

# The Month of Rajab:

# Mi'raj and al-Masjid al-Aqsā

The month of Rajab is one of the four months deemed sacred in the verses of the noble Qur'an [Sūrah al-Tawbah: 36]. These four sacred months are:

Rajab, Dhū al-Qa'dah, Dhū al-Hijjah, and Muharram.

Many significant events transpired in this auspicious month, the most famous of all incidents that has been reported to have occurred in this month is the journey of Mi'rāj. There is a difference of opinion as to which exact month this miraculous journey transpired; however, we do find some scholars inclined to it having occurred in the month of Rajab.

## ISRĀ' AND MI'RĀJ

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى  
الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ  
هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing. [Isra: 1]

Two terms are used when speaking of this event:

**Isrā'**: The journey from Makkah to al-Bayt al-Maqdis in Jerusalem.

**Mi'rāj**: The journey from al-Bayt al-Maqdis to the seven heavens.

So, this would be the first time the Prophet ﷺ set foot in al-Masjid al-Aqsā, as the Final Messenger of Allah, and it was here that he led all the previous Ambiyā' in Salāh. While the narrations vary regarding the exact date and month in which this occurred, we find a unique history of al-Bayt al-Maqdis — its liberation — being attached to the month of Rajab. It is as if this month was marked

by a phenomenal event that would reverberate through time.

## SAYYIDUNĀ 'UMAR AND THE LIBERATION OF AL-MASJID AL-AQSĀ

By the year 15 AH, the Muslim armies had penetrated deep into Syria and Palestine. The Roman army had suffered a devastating defeat in the Battle of Yarmūk, where an army of 40 000 Muslims defeated the Roman army of 400 000. Soon after this, the Battle of Ajnadayn transpired, as Sayyidunā 'Amr ibn al-'Ās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was making his way towards Jerusalem. He had to face off against the Roman Commander Artabūn (Aretion) who was second only to the Roman Emperor himself. The Roman army was a 100 000 strong while the contingent under the command of Sayyidunā 'Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ numbered only 9000. When apprising Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ of the situation, Sayyidunā 'Umar replied, "We are going to pit our Artabūn against their Artabūn, let's see who wins." The two armies faced off, and the promise of Allah came to pass. The Romans were soundly defeated; those who survived, Artabūn as well, fled to Jerusalem, taking refuge behind its fortified walls. It was this victory that Allah ﷻ granted the Muslims at the hands of Sayyidunā 'Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that led to the siege of Jerusalem and the ultimate liberation of al-Masjid al-Aqsā.

The city of Jerusalem was strongly fortified and virtually impregnable. The siege continued for four months, during the bitter cold and snow, but the Muslims still did not attain victory. Artabūn tried to dishearten the Muslims, writing to 'Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, "...You cannot gain any victory at Palestine, so accept the single victory you gained at Ajnadayn and return. Don't be fooled by that single victory or you will face the fate of all those who came before you." 'Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ responded, "I am going to take control of the very land under your feet!" and he instructed the messenger to observe



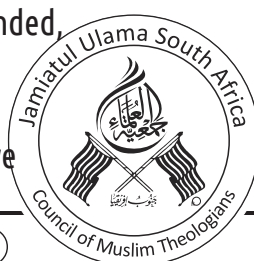
+2711 373 8000



info@jamiatsa.org



www.jamiatsa.org



the reaction of Artabūn when he reads the letter. Upon reading the letter he laughed and said, “The one who will liberate Jerusalem will be a man named 'Umar.” 'Amr رضي الله عنه wrote to 'Umar رضي الله عنه informing him of the new developments, and urged him to come to Palestine. 'Umar رضي الله عنه after consulting the Sahābah decided to set out to al-Masjid al-Aqsā.

'Umar رضي الله عنه sat out to take the keys for al-Masjid al-Aqsā, travelling alone with one donkey and one servant. Each taking turns to ride. And as they drew closer to al-Masjid al-Aqsā it was the slave’s turn to ride; his slave insisted that 'Umar take his turn, but 'Umar would not hear any of it. And so, holding the reigns of the camel, slave mounted and leader of the Muslim world on foot, Amīr al-Mu’minīn appeared before the Romans. This was the spectacle they needed to see, this was the way it was prophesied in their books. And the Romans handed over the keys and al-Masjid al-Aqsā came under the flag of Tawhīd. Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنه entered the land of al-Masjid al-Aqsā in Rajab 16 AH.

## SALĀH AL-DĪN AND THE LIBERATION OF AL-MASJID AL-AQSĀ

The second time Bayt al-Maqdis was retaken by the Muslims was in the sixth century after hijrah. The Crusaders had taken back Jerusalem in 492 AH and the dreadful spectacle of that day stands in complete contrast with the peaceful Muslim occupation 500 years earlier. The western Historian Lane-Poole describes this event:

So terrible, it is said, was the carnage which followed that the horses of the Crusaders who rode up to the mosque of Omar were knee-deep in the stream of blood. Infants were seized by their feet and dashed against the walls or whirled over the battlements, while the Jews were all burnt alive in their synagogue.

He continues:

On the next day the horrors of that which had preceded it were deliberately repeated on a larger scale. Tancred had given a guarantee of safety to 300 captives. In spite of

his indignant protest these were all brought out and killed; and a massacre followed in which the bodies of men, women and children were hacked and hewn until their fragments lay tossed together in heaps. The work of slaughter ended, the streets of the city were washed by Saracen prisoners. [Saviours of Islamic spirit, 1/230]

Seventy thousand Muslims were estimated to have been killed by the Crusaders. For close onto 90 years the Syrian countryside and Jerusalem were occupied by the Crusaders. Blood thirsty zealots, the likes of Reginald de Chattilon, who expressed the desire to cross over to Arabia with the fell design of sacking Makkah and Madīnah and taking the corpse of the blessed Prophet out of his grave! Upon hearing this, Salāh al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī took an oath that he would personally kill Reginald. Allah would assist Salāh al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī in fulfilling this oath and on 24 Rabi' al-Ākhir 583 AH he defeated the crusaders at Hittīn and executed Reginald de Chattilon.

On Friday, 27th Rajab 583 AH, he entered al-Masjid al-Aqsā. The Crosses were removed and the flag of Tawhīd once again raised high.

## LESSONS TO BE LEARNT

Let this month of Rajab and the miraculous incident of Isrā’ be a lesson for us: True victory can only be attained in following the practices of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Only when the men and women of this Ummah inculcate within themselves the qualities of these great heroes of Islam will the banners of victory be raised high. Allah

سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Say, [O Muhammad], “If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” [Āl 'Imrān: 31]

And for the beloveds of Allah nothing is impossible. May Allah instil love for the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Sunnah in our hearts. Āmīn



+2711 373 8000



info@jamiatsa.org



www.jamiatsa.org

