

Arab Republic of Egypt

Ministry of Awqaf

Rajab ٢٢, ١٤٤٠ A.H./March ٢٩, ٢٠١٩ C.E.

In the Memory of Al-Israa wa Al-Mi'raj

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, Who says in His Glorious Book, "Glory be to Him who took His votary by night from the sacred place of worship [at Makkah] to Al-Aqsa Mosque [at Jerusalem], the surroundings of which We have blessed, so that We might show him some of Our signs. Indeed, He alone is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing." I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that our Master Muhammad is His votary and Messenger; may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him, his Household, Companions and upon those who follow him till the Day of Judgment.

It goes without saying that Al-Israa and Al-Miraj (**Prophet's miraculous night journey and ascension to Heavens**) is a journey that is full of great secrets. It is a journey that stands unique throughout the history of humanity. It was made to happen to honor the seal of the Prophets and Messengers, and to comfort him (PBUH) after years through which he, along with his Companions, experienced different forms of persecution and harm, and after he had lost, within a couple of days since the start of the tenth year of his mission, his uncle Abu Talib, who was a great supporter for him, and his wise and warmhearted wife Khadijah (may Allah be pleased with her) who represented a safe refuge for him in times of hardship.

The anguish of the Prophet (PBUH) increased after the sorrowful journey he made to the city of Al-Taif, which was one of the hardest situations in his life. After the persecution that He (PBUH) went through at the hands of his own people, the Prophet travelled to Al-Taif hoping that he would find support from its

people. However, they were more harsh and cruel to him than his own people. They ordered their children to throw stones at him till his honorable feet bled. On his way back, the Prophet (PBUH) invoked his Lord with this pitiful supplication that shows humbleness and complete surrender to Allah, saying:

"O Allah to you do I complain of my weakness, of my helplessness, and of my lowliness before people. O Most Merciful, You are the Lord of the weak, and You are my Lord. Into whose hands will You entrust me? Unto some far off stranger who will ill-treat me? Or unto an enemy whom You have empowered against me? I care not, if You are not angry with me. But Your favoring help for me is the broader way! I take refuge in the Light of Your Countenance whereby all darkness is illuminated and the things of this world and the next are rightly ordered lest You make descend Your anger upon me, or lest Your wrath besets me. Yet, is it You to reproach until You are well pleased? There is no power and no might except through You."

After all these sufferings, there came this Divine gift of the Miraculous Journey of Al-Israa and Al-Mi'raj, in which Allah the Almighty showed His Prophet (PBUH) transcendental facts and Universal secrets, that no other Prophet or an angel had seen before. This was to honor the Prophet and to support him, and to increase his steadfastness and his belief that Allah stands with him.

Below are some lines of poetry that Imam Al Buseiry composed to commemorate the event.

*(O Prophet!) You traveled over night from one sacred place to another
as the full moon travels (at night) through intense darkness*

*And (O Prophet!) you continued ascending (over night) until you
reached (your) destination,*

so close (To Allah) which had never been attained nor sought

*And (O Prophet!) you were preferred (to lead the other prophets in prayer),
by all prophets and messengers just as a preference is given by (a) subordinate to (his) master*

The event of *Al-Israa and Al-Mi'raj* is one of the greatest miracles that Allah gave to His Prophet (PBUH). In the memory of this great incident, we might get some lessons and insights, as follows:

Making use of the available means is not contrary to relying on Allah. Allah the Almighty provided the Prophet on that night with the creature known as "*Al-Buraq*" to be his means of transportation in this journey although Allah was able to take the Prophet in the journey without any medium. On the other hand, although the Prophet was completely relying on Allah, when he reached Jerusalem, he tethered *Al-Buraq*, to teach his nation the necessity of making use of the available means. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "So I tethered it." Imam Al-Nawawy said, "Tethering the *Buraq* indicates the necessity of being cautious and making use of the available means, and shows that such conduct is not contrary to relying on Allah."

A true believer acts on the basis that nothing will avail him except his work, and meanwhile, he trusts Allah on the basis that nothing will happen to him against the will of Allah. This balanced understanding is the one meant by the saying of the Prophet (PBUH), where he advises: "If the Final Hour comes while you have a palm-cutting in your hands and it is possible to implant it, then implant it;" And his saying, "If you all depend on Allah with due reliance, He would certainly give you provision as He gives it to birds which set off hungry in the morning and return with full stomachs at dusk."

The brotherhood among all Prophets and Messengers: all Prophets and Messengers are conveyors of one message in terms of fundamentals and basics, although their laws may differ. Allah says, "We never sent a Messenger before you 'O Muhammad' without revealing to him: 'There is no god 'worthy of worship' except Me, so worship Me 'alone.''" The Prophet also said, "Prophets are paternal brothers; their mothers are different, but their religion is one."

Allah says, "Say, 'O Prophet,' "Come! Let me recite to you what your Lord has forbidden to you: do not associate others with Him 'in worship'. 'Do not fail to' honor your parents. Do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We provide for you and for them. Do not come near indecencies, openly or secretly. Do not take a 'human' life – made sacred by Allah – except with 'legal' right. This is what He has commanded you, so perhaps you will understand. And do not come near the wealth of the orphan – unless intending to enhance it – until they attain maturity. Give full measure and weigh with justice. We never require of any soul more than what it can afford. Whenever you speak, maintain justice – even regarding a close relative. And fulfil your covenant with Allah. This is what He has commanded you, so perhaps you will be mindful. Indeed, that is My Path – perfectly straight. So follow it and do not follow other ways, for they will lead you away from His Way. This is what He has commanded you, so perhaps you will be conscious 'of Allah'." Ibn Abbas commented on the ten commandments mentioned in these verses, stating "These are fundamental verses which have not been abrogated in any religion. The forbidden things mentioned in the verses are forbidden to all people. These verses are the basis of the Scripture; he who acts upon these commandments will enter Paradise; and he who pays no heed to them will be sent to Hellfire."

One of the greatest signs with which Allah the Almighty honored His Prophet (PBUH) was that He, Most High, gathered all the

Prophets and Messengers for his sake at Al-Aqsa Mosque where he led them in prayer. Moreover, when they met him in the Heavens they greeted him saying, "Welcome, righteous Brother and Prophet." This particular event marked the transition of the spiritual leadership to him (PBUH), and is viewed as a practical application of the covenant that Allah took from the Prophets, as he, Most High, says: "And [recall, O People of the Scripture], when Allah took the covenant of the prophets, [saying], "Whatever I give you of the Scripture and wisdom and then there comes to you a messenger confirming what is with you, you [must] believe in him and support him." [Allah] said, "Have you acknowledged and taken upon that My Commitment?" They said, "We have acknowledged it." He said, "Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses." In this connection, 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib and 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with them both) said: "Never did Allah send a Prophet unless He had taken a covenant from him that he would believe in and support Muhammed (PBUH) if Allah sent him while he was alive."

The status of Al-Aqsa Mosque along with the Sacred Mosque:

Al-Aqsa Mosque was the final stop in the Prophet's Night Journey, and it was the point from which his (Ascension) to the heavens and then to the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary started. Al-Aqsa Mosque is also the Muslims' first *qibla* (direction of prayer), the third next to the Two Holy Mosques, and one of the three Mosques to which journeys are undertaken for the sake of

performing prayer and attaining their reward. In addition, it is the Second Mosque to be built on earth. Abu Dharr (Allah be pleased with him) said: "O Allah's Messenger (PBUH)! Which mosque was first built on the surface of the earth?" He said, "Al- Masjid-ul-Haram (in Mecca)." I said, "Which was built next?" He replied "The mosque of Al-Aqsa (in Jerusalem)." I said, "What was the period of construction between the two?" He said, "Forty years." He added, "Wherever (you may be, and) the prayer time becomes due, perform the prayer there, for the best thing is to do so (i.e. to offer the prayers in time). Furthermore, observance of prayer in Al-Aqsa Mosque is as worth in reward as five hundred prayers in any other mosque, with the exception of the Sacred Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque. In this regard, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Observance of one prayer in the Sacred Mosque (in Mecca) is one hundred thousand times better than observance of it in any other mosque; observance of prayer in my Mosque (in Medina) is one thousand times better than its observance in any other mosque; and observance of prayer in Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem is five hundred times better than its observance in any other mosque." So, Al-Aqsa Mosque is an indispensable part of the Islamic Holy Places. It has a place status in the hearts of all Muslims who all are entrusted to protect it, so we must not neglect it and must shoulder our due responsibility towards it. We should implant this concept in the minds our sons, so that the forthcoming generations would not forget the holy of Al-Aqsa Mosque.

This is my speech to you, and I seek Allah's Forgiveness for me and you

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds; I bear witness that there is no god deserving to be worshipped but Allah, the Almighty, and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger; may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him, his family and his companions

Muslim brothers,

Every year at the beginning of April, the entire world celebrates the Orphans Day, yet the teachings of our purified religion have actually preceded all the humanitarian organization as to caring for orphans and granting them their due rights. Allah, Most High, says: "And they ask you about orphans. Say, "Improvement for them is best. And if you mix your affairs with theirs - they are your brothers. And Allah knows the corrupter from the amender. And if Allah had willed, He could have put you in difficulty. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise." Whoever ponders over this holy verse will surely realize that the Quran has used the word *Islah* (i.e. reform) to cover all the different aspects of care, since the this word i.e. *Al-Islah* covers all that the orphan is in need for. For example, if he needs subsistence, *Al-Islah* in this case will be the act of providing him with the subsistence he needs; in case he is rich, *Al-Islah* might take the form of good education and uprising; in case he needs partner to trade in his money or to manage his agricultural or industrial activities, *Al-Islah* in this case

will certainly be the fulfillment of these matters; and in case he does not need any of this, he might be in need for affection and kindness and paternal emotion, which is also included in the term *Al-Islah*. Furthermore, *Al-Islah* might take the form of cultivating his manners, behavior and ethics. To this point, all the Qur'anic and Prophetic texts urged and called upon us to improve the conditions of the orphans and to run their affairs.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Whoever deals kindly with a male or female orphan under his custody will be with me in the Paradise like this, and he joined his middle finger and forefinger." He (PBUH) also said: "The best of Muslims' houses is the house where an orphan is well treated. The worst of Muslims' houses is a house an orphan is ill-treated."

O Allah, make us from those who listen to speech and follow the best of it. Those are the ones Allah has guided, and those are the people of understanding.