.e. the body of the Prophet’s assurance. The writer introduces this assurance and claims that it was written by ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib. Then follows the long text of the assurance, which is translated by Hirschfeld (1903: 170-172) as the following:

In the name of the Merciful, Compassionate: This is an assurance from Muhammad, the Messenger of Allāh, to Ḥanīnā<sup>229</sup> and the People of Kheibar<sup>230</sup> and Maqnā and their progeny as long as the heavens are above the earth, peace. I praise unto your God, save whom there is no God but he. Now [I say that] he has revealed unto me that you are about to return to your cities and to the inhabitants of your dwelling-place. Return in safety, in the protection of Allāh and that of his Messenger. Yours is the safeguard of Allāh and that of his Messenger

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<sup>229</sup> This is the way Hirschfeld spells it; in the original manuscript it is written חנינא, and Ḥamīdullāh (1987: 121) pronouns it as Ḥunanā.

<sup>230</sup> The town mentioned here is Khaybar, the main centre for Jews in Arabia until the year 7 AH, when the Prophet led a campaign against it and captured it but left its people there (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 470-493)

with regard to your persons, belief, and property, slaves, and whatever is in your possession. You shall not have the annoyance of land-tax<sup>231</sup>, nor shall a forelock of yours be cut off. No army shall treat on your soil, nor shall you be assembled [for military service], nor shall tithes be imposed on you, neither shall you be injured in any way. No one shall leave his mark on you, you shall not be prevented from wearing slashed or coloured garments, nor from riding on horseback, nor from carrying any kind of arms. If any one attacks you, fight him, and if he is killed in the war against you, none of you shall be executed for his sake, nor is ransom to be paid for him. If anyone of you kills a Moslim<sup>232</sup> intentionally, he shall be dealt with according to Moslim law. No disgraceful charges shall be brought against you, and you shall not be as other [non-Moslim] poll-tax payers<sup>233</sup>. If you ask assistance, it shall be granted to you, and if you want help you shall have it. You shall not be punished for white, nor yellow, nor brown (garments), nor for a coat of mail, nor (tying the *Kashṭīz*, nor wearing *al-Mushahharāt*)<sup>234</sup>... Not a shoe-lace of yours shall be cut. You shall not be hindered entering the mosques, nor precluded from governing Moslims. You shall have no other ruler except out of your own midst, or from the family of the messenger of Allāh. Room shall be made for your funerals, except when they trespass on a sacred spot (mosque). You shall be held in honour on account of your own high station and the station of Ṣafīyya<sup>235</sup>, the daughter of your Uncle. It shall be incumbent upon the Moslims to uphold your honour, and not to touch you (?). If any of you goes on a journey, he shall be under the safeguard of Allāh and his Messenger. "There is no compulsion in matters of religion." If any of you follows the religion of the Messenger of Allāh and his command, he shall have one fourth of what the Messenger of Allāh has ordered to be given to the people of his house, to be given when Qureish<sup>236</sup> receive their portions, viz. fifty dinārs. This is a present from me for you. The family of the house of the Messenger of Allāh as well as the Moslims are charged to fulfil all that is in this assurance. Whoever deserves well of Ḥanīnā and the people of Kheibar and Maqnā, all the better for him; but he who does them evil, all the worse for him. Whoever reads this my assurance, or to whomever it is read, and he alters or changes anything of what is in it, upon him shall be the curse of Allāh and the curse of the cursing of ... and all mankind. He is beyond my protection and intercession on the day of Resurrection, and I am his foe. And who is my foe is the foe of Allāh, and he who is the foe of Allāh goes to hell ... and bed is the abode there. Witness is Allāh, like whom there is no God, and Allāh is sufficient as witness, and his angels... , and those Moslims who are present. Ali, the son of Abū Ṭālib, wrote it with his writing, whilst the

<sup>231</sup> i.e. *Jizyah*

<sup>232</sup> This is the way Hirschfeld writes it.

<sup>233</sup> The term used in the text is *Ahl al-Dhimmah*

<sup>234</sup> The words between the brackets were not mentioned by Hirschfeld, the researcher found them in the text.

<sup>235</sup> Ṣafīyyah, daughter of Ḥuyay Ibn Akṭab, was the wife of the Prophet who he married in the year 7 AH after the *Ghazwah* to Khaybar (see Ibn Ishāq 2004:480)

<sup>236</sup> i.e. Quraysh, the tribe of the Prophet Muhammad.

Messenger of Allāh dictated to him letter for letter, Friday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Ramadhān, the year five of the Hijra. Witnesses: [Amm]ār b. Yāsir; Salmān the Persian, the friend of the Messenger of Allāh; Abū Ḍarr al-Ghifārī.<sup>237</sup>

The researcher argues that even a glance at this text shows it to be very problematic. It contains some terms not used by the Prophet Muhammad such as *al-Kashtīz*, which is not Arabic. In addition, a study in depth of the concepts of this text shows there are a few points that should be mentioned:

- 1- This text was mentioned in a Cairo Genizah fragment, which means it is late, since the Cairo Genizah documents mainly date to the 11<sup>th</sup> century CE ( Ben-Sasson 2007: (7) 462).
- 2- This text adds the people of Khaybar to those of Maqnā.
- 3- The text exempts the people of Khaybar and Maqnā from the *Jizyah*, and claims that they are not to be treated as *Ahl al-Dhimma*. This was unlikely to have occurred in the time of the Prophet Muhammad, since it is known historically that he obliged the people of Khaybar to pay half of their crops as a condition to staying in Khaybar (see Ibn Ishāq 2004: 492)

<sup>237</sup> The researcher quotes the translation and the spelling according to Hirschfeld. Ḥamīdullāh wrote the original Arabic text as follows: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، هَذَا كِتَابٌ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ لِحَنِينَا، وَلِأَهْلِ خَيْبَرَ وَالْمَقْنَا: أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَإِنَّهُ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيَّ الْوَحْيَ أَنْكُمْ وَلِذُرِّيَّتِهِمْ، مَا دَامَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ. سَلَامٌ أَنْتُمْ، إِنِّي أَحْمَدُ إِلَيْكُمْ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَإِنَّهُ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيَّ الْوَحْيَ أَنْكُمْ رَاجِعُونَ إِلَى قَرَاكُمُ وَسَكْنَى دِيَارِكُمْ، فَارْجِعُوا بِأَمَانٍ وَأَمَانَ رَسُولِهِ، وَلَكُمْ ذِمَّةُ اللَّهِ وَذِمَّةُ رَسُولِهِ عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ وَدِينِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَرَقِيقِكُمْ وَكُلِّ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ. وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَدَاءُ جُزْيَةٍ، وَلَا تَجُزْ لَكُمْ نَاصِيَةٌ، وَلَا يَطَأُ أَرْضَكُمْ جَيْشٌ، وَلَا تَحْشُدُونَ وَلَا تَحْشُرُونَ وَلَا تَعْشُرُونَ وَلَا تَظْلَمُونَ، وَلَا يَجْعَلُ أَحَدٌ عَلَيْكُمْ رِسْمًا، وَلَا تَمْنَعُونَ مِنْ لِبَاسِ الْمُشَقَّاتِ وَالْمَلُونَاتِ، وَلَا مِنْ رُكُوبِ الْخَيْلِ وَلِبَاسِ أَصْنَافِ السِّلَاحِ. وَمَنْ قَاتَلَكُمْ فَقَاتِلُوهُ، وَمَنْ قَتَلَ فِي حَرْبِكُمْ فَلَا يَقَادُ بِهِ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا لَهُ دِيَّةٌ. وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مِنْكُمْ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ تَعْدًا فَحُكْمُهُ حُكْمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ. وَلَا يَفْتَرَى عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ، وَلَا تَنْزِلُونَ مَنْزِلَةَ أَهْلِ الذِّمَّةِ، وَإِنْ اسْتَعْنَتُمْ تَعَانُونَ، وَإِنْ اسْتَرْفَدْتُمْ تَرْفُدُونَ. وَلَا تَطَالِبُونَ بِيَضَاءَ وَلَا صَفَرَاءَ وَلَا سَمَرَاءَ وَلَا كِرَاعَ وَلَا حَلْقَةَ وَلَا شِدَّ الْكُشْتِيزِ وَلَا لِبَاسَ الْمُشْهَرَاتِ، وَلَا يَقْطَعُ لَكُمْ شَيْءٌ نَعْلَ، وَلَا تَمْنَعُونَ دُخُولَ الْمَسَاجِدِ، وَلَا تَحْجِبُونَ عَنْ وَلَاةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَلَا يُؤَلَّى عَلَيْكُمْ وَالْإِلَا مِنْكُمْ أَوْ مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ. وَيُوسَعُ لِحَنَانُكُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ تَصِيرَ إِلَى مَوْضِعِ الْحَقِّ الْيَقِينِ. وَتَكْرُمُوا لِكِرَامَتِكُمْ وَكَرَامَةِ صَفِيَّةِ ابْنَةِ عَمِّكُمْ. وَعَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى الْمُسْلِمِينَ أَنْ تَكْرُمَ كَرِيمَكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ مَسِيئَتِكُمْ. وَمَنْ سَافَرَ مِنْكُمْ فَهُوَ فِي أَمَانٍ وَأَمَانَ رَسُولِهِ. وَلَا إِكْرَاهُ فِي الدِّينِ. وَمَنْ مِنْكُمْ اتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَوَصِيَّتَهُ، كَانَ لَهُ رُبْعُ مَا أَمَرَ بِهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ لِأَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ، تَعْطُونَ عِنْدَ عِطَاءِ قَرِيشٍ وَهُوَ خَمْسُونَ دِينَارًا، ذَلِكَ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ. وَعَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى الْمُسْلِمِينَ الْوَفَاءَ بِجَمْعٍ مَا فِي هَذَا الْكِتَابِ. فَمَنْ أَطْلَعَ لِحَنِينَا وَأَهْلَ خَيْبَرَ وَالْمَقْنَا بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ أَخِيرُ لَهُ وَمَنْ أَطْلَعَ لَهُمْ بِ(شَرٍّ) فَهُوَ شَرُّ لَهُ. وَمَنْ قَرَأَ كِتَابِي هَذَا، أَوْ قَرَأَ عَلَيْهِ وَغَيْرَ أَوْ خَالَفَ شَيْئًا مِمَّا فِيهِ، فَعَلَيْهِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَلَعْنَةُ اللَّاعِنِينَ مِنَ (الْمَلَائِكَةِ) وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ، وَهُوَ بَرِيءٌ مِنْ ذِمَّتِي وَشَفَاعَتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَأَنَا خَصْمُهُ، وَمَنْ خَصِمَنِي فَقَدْ خَصِمَ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ خَصِمَ اللَّهَ فَهُوَ فِي النَّارِ، وَالْ(.....)ةُ وَبَنُو الْمَصْبِيرِ. شَهِدَ (ال)لَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ كَفَرِي (ي) بِهِ شَهِيدًا وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ (حَمَلَةً ع)رْشِهِ وَمَنْ حَضَرَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَكُتِبَ عَلَيَّ بِنِ أَبِي (ي) طَالِبٍ بِخَطِّهِ، وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ يَمْلِي عَلَيْهِ حَرْفًا حَرْفًا، يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ لثَالِثَ (!) لَيْالٍ خَلَّتْ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ سَنَةِ خَمْسٍ مَضَتْ مِنَ الْهَجْرَةِ. شَهِدَ (عَمَارُ) بِنِ يَاسِرٍ وَسُلَيْمَانَ الْفَرَارِسِيِّ (!) مَوْلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَأَبُو ذَرٍّ الْغِفَارِيِّ.

- 4- This version reverses the issue of the one fourth of the products, which was mentioned in the first and second versions. It makes it payable from the Prophet to anyone who converts to Islam from the people of Khaybar and Maqnā, instead of its being paid by them to the Prophet.
- 5- The date mentioned in the text is the year 5 AH, i.e. before the *Ghazwah* to Khaybar.
- 6- The text mentions Şafiyyah, who the Prophet married after the *Ghazwah* to Khaybar.

The researcher argues that these points make it most likely that this version is fabricated. Hence, the researcher here disagrees with Hirschfeld who argues in favour of this text being authentic. Hirschfeld argues (1903: 172) that the problematic issue with this version is the date mentioned in it, and says that it is most likely to be in the year 9 AH. However, the researcher argues that ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib was not in Tabūk with the Prophet Muhammad as was mentioned when the second version of this assurance was discussed. Hirschfeld claims that, since the writer introduces himself as a Muslim convert, it is unlikely that he could have fabricated this copy. Hirschfeld also claims that this document is “singed” by three of the trustworthy companions of the Prophet Muhammad, which gives it authenticity. Yet the researcher argues that the first argument of Hirschfeld, with regard to the writer’s claim that he was Muslim, is not sufficient reason to authenticate the text, for two reasons: first, the writer claimed to be a Muslim, yet mentions in his preface some unknown concepts such as *Sittat Ayyām fī al-Jumu‘ah al-Zahrā’* (Six days in the Lustrous Week) and other terminologies; and second, the writer himself is unknown, and did not introduce himself. Moreover, mentioning the names of three of the Prophet’s companions is not in itself evidence of authenticity. The companions noted

in the text did not actually sign this document; their names were only mentioned at the end of it, knowing that it was a copy as Hirschfeld himself argued.<sup>238</sup> Therefore, it is unlikely that this version can be considered reliable.

Following this study of the three versions of the document, the researcher argues that the text mentioned by Ibn Sa'd can be considered the most likely to be the most reliable text due to its proper language and context.



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<sup>238</sup> Ḥamīdullāh (1987:124-125) mentions the event when some Jews claimed that they had a document from the Prophet written by 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib cancelling the *Jizyah* from the people of Khaybar. When this document was shown to al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 462 AH / 1069 CE), he said: this is fabricated, since it has the name of Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh, who died 2 years before the *Fath* of Khaybar, and Mu'āwiyah, who converted to Islam a year after Khaybar. Then Ḥamīdullāh quotes Ibn al-Qayyim: there was no *Jizyah* in the time of Khaybar, since the verses of *Jizyah* were revealed 2 years after Khaybar, i.e. in the year 9 AH. Therefore, Ḥamīdullāh argues that it seems that this text is only a "correction" of that fabricated document of Khaybar, and the names of 'Ammār, Salmān, and Abū Dhar were written instead of Sa'd and Mu'āwiyah.

### Appendix III: Assurance to Adhruḥ

There has been disagreement with regard to whether this assurance was granted to the people of Adhruḥ only or jointly with the people of the neighbouring town, Jarbā'. The researcher has investigated the issue and found that these different accounts could be summarised as follows:

| Source                               | The Opinion                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Al-Wāqidī<br>(d. 207 AH / 823 CE)    | Mentions two assurances: one for the People of Adhruḥ only, and the other for both Adhruḥ and Jarbā', but even here he mentions the text of the assurance to Adhruḥ only. |
| Ibn Sa'd<br>(d. 230 AH / 844 CE)     | Mentions one joint assurance for both Adhruḥ and Jarbā'                                                                                                                   |
| Al-Balādhurī<br>(d. 279 AH / 892 CE) | Mentions two separate assurances, one for Adhruḥ, and another for Jarbā' but he does not mention the texts                                                                |
| Ibn Hishām<br>(d. 218 AH / 833 CE)   | Mentions one joint assurance for both Adhruḥ and Jarbā' but without mentioning the text                                                                                   |
| Ibn Kathīr<br>(d. 774 AH / 1372 CE)  | Mentions one joint assurance for both Adhruḥ and Jarbā'                                                                                                                   |
| Al-Miqrīzī<br>(d. 845 AH / 1442 CE)  | Mentions two separate assurances, one for Adhruḥ, and another for Jarbā' and he mentions the texts                                                                        |

The only difference here is that al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 410) clearly mentions that he saw the Adhruḥ document and copied it himself. No one else claims to have seen the original copy of this document. This means that al-Wāqidī's narration of the assurance of Adhruḥ would be the most authentic, since he is the only historian to have seen the origin. However, the problem here is that, although al-Wāqidī argues that he saw the original copy of the document, he mentions, just before that, an

abbreviated text of the assurance to Adhruḥ, and says that this is what the Prophet wrote for both Jarbā' and Adhruḥ.<sup>239</sup>

The first version that al-Wāqidī narrates for this assurance, which is an abbreviated copy (2004: (2) 410), is thus:

The Messenger of God wrote to the people of Jarbā' and Adhruḥ: "This assurance is from Muhammad the Prophet, the messenger of God, to the People of Adhruḥ; they are safe by the safeguard of God and the safeguard of Muhammad, and they have to pay 100 *Dinār* on every *Rajab* (i.e. annually in the month of *Rajab*), complete and pure, and God is their guarantor."<sup>240</sup>

Al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 410) then mentions the longer version of the assurance, stating that he saw the original document:

Al-Wāqidī said: I copied the document of Adhruḥ, and I found in it [the following]: By the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, from Muhammad the Prophet to the People of Adhruḥ, they are safe by the safeguard of God and the safeguard of Muhammad, and they have to pay 100 *Dinār* on every *Rajab*, complete and pure, and God is their guarantor that they would give advice and be kind to Muslims, and to any Muslim who seeks asylum to them, because of any fear, if they feel any danger threatens the Muslims. And they shall be safe [i.e. calm] until Muhammad informs them before he leaves [i.e. for any help in wars].<sup>241</sup>

It is noted here that the two versions are similar in the parts that they share. Yet al-Wāqidī in the first abbreviated version mentions that the assurance was for the

<sup>239</sup> Al-Wāqidī (2004: (2) 410) says: "The Messenger of God wrote for the people of Jarbā' and Adhruḥ: (This letter is from the Prophet Muhammad to the people of Adhruḥ....)", and he mentions an abbreviated letter, then he says: "I copied the document of Adhruḥ and what was in it is: (By the name of God, the Most Compassionate, The Most Merciful. From the Prophet Muhammad to the People of Adhruḥ....)".

<sup>240</sup> وكتب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لأهل جرباء وأذرح: (هذا الكتاب من محمد النبي رسول الله لأهل أذرح، أنهم آمنون بأمان الله وأمان محمد، وأن عليهم مائة دينار في كل رجب وافية طيبة والله كفيل عليهم).

<sup>241</sup> قال الواقدي: نسخت كتاب أذرح وإذا فيه: (بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، من محمد النبي لأهل أذرح، أنهم آمنون بأمان الله وأمان محمد، وأن عليهم مائة دينار في كل رجب وافية طيبة، والله كفيل عليهم بالنصح والإحسان للمسلمين ولمن لجأ إليهم من المسلمين من المخافة والتعزير إذ خشوا على المسلمين، وهم آمنون حتى يحدث إليهم محمد قبل خروجه).

people of Adhruh and Jarbā', while the text clearly mentions that it was only for Adhruh, which could be a problematic issue. The researcher argues that there are three possibilities:

- 1- That al-Wāqidī heard the first narration of the abbreviated text of this assurance, i.e. that mentions that the assurance was sent to both Adhruh and Jarbā', and notes it. He then saw the original document and found it to be only for the people of Adhruh, and he then added the text that he saw. This can be concluded since, before mentioning the original copy, is written: "al-Wāqidī said: I copied the... etc.", which shows the possibility that this was an addition probably not by al-Wāqidī himself, but by his students who copied his book and heard directly from him.
- 2- That al-Wāqidī was not aware of the presence of another assurance to the People of Jarbā', so he thought that the assurance of Adhruh was the same as that to Jarbā'. In other words, he did not differentiate between the two towns since they were usually mentioned together.
- 3- That the statement of al-Wāqidī about copying directly from the original document was fabricated after him.

The researcher argues that the third possibility is unlikely; since the book of *al-Maghāzī* by al-Wāqidī today is most likely proven to be the original one that al-Wāqidī left.<sup>242</sup> Therefore, it is unlikely that this note was fabricated or added later. The same is for the second possibility, since it is unlikely that al-Wāqidī was not aware of any different assurance to Jarbā' or of any difference between the two

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<sup>242</sup> This statement was taken from Prof. Abd al-'Aziz al-Dūrī during a meeting in his office at the University of Jordan in April 2005.

towns. This is since al-Wāqidī is well-known for his extreme interest in identifying the places that were mentioned in the *sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (1974: (1) 18) reports that al-Wāqidī said: “whenever I heard of any of the companions’ sons or the sons of the martyrs, I used to ask if he knew anyone who would know where his father was killed or died, if he tells me, I used to go to the place to examine by myself, and whenever I heard about a *Ghazwah* I used to go to the place in order to examine it”. This shows that al-Wāqidī was very strict in confirming his accounts by going himself to investigate the location.

Therefore, it appears that the first possibility is the most acceptable; it seems that when al-Wāqidī first registered this historical event he was not aware of the original document, and thus quoted the text from his sources; perhaps that is why the text is quite abbreviated. Afterwards he was able to see and examine the original text and added to it through his students or copiers. This means that the text that al-Wāqidī mentions for the assurance of Adhruḥ is the most authentic in this regard, yet a question must be raised, that is, why did al-Wāqidī not cancel the abbreviated text from his book as long as he was able to himself examine the original text? The researcher argues that this could have been due to the presence of the name of Jarbā’ in the abbreviated text, which was quoted from different narrators as al-Wāqidī was used to do in his book. It seems that since al-Wāqidī saw the original document which mentioned only Adhruḥ, when he had heard from his sources the text as being both Adhruḥ and Jarbā’, and since he could not find an original document that mentioned Jarbā’, he decided to leave the text as it was, because it had been narrated through a chain of narrators to him. He then recorded his achievement of copying the original document that he found, which only mentions Adhruḥ. This means that al-

Wāqidī was probably convinced that there was another assurance from the Prophet Muhammad to Jarbā’.

The researcher argues that, in order to investigate this issue, one needs to compare the texts that were mentioned for the assurance of Jarbā’ with al-Wāqidī’s original text of Adhruḥ. This means that the text of the assurance with Jarbā’ mentioned by al-Miqrīzī needs to be compared with al-Wāqidī’s text of Adhruḥ, since al-Miqrīzī was the only historian to note a special text for Jarbā’.

Al-Miqrīzī’s text ((n.d): (1) 468) of the assurance to Jarbā’ is as follows:

This assurance is from Muhammad the Prophet, the messenger of God, to the People of Jarbā’; they are safe by the safeguard of God and the safeguard of Muhammad, and they have to pay 100 *Dinār* on every *Rajab*, complete and pure, and God is guarantor.<sup>243</sup>

It is clear that this text is exactly the same as al-Wāqidī’s abbreviated version of the document, except that this text contains the name Jarbā’ and not Adhruḥ. Al-Miqrīzī, however, does not specify his source of this text and, taking into consideration that al-Miqrīzī is not an early source, since he lived in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, it is most likely that he copied this text from earlier sources, especially al-Wāqidī, since al-Miqrīzī also mentions the text of al-Wāqidī immediately after this text, i.e. as al-Wāqidī in his book. This shows that al-Miqrīzī either wrote Jarbā’ instead of Adhruḥ by mistake or he changed the name deliberately, thinking that his source, which in this case was most likely al-Wāqidī, had mentioned Adhruḥ in the abbreviated text mistakenly.

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(هذا الكتاب من محمد النبي رسول الله لأهل جرباء، إنهم آمنون بأمان الله وأمان محمد، وإن عليهم مائة دينار في كل رجب وافية<sup>243</sup> طيبة، والله كفيل).

Thus, the researcher argues that, as it can be noted from the various texts that they are all almost identical, it seems that only one document was written by the Prophet Muhammad in this context, and this was most likely to the People of Adhruh rather than Jarbā'. There is no reason to reject the fact that the two towns were mostly dealt with as one, as this can be noted from the various historical sources; perhaps their people were of the same origin or tribe. Thus, as al-Wāqidī's detailed text is clearly argued as being a copy of the original document, in addition to the language of this version, which seems very similar to the style and language of that of the Prophet Muhammad and Arabia in that era, the researcher will deal with it as the most acceptable of this assurance.



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## ***GLOSSARY***

# Glossary

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><i>Abū</i></b>                           | Father of.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b><i>Al-Aqṣā Mosque</i></b>                | Literally means the Furthest Mosque; it refers to the ancient Mosque located in Islamic Jerusalem, in the Southern Eastern corner of the walled city of Jerusalem.                                                               |
| <b><i>‘Aṣr</i></b>                          | Literally means time / afternoon; it refers to the third daily prayer of the Muslims and it is prayed between afternoon and sunset.                                                                                              |
| <b><i>Ba‘th</i></b>                         | An expression literally means mission. It is usually used in the <i>sīrah</i> of the Prophet Muhammad to describe the army that the Prophet assembled before his death and appointed Usamah Ibn Zayd Ibn Hārithah as its leader. |
| <b><i>Bāb (of a book)</i></b>               | The section of a book, it is often used in Muslim writings to describe a section of a chapter, which is usually called <i>Kitāb</i> (Book).                                                                                      |
| <b><i>Barakah</i></b>                       | Literally means growth and expansion; it is used in Muslim sources to show spiritual growth and happiness, and is usually translated into the English language as ‘Blessing’.                                                    |
| <b><i>Bayt al-Maqdis</i></b>                | An Arabic terminology that is used historically to refer to al-Aqṣā Mosque, the city of Jerusalem, and the region of Islamic Jerusalem.                                                                                          |
| <b><i>Da‘īf</i></b>                         | Weak.                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b><i>Dhulqi‘dah</i></b>                    | The 11 <sup>th</sup> month of the Muslim lunar calendar.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b><i>Dhulhijjah</i></b>                    | The 12 <sup>th</sup> month of the Muslim lunar calendar.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b><i>Fajr</i></b>                          | Literally means dawn; it refers to the first daily prayer of the Muslims and it is prayed at dawn before the sunrise.                                                                                                            |
| <b><i>Fath</i></b>                          | Literally means opening; it is usually used in the Muslim sources to describe an achievement that took place with divine aid in peace and war. It is used to describe a Muslim conquest.                                         |
| <b><i>Ghazwah</i> [pl. <i>Ghazawāt</i>]</b> | A military expedition led by the Prophet Muhammad.                                                                                                                                                                               |

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|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><i>Ḥadīth</i> [pl. <i>Aḥādīth</i>]</b> | Oral or actual tradition of the Prophet Muhammad.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b><i>Ḥadīth Ḥasan</i></b>                | A sound <i>ḥadīth</i> , though it is less authentic than the <i>Ṣaḥīḥ</i> . This rank is given to the <i>ḥadīth</i> if one or more of its narrators is known for being pious, yet has a slightly weaker memory than that of other more authentic narrators.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b><i>Ḥadīth Ḥasan Lighayrih</i></b>      | A <i>ḥadīth</i> has different narrations that are all considered slightly weak due to one or more rather weak narrators in its <i>sanad</i> (chain of narrators). When different slightly weak narrations mention almost the same <i>ḥadīth</i> with different chains of narrators, the rank of the <i>ḥadīth</i> is raised to <i>Ḥasan Lighayrih</i> , which is considered generally acceptable unless it contradicts a more authentic narration. Yet this rank is still less authentic than the rank of <i>Ḥadīth Ḥasan</i> , since the <i>ḥadīth ḥasan lighayrih</i> was originally weak. |
| <b><i>Ḥadīth Marfū‘</i></b>               | A <i>ḥadīth</i> that is attributed to the Prophet Muhammad as having been said or done by him.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b><i>Ḥadīth Mursal</i></b>               | A <i>ḥadīth</i> narrated by a <i>tābi‘ī</i> (successor) directly from the Prophet Muhammad, i.e. when the <i>tābi‘ī</i> does not specify the person or persons between him and the Prophet Muhammad. This kind of <i>ḥadīth</i> is considered weak due to the disconnection between the <i>tābi‘ī</i> and the Prophet.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b><i>Ḥadīth Ṣaḥīḥ</i></b>                | An authentic <i>ḥadīth</i> . This is the highest rank of authenticity of a <i>ḥadīth</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b><i>Ḥanīf</i></b>                       | On the natural instinct. This expression is used in the Qur’ān to refer to the religion of the Prophet Abraham and to the nature of Islam as a return to the natural instinct, which delivers the person to submitting to God. The terminology ‘Islam’ means: submission to God.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b><i>Al-Ḥarām Mosque</i></b>             | The Sacred Mosque in Makkah.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b><i>Hijrah</i></b>                      | The migration of the Prophet Muhammad.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b><i>Ibn</i></b>                         | Son of.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b><i>Iqtā‘</i></b>                       | The granting of a land for the benefit of a specific person to become his/her own property.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>‘Ishā’</b>                    | Literally means night; it refers to the fifth daily prayer of the Muslims and it is prayed at night.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b><i>Islamicjerusalem</i></b>   | Defined by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi (2006: 14) as: a new terminology for a new concept, which may be translated into the Arabic language as <i>Bayt al-Maqdis</i> . It can be fairly and eventually characterised and defined as a unique region laden with a rich historical background, religious significances, cultural attachments, competing political and religious claims, international interests and various aspects that affect the rest of the world in both historical and contemporary contexts. It has a central frame of reference and a vital nature with three principal intertwined elements: its geographical location (land and boundaries); its people (population); and its unique and creative inclusive vision, to administrate that land and its people, as a model for multiculturalism. |
| <b><i>Isnād</i></b>              | See <i>Sanad</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b><i>Isrā’</i></b>              | The Night Journey of the Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Islamicjerusalem.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b><i>Jamādā al-Ūlā</i></b>      | The 5 <sup>th</sup> month in the Muslim lunar calendar.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b><i>Jamādā al-Thānīyah</i></b> | The 6 <sup>th</sup> month in the Muslim lunar calendar.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b><i>Jizyah</i></b>             | A tax paid by non-Muslims who live in the Muslim state in replacement of the <i>Zakāh</i> , which is paid by the Muslims of the state, as Maher Abu-Munshar (2007: 27-28) clarifies.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b><i>Juz’ [pl. Ajzā’]</i></b>   | A section of the Qur’ān that contains a certain number of verses. The Qur’ān is divided into 30 <i>Ajzā’</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Ka‘bah</b>                    | Literally means cube; the cubic building in the heart of al-Ḥarām Mosque in Makkah, towards which the Muslims turn their faces during the prayer. The Muslims believe it to be the first place of worship built on earth.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b><i>Ma’t’hūr (School)</i></b>  | One of the two major schools of exegesis of the Qur’ān. The followers of this school depend on the narrations from the Prophet Muhammad and his companions and their successors in explaining the meanings of verses of the Qur’ān rather than                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

relying on their own understanding of the meaning of the Qur'ānic text.

***Maghrib***

Literally means sunset; it refers to the fourth daily prayer of the Muslims and it is prayed at sunset.

***Mi'rāj***

The Ascension of the Prophet Muhammad to heaven during the Night Journey.

***Muḥarram***

The 1<sup>st</sup> month in the Muslim lunar calendar.

***Mustaḥab***

Preferable. This terminology is used to describe an act that is not compulsory but desirable.

***Qiblah***

The direction of Prayer.

***Qirā'ah* [pl. *Qirā'āt*]**

Way of reciting the Qur'ān. There are ten acceptable *Qirā'āt* in the Qur'ān, all of them are authenticated through a chain of narrators to the Prophet Muhammad.

***Quraysh***

The tribe of the Prophet Muhammad in Makkah.

***Al-Ra'y (School):***

One of the two major schools of exegesis of the Qur'ān, The followers of this school depend on their own understanding of the Qur'ānic text to explain the meanings of verses of the Qur'ān, more than relying on the narrations from the Prophet Muhammad and his companions and their successors.

***Rabī' al-Awwal:***

The 3<sup>rd</sup> month in the Muslim lunar calendar.

***Rabī' al-Thānī***

The 4<sup>th</sup> month in the Muslim lunar calendar.

***Rajab***

The 7<sup>th</sup> month in the Muslim lunar calendar.

***Ramaḍān***

The 9<sup>th</sup> month in the Muslim lunar calendar.

***Rak'ah***

A unit of prayers. Each *Ruk'ah* contains movements and actions: standing and reciting chapter 1 of the Qur'ān (*al-Fātiḥah*), bowing, rising up, prostrating, sitting and then prostrating again. These actions form one *ruk'ah*.

***Ṣafar***

The 2<sup>nd</sup> month in the Muslim lunar calendar.

***Ṣalāh***

Prayer.

|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><i>Sanad</i></b>                        | The chain of narrators who took the <i>ḥadīth</i> or the narration from each other up until the origin of the narration, i.e. the person who said it first who, in the case of <i>ḥadīth</i> , was the Prophet Muhammad.                                                                   |
| <b><i>Sariyyah</i> [pl. <i>Sarāyā</i>]</b> | Military expedition sent by the Prophet Muhammad but in which he did not participate.                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b><i>Sha‘bān</i></b>                      | The 8 <sup>th</sup> month in the Muslim lunar calendar.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b><i>Al-Shām</i></b>                      | The Arabic concept of Historical Syria / The Levant.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b><i>Shawwāl</i></b>                      | The 10 <sup>th</sup> month in the Muslim lunar calendar.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b><i>Sīrah</i></b>                        | Literally means biography; it is usually used to refer to the biography of the Prophet Muhammad.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b><i>Tābi‘ī</i></b>                       | Literally means successor; it refers to the students of the second generation of Muslims who did not meet the Prophet Muhammad, but met his companions and took the <i>ḥadīth</i> of the Prophet from them.                                                                                |
| <b><i>Tafsīr</i></b>                       | The Exegesis of the Qur’ān.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b><i>Waqf</i></b>                         | It is usually translated as Endowment; it means taking the ownership of a property away all the humans and declaring it owned by God for the benefit of a charitable project. This means that the property cannot be sold, and all of its income goes to financing the charitable project. |
| <b><i>Zuhr</i></b>                         | Literally means noon; it refers to the second daily prayer of the Muslims and it is prayed at noon.                                                                                                                                                                                        |



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