

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Advisory for Khateeb: 71 years of Nakba in Palestine

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا

*And what is [the matter] with you that you fight not in the cause of Allah and [for] the oppressed among men, women, and children who say, "Our Lord, take us out of this city of oppressive people and appoint for us from Yourself a protector and appoint for us from Yourself a helper?" (Surah Nisa: 75)*

The past week marked the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the *Nakba*, a commemoration of the catastrophe in which Zionist forces banished 750 000-900 000 Palestinians, destroyed 531 villages, and appropriated the holdings of those who were expelled.

The *Nakba* was a deliberate and systematic crime of ethnic cleansing, committed by Zionist militias and later the state of Israel, against the indigenous Palestinian people around 1948 to make room for a racially supremacist settler-colony. **But it is not just a crime of the past, it is ongoing until today.**

Palestinians refer to this as *Al-Nakba al-Mustamera*, or the on-going *Nakba*, which signifies that discrete chapters in the history of Palestine, such as the catastrophe of 1948, are not just events in the past, but rather are a part of a contemporary historical chapter.

### How is Palestine still undergoing a *Nakba*?

We have to look no further than Israel's recent bombing of Gaza at the onset of Ramadan which resulted in more than 25 martyrs and nearly 200 injured. Furthermore, the Palestinian Health Ministry in Gaza has just reported that the Israeli army has killed 305 Palestinians, and injured 17335 others, just since March 30, 2018 when Palestinians began the peaceful Great March of Return. And for three successive nights this week, Israeli police used force to evict Muslims from inside Masjid al-Aqsa after they sought to spend the night therein in *Ibadah*.

## **71 Years after the Nakba, the catastrophe continues...**

**Ethnic Cleansing.** In 1948, 800 000 Palestinians became refugees. Tens of thousands more lost their homes. Palestinians lost 531 villages and many cities, like Jaffa and Lydda. Today, Palestinian villages like Al-Araqib and Um Al-Hiran in the Naqab (Negev Desert) are still being destroyed. Villages like Susiya and Al-Walaja in the West Bank are threatened, as well.

**Dispossession.** Today, there are over 7 million refugees who have the right to return to their homes, as guaranteed by UN Resolution 194 in 1948. Yet, Israel has prohibited from doing so. These refugees have endured poverty, discrimination, massacres, and wars.

**Militarization.** Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza have lived under military occupation for more than 50 years. There is no accountability and Palestinians have to face military courts under occupation.

**Mass Incarceration.** According to the human rights organization Addameer, one in five Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza has been jailed since Israeli occupation began. Around a million Palestinians have been cumulatively imprisoned since 1967. Israel also regularly arrests and tortures children.

**Walls of Separation.** Israel's apartheid wall in the West Bank contributes to the de facto annexation of Israel's illegal settlements. It isolates farmers from their land and water. Along with checkpoints, the wall creates severe impediments to Palestinian movement.

**Racism.** According to the human rights organization Adalah, more than 65 Israeli laws discriminate against Palestinians, who are 20% of the population of Israeli citizens. Almost half of Israeli Jews favour the expulsion of Israel's Palestinian citizens, according to a 2016 Pew poll.

**Siege.** Palestinians in Gaza have survived 12 years of siege and three ferocious Israeli military attacks. During the last of these wars in 2014, 2 251 Palestinians were killed, most of them civilians, and including over 500 children. That year alone, Israeli bombings damaged 73 medical facilities and destroyed 18 000 homes. Israel's blockade has made it nearly impossible to rebuild. Israel has imposed a tight **blockade** on the Gaza Strip, severely limiting the entry and exit of people and goods. The economy has all but collapsed. Gaza gets only a few hours of electricity a day. Raw sewage flows through the streets, and 97 percent of Gaza's water is not drinkable. The UN has stated that Gaza will be **"unlivable by 2020 if not sooner."** The Israeli historian Ilan Pappé has called Israel's policy toward Gaza **"incremental genocide."**

**Attacks on Masaajid:** In the 2008/9 aggression on Gaza, 34 Masaajid were completely destroyed and 150+ damaged. In 2014, a further 73 Masaajid were destroyed and 205 damaged. Masaajid in the West Bank also regularly face price-tag attacks from Zionist settlers.

**Masjid al-Aqsa and al-Quds:** *Al-Aqsa fi Khatar* (Al-Aqsa is in Danger) is not simply a slogan, but the **daily reality** facing the Masjid. Al-Aqsa faces plans to divide it spatially between Muslims and Jews. There are also suggestions to apportion specific prayer times for Muslims and Jews within the compound. Masjid al-Aqsa has been under Israeli Occupation now for 52 years. Israeli police have the final say on who is allowed to enter the Masjid or not. In recent years the Masjid has often been besieged, raided and even shut down. Large numbers of Israeli police-protected messianic Jewish extremists from the Temple movement make provocative visits to the Masjid monthly with a goal to eventually destroying Masjid al-Aqsa. The Israeli government has also been digging underneath the Masjid foundation for many years and there are over 60 underground tunnels in the Masjid vicinity.

Israel is also pursuing an aggressive policy of Judaization in the wider city of Jerusalem which includes revocation of Palestinian residency permits, confiscation and demolition of homes and heavy taxation.

(Some data in this section adapted from <https://grassrootsonline.org/in-the-news/what-is-the-ongoing-nakba/> )

## **A call for urgent action**

On the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Nakba, Palestinians have sent **a message of distress**, and an appeal for true solidarity, at this most difficult period in their struggle for liberation. Israel is ruthlessly intensifying its efforts aimed at “disappearing” the Palestinian people, politically, geographically and even physically. And it is enabled by blind support from the anti-Palestinian Trump administration and the deep complicity of other world powers.

Acting to end Israel’s impunity and to stop its rolling crimes against humanity has become **an urgent moral obligation** of the first order.

Every new minute under Occupation and Nakba is one minute too long. The month of Ramadan should be a time when we inject **a new sense of urgency** into our solidarity with Palestine.

*“It is the month of sympathy/solidarity with one’s fellow man”.*

(Hadith narrated by Sayyidina Salmaan (RA) and mentioned by Ibn Khuzaymah in his Saheeh)

*Sayyidina Al-Nu’man ibn Bashir (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever.” (Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim)*

*Sayyidina Abu Huraira (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Whoever relieves the hardship of a believer in this world, Allah will relieve his hardship on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever helps ease one in difficulty, Allah will make it easy for him in this world and in the Hereafter. Whoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his*

*faults in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah helps the servant as long as he helps his brother..” (Sahih Muslim)*

*Sayyidina Abu Sa’eed al-Khudree (RA) reported: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, “Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart — and that is the weakest of faith.” (Sahih Muslim)*

## **Practical Solidarity**

### **1. Repent and draw closer to Allah (SWT)**

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا أَلَانَهُمْ  
يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

*Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness]. (Qur’aan 30:41)*

Let us use Ramadan as an opportunity to boycott our sins, divest from our desires and sanction our Nafs, thereby seeking the Pleasure of Allah (SWT) and mercy upon the Ummah.

### **2. Charity**

*“Indeed charity extinguishes the Lord's anger and it protects against the evil death.” (Tirmidhi)*

The month of Ramadan is a month particularly associated with charity. We have also been notified in other Ahadeeth of our special charitable responsibilities to Masjid al-Aqsa.

### **3. Dua**

*“Three supplications will not be rejected, the supplication of the parent for his child, the supplication of the one who is fasting, and the supplication of the traveller.” (Tirmidhi)*

Make use of this 'weapon of a believer' in a month of guaranteed acceptance to seek assistance for the Palestinians and victory and freedom for the oppressed.

#### 4. Visiting

Of the responsibilities of Muslims towards Masjid al-Aqsa, one of the most critical is visiting this blessed Masjid. This duty is emphasised in the Ahadeeth:

*Sayyidah Maymunah bint Sa'd رضي الله عنها relates that she asked the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "O Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Inform us about Bayt al-Maqdis"? He said, "Visit it for prayer". She further asked, "If one of us cannot visit it, what should we do"? He said, "If you cannot go for prayer then send some oil to be used in its lamps; whosoever gives oil for its lamps, will be as if he has prayed in it". (Musnad Imam Ahmed)*

Visiting is a responsibility that exists for Muslims irrespective of whether adverse political conditions or oppression reign at al-Aqsa or not. The primary reason for such visits is to please Allah تعالى و سبحانه and accrue the spiritual rewards promised for performing Salaah here.

*Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه relates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "You should not undertake a special journey to visit any place other than the three Masjid with the expectations of getting greater reward: the Sacred Masjid of Makkah, this Masjid of mine, and Masjid al-Aqsa". (Sahih al-Bukhari)*

*Sayyidna Abu Darda رضي الله عنه relates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A prayer in Makkah is worth 100000 times, a prayer in my Masjid (Madinah) is worth 1000 times, and a prayer in al-Aqsa is worth 500 times more than anywhere else". (Tabarani)*

Visiting al-Aqsa is also encouraged for the purpose of using it as a station from which to embark upon Hajj or Umrah:

*Umm Salamah, Umm al-Mu'minin رضي الله عنها relates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If anyone puts on ihram for Hajj or 'Umrah from the Masjid al-Aqsa and then proceeds to the sacred Masjid, his former and latter sins will be forgiven, or he will be guaranteed Paradise". The narrator 'Abdullah doubted which of these words he said. (Sunan Abu Dawud)*

A Hadith mentions certain special duas Sayyidina Sulaymaan عليه السلام made whilst **reconstructing** Masjid al-Aqsa, whose blessings even contemporary visitors can share in:

*Sayyidina Abdullah ibn Amr رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "Sulaymaan, son of Dawood) prayed for three things from Allah, the Mighty and Glorious, when constructing Bayt al-Maqdis: (i) the ability to decide cases in accordance to the Will of Allah, which was granted to him; (ii) a kingdom the like of which would be given to no one after him, which was also granted; and (iii), after finishing the construction of the*

*masjid he prayed, 'May anyone who comes to this masjid solely for the purpose of praying in it be delivered from all his sins as on the day his mother gave birth to him'" (Nasa'i)*

Masjid al-Aqsa is also the focal point of the Palestinian struggle against dispossession, occupation and apartheid, and Palestinians – especially Jerusalemites – are the first line of defence for the Masjid. It is a common sentiment of Palestinians that the best means for fellow Muslims to assist them is to visit Masjid al-Aqsa and wider Palestine.

Such visits expose the traveller to the realities of Occupation and provide the impetus to become an ambassador for the cause upon returning to one's home country. Critically it is a means of conveying to Palestinians that they are not alone in the struggle to maintain the Holy City's authentic identity. These visits lift their spirits and spur them on to continue resisting and yearning for justice.

Palestinians, especially Jerusalemites, also find themselves under great financial strain due to the policies of Occupation. Visiting is a golden opportunity to support the local Palestinian economy as well as to contribute to Masjid al-Aqsa and its people.

## **5. Education**

Education is the key to change. Educate oneself on the Islamic significance of Palestine, important events that occurred here and how this land features in the Qur'aan and Hadeeth. Also acquaint oneself with the recent political history of this land and the injustices meted out to its people. Empower oneself to counter the propaganda-driven Zionist narrative. Keep abreast with current news developments from Masjid al-Aqsa and Palestine. Read, learn and educate others.

## **6. Mobilise**

Participate, within the parameters of Shariah, in any of the wide range of solidarity activities for Palestine from BDS to awareness, grassroots education, media advocacy, fundraising and lobbying.

*We ask Allah سبحانه و تعالى bring peace and justice to the Holy Land. May He free its people from their long night of bondage. May he have mercy on its martyrs, give solace to its mothers, strength to its children and cure to its injured. May He return Masjid al-Aqsa fully to Islam. May we all be granted the opportunity to pray therein. May our love and yearning for Masjid al-Aqsa be increased. May be we guardians for Masjid al-Aqsa and patrons for the oppressed. And may we see freedom in our lifetime. Aameen*

***This khutbah is prepared by the Palestine Information Network (PIN) in the interests of enhancing education on Masjid al-Aqsa and Palestine.*** 

For updated news on Masjid al-Aqsa as well as a repository of informative resources on Masjid al-Aqsa, visit [www.masjidalqasa.net](http://www.masjidalqasa.net) or @firstqiblah on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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