Importance And History Of Al-Aqsa Mosque

Al-Aqsa Mosque, also known as the Farthest Mosque, is located in the old city of Jerusalem. It is considered the third holiest mosque in the world after the Al-Haram and the Al-Nabawi mosque. The **history of Al-Aqsa** makes it an important Muslim site. It is built over the Temple Mount, known as the Al –Aqsa compound or Haram esh-Sharif. This happened several years after the Prophet’s death. It is believed that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) traveled from the Great Mosque to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the Night Journey on a ‘strange’ winged creature called Buraq in one night, after which he ascended to heaven where he met the rest of the Prophets and eventually God. History suggests that before The Prophet (PBUH) and the Muslims were ordered to pray towards the Kaaba, they directed their prayers towards this mosque. This is the reason why this mosque holds a special place in the hearts of Muslims.

## **Al-Aqsa Mosque History**

The Mosque built on Temple Mount is known as Haram al-Sharif, this was expanded by King Herod the Great. Before this, in Islamic beliefs, the masjid is known to be dated to the time of Prophet Ibraham (PBUH). The Aqsa mosque was an important mosque during the lifetime of Prophet Ibrahim, his son Prophet Ishaq and grandson Prophet Yaqub(PBUH). When Prophet Yaqub’s son, Prophet Yusuf (PBUH) came into power, he suggested leaving Egypt where they were engulfed by poverty. Ever since there was no one to guard the Al-Aqsa mosque as their own and hence it expanded, renovated, and reconstructed many times. He trusted the people of Palestine, who were his believers to take care of the mosque.

The Israelites migrated to Egypt to look for better prospects of better material life. But these people fell into becoming slaves for the Egyptians until Prophet Musa (PBUH) or Moses was ordered by Allah to save them. However, they refused to return to Palestine on the orders of God and therefore were banished to wander around the desert for 40 years. This was the history of the Jews. Prophet Daoud (PBUH) started his kingdom in Palestine, and his son re-established the masjid with the help of the local people aside from which he also built a palace.

## **Importance and Story of Al-Aqsa Mosque**

The masjid Al Aqsa Jerusalem played a very important role in the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The main reason for significance of Al Aqsa Mosque was that the masjid was home to many Prophets before Muhammad (PBUH) went there. It was the center of preaching monotheism. Later by order of Allah, the believers turned from facing the masjid to the holy Kaaba. A significant part of the history of Al Aqsa, which actually makes it an important mosque in Islam is the night of the journey or the night of Isra. During this journey, the Prophet fell asleep on the Kaaba, late at night. That is when the angel Jibreel provided him with a winged creature known as Burqa, who carried the Prophet(PBUH) to this mosque. Later that night, the Prophet (PBUH) departed his journey to Heaven.

After the Prophet (PBUH) died, the second kalif of Islam, Umar Al Khattab entered Jerusalem without shedding any blood, when a Christian leader invited him. Umar’s personality resembled that of their liberator and thus, it wasn’t that difficult to accept him as their leader. Both Christians and Jews were happy to have him and the Muslims with their justice.

## **Al-Aqsa Mosque Architecture**

The history of Al-Aqsa mentions some important architectural changes. The mosque is constructed upon an artificial platform supported by arches that were built to overcome difficult typographic conditions. The first renovation started in 1922. The renovations caused the establishment of the mosque’s ancient Umayyad foundations that changed the interior columns by the replacement of beams. These conserved the arches and drums in the interior of the main dome. The southern wall was also rebuilt and replaced timber with a slab of concrete.

However, earthquakes destroyed some of the renovations. And thus, finally, the architecture came down to:

* A rectangular mosque, that goes over for 36 acres and can accommodate 5000 worshipers.
* There is a Dome of Rock, which exhibits Byzantine architecture. Although nothing remains originally, the present-day dome is woodwork plated with enamelwork.
* Under the dome is a chapel or a Muslim prayer hall which is situated in the southern part of the masjid.
* The mosque also consists of a facade filled with balustrades consisting of arcades and small columns.
* The interior of the mosque features seven aisles with many halls. The mosaic and the inscriptions are facing the main entrance near the dome.

## **Al-Aqsa Mosque facts**

1. Masjid Al Aqsa is not just one mosque but a collection of mosques.
2. The main mosque in the Al Aqsa complex is Qibla Mosque, present in the southern corner of the premises.
3. Buraq Masjid and Marwani Mosque are also present in the Haram Al-Sharif or Al Aqsa Mosque.
4. There are many graves of noble Muslims present in the complex, such as the grave of Prophet Suleiman.
5. The name of the Masjid is mentioned in the holy book of the Quran along with the Holy Kaaba.
6. Ihyaa Ulum Al-Din by Abu Hamid Al Ghazali, a famous Islamic literature book, was written inside Al Aqsa.
7. The dome of the rock is among the initial domes built in Islam.
8. Al Aqsa for long was used as dumping grounds by Romans until Hazrat Umar cleared the trash and litter from the premises.

An important part of the Islamic history, this mosque is a symbol of Allah’s greatness. It stands for a lot of things, and is an important Islamic religious site for Muslims around the world. A visit here is all one needs to witness the grandeur and the beauty of the Al Aqsa mosque.

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| **Al-Aqsa Mosque** | |
| ٱلْمَسْجِد ٱلْأَقْصَىٰ, *Al-Masjid al-'Aqṣā* | |
|  | |
| **Religion** | |
| [**Affiliation**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_religions_and_spiritual_traditions) | [Islam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam) |
| **Leadership** | [Imam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imam) [Muhammad Ahmad Hussein](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad_Ahmad_Hussein) |
| **Location** | |
| **Location** | [Old City of Jerusalem](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_City_(Jerusalem)) |
| [Al-Aqsa Mosque is located in Jerusalem](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Location_map_Jerusalem.png)  Al-Aqsa Mosque  Location within the Old City of Jerusalem | |
| **Administration** | [Jerusalem Islamic Waqf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerusalem_Islamic_Waqf) |
| [**Geographic coordinates**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic_coordinate_system) | [31.77617°N 35.23583°E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Al-Aqsa_Mosque&params=31.77617_N_35.23583_E_region:IL-JM_type:landmark)[Coordinates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic_coordinate_system): [31.77617°N 35.23583°E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Al-Aqsa_Mosque&params=31.77617_N_35.23583_E_region:IL-JM_type:landmark) |
| **Architecture** | |
| **Type** | Mosque |
| [**Style**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Architectural_style) | [Early Islamic, Mamluk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_architecture) |
| **Date established** | 705 |
| **Specifications** | |
| **Direction of façade** | north-northwest |
| **Capacity** | 5,000+ |
| [**Dome**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dome)**(s)** | two large + tens of smaller ones |
| [**Minaret**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minaret)**(s)** | four |
| **Minaret height** | 37 meters (121 ft) (tallest) |
| [**Materials**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Building_material) | Limestone (external walls, minaret, facade) stalactite (minaret), gold, lead and stone (domes), white marble (int |