



**THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**THE CONNECTION AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF CALIPH
ABŪ BAKR TO THE FIRST MUSLIM LIBERATION
OF ISLAMIC JERUSALEM**

Master's Thesis

Ahmad Dawamul MUTHI

Master of Arts in Quds Studies

February 2022



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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work. I declare that this thesis is written according to the writing rules of the Social Sciences University of Ankara, Institute of Social Sciences.

Ahmad Dawamul Muthi

Signature

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ÖZET

Halife Hz. Ebu Bekir'in Beytülmakdis'in İlk Müslüman Fethi

ile Bağlantısı ve Katkıları

Ahmad Dawamul Muthi

Kudüs Çalışmaları, Yüksek Lisans Programı

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Halid Üveysi

Yedinci yüzyılda Beytülmakdis'in ilk Müslüman fethi tarihte dikkate değer bir zaferdir. Bu tarihi olay, iki süper güç olan Bizanslılar ve Persler arasında İslam'ın saygınlık ve itibarını artırmıştır. Olay, Ömer ibn'ül Hattab döneminde meydana geldiği için, fetih genelde onunla ilişkilendirilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, önceki araştırmalar tipik olarak yalnızca ikinci Halife'nin fethin lideri olarak rolünü araştırmış ve literatür, bu önemli olayla ilgili çabalarını ve başarısını yansıtmaya adanmıştır. Öte yandan, Ömer ibn'ül Hattab'dan önce gelen, ilk halife Ebu Bekir hakkında sınırlı sayıda yayınlanmış çalışma bulunmaktadır. Ebu Bekir'in Beytülmakdis'in fethindeki rolü geniş çapta tartışılmamış ve bu sebeple bu çalışmanın ana amacı haline gelen bu konuda özel bir araştırma ihtiyacı ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu araştırma, Hz. Peygamber'in vefatından sonra Ebu Bekir'in sadece Medine'de İslam Devleti'nin temellerini güçlendirmek için değil, aynı zamanda Beytülmakdis'in fethi için de birçok katkıda bulunduğu argümanını öngörmektedir. İslam'ın üç ana kentinden biri olan Beytülmakdis'in önemi ve kutsallığı hayati öneme sahiptir ve bu nedenle Hz. Peygamber ve sahabeleri için bu toprakları fethetme çabaları öncelikli olmuştur. Birincil kaynaklara ve tarihsel kayıtlara dayalı araştırma ve analizler, sahabeler arasında, Peygamber'in Beytülmakdis'i fetih planını Ebu Bekir'den daha iyi kimsenin bilemeyeceğini ispatladığını göstermektedir. Ebu Bekir'in Mekke ve Medine dönemlerinde Beytülmakdis ile manevi, dini ve siyasi açıdan bağlantısının bu başarıda önemli bir rolü vardır. Mukaddes Topraklarla olan sağlam bağı, halife olarak liderliği sırasında, Beytülmakdis'in fethinin yolunu açmak için önemli katkılarına dönüşmüştür. Nihayetinde, Ebu Bekir'in Beytülmakdis ile bağlantısı ve fethine katkılarıyla, Mukaddes Toprakların ilk Müslüman fethi, onun ölümünden kısa bir süre sonra gerçekleştirilebilmiştir. Son olarak, Hz. Muhammed, Ebu Bekir ve Ömer ibn'ül Hattab'ın gösterdiği gibi, Beytülmakdis'e yönelik vizyonun Müslüman ümmetin nesilleri üzerinde bir bayrak yarışı olduğu gösterilmiştir. Bundan sonra yapılacak araştırmalar Ebu Bekir'in bağlantısını ve katkılarını çağdaş bir bağlamda her yönüyle analiz etmek için bu çalışmadan yararlanabilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Beytülmakdis, Mukaddes Topraklar, Ebu Bekir, Katkılar, Müslüman Fethi.*

ABSTRACT

The Connection and Contributions of Caliph Abū Bakr to The First Muslim Liberation of Islamicjerusalem

Ahmad Dawamul Muthi

MA, Quds Studies

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Halid Üveysi

The first Muslim liberation of Islamicjerusalem in the seventh century is a remarkable triumph in history. This historical event raised the credibility of Islam between two superpowers, the Byzantines and the Persians. Because the event occurred in the era of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, most people attribute this liberation to him. Consequently, previous research typically investigated only the role of the second Caliph as the leader of the liberation, and numerous literatures are dedicated to reflecting on his efforts and achievements regarding this significant event. On the other hand, there is limited published literature on the Muslims’ leader before ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, which is Abū Bakr as the first Caliph. Abū Bakr’s role in the liberation of Islamicjerusalem was not widely discussed and therefore required specific research on this matter, which became the main aim of this study. This research proposed the argument that after the death of the Prophet, Abū Bakr has contributed many things not just to strengthen the foundation of the Islamic State in Madinah but also for the liberation of Islamicjerusalem. As one of the three main cities in Islam, Islamicjerusalem’s significance and sacredness are vital, and hence, the efforts to liberate this land became the priority for Prophet Muhammad and his companions. The investigation and analysis show the previous argument that among the Prophet’s companions, no one knows better than Abū Bakr about the Prophet’s plan to liberate Islamicjerusalem has been proven, based on primary resources and historical records. Abū Bakr’s connection in spiritual, religious, and political aspects with Islamicjerusalem in the Makkan and Madinah periods is crucial to his achievement. His solid connection with the Holy Land developed further into significant contributions during his reign as the Caliph to pave the way for the liberation of Islamicjerusalem. Ultimately, with Abū Bakr’s connection and contributions to the liberation of Islamicjerusalem, the first Muslim liberation of the Holy Land could be achieved in a short period after his death. Finally, it illustrates that the vision towards Islamicjerusalem is a legacy relayed over the generations of the Muslim ummah, as demonstrated by Prophet Muhammad, Abū Bakr, and ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Further research could benefit this study by analyzing every aspect of Abū Bakr’s connection and contributions in a contemporary context.

Keywords: *Islamicjerusalem, Holy Land, Abū Bakr, Contributions, Muslim Liberation.*

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
ā long	ā
ū long	ū
ī long	ī
ʾ short	A
ʾ short	I
ʾ short	U

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Muslims worldwide still feel grief and disappointment because of the restriction to perform Hajj (pilgrimage) and Umrah (lesser pilgrimage) due to the global pandemic since 2020. Muslims' deep connection with the holy city, Makkah, was rooted in spiritual and religious involvement throughout their lives. Therefore, the main reason for the grief is the unavailability of Muslims to visit the Ka'bah in Makkah as their Qiblah (direction of prayer). In historical context, the same letdown also occurred in the heart of Muslims in the seventh century when they could not visit their Qiblah at that time, al-Aqsa Mosque in IslamicJerusalem (Bayt al-Maqdis), because it was under Byzantine and Persian occupation. Nowadays, al-Aqsa Mosque is in the same condition during the Prophet Muhammad's life; it has been under the Zionists' military control since 1967. This occupation has a serious impact; Muslims are restricted from entering the mosque to worship.

Although IslamicJerusalem is one of the three most crucial areas in Islam, the sadness of Muslims is different if they cannot enter the al-Haram Mosque in Makkah. There is an unbalanced relationship among holy places, which ideally have the same level of holiness. In other words, Muslims today who yearn for Makkah should have the same longing feeling for IslamicJerusalem as well. Because, for Muslims, the spiritual, religious, and historical ties that bind these two holy cities are inextricably linked. A link between Muslims and IslamicJerusalem initiated at the beginning of the Makkan period. The spiritual connection to IslamicJerusalem in the early Muslim period started in the early days of Muhammad's prophethood in Makkah. The first Muslims' connection with IslamicJerusalem started as their first Qiblah, and some of the Qur'anic verses revealed in Makkah are directly or indirectly connected with this land.

However, El-Awaisi (2019) states that the turning point that radically shaped the Muslims' perspective towards IslamicJerusalem happened in the tenth year of

prophethood, during *al-Isrā' wa al-Mi'rāj* (the Night Journey and Ascension). This perspective includes the legacy and mission of Prophet Muhammad to liberate Islamic Jerusalem, which he passed to his companions after his death. Since the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem was a significant and long-awaited goal, the event could not be completed in a short time; it needed a long preparation process to be accomplished. Therefore, this thesis investigates the role of the Prophet's companion, the first Caliph, Abū Bakr. His role was very crucial that it could be argued that he continued the prophet Muhammad's strategic plan that led to the first Muslim liberation of Islamic Jerusalem in the time of 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

1.1 Problem Statement

As the result of Prophet Muhammad's strategic plan, the first Muslim liberation of Islamic Jerusalem in the seventh century is a remarkable triumph in history. This historical event raised the credibility of Islam between two superpowers, the Byzantines and the Persians. Because the event occurred in the era of 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, most people attribute this liberation to him. Consequently, previous research typically investigated only the role of the second Caliph as the leader during the liberation, and many kinds of literature were written about what he had done to achieve this significant event. Conversely, there is limited published literature on the Muslims' leader before 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, namely Abū Bakr.

Moreover, there are claims that because the reign of Abū Bakr was only for a short period of two years, there was nothing much he could do for the liberation. Some western academics respond to this fact by undermining the position of Abū Bakr as the first Caliph after the death of the Prophet. For instance, Hillenbrand (2008) claims that Islamic sources praise the second Caliph, 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, for establishing a truly Islamic government. Whereas she indicates that the reign of Abū Bakr, lasting only two years, was merely a caretaker government. The researcher argues her claims lack the historical fact since, in the short time of Abū Bakr's reign, the Muslim community in Madinah could exist amid the massive apostasy and the emergence of false prophets in the Arabian Peninsula. In addition, he successfully gives the leaders surrounding Arabia the impression that Muslims still have power, although their prophet has just passed away, by continuing to send the Army of Usāmah. Also, he prepared four commanders to lead

the expedition towards the northwest area of Madinah, which is the area adjacent to IslamicJerusalem. Thus, as a leader, Abū Bakr helped establish the foundation of a strong, stable, and prosperous state that extended throughout the Arabian Peninsula, and then expanded to far-off lands outside Arabia (Al-Ṣallābī, 2007). As a proposed argumentation in this thesis, Abū Bakr has contributed many things to establishing the foundation of the Islamic State in Madinah and the liberation of IslamicJerusalem. Abū Bakr was also considered the most notable figure in exemplifying the connection between Muslims to IslamicJerusalem in Makkan and Madinah periods. Therefore, this study proposes to extend the research by seeking the connection between Abū Bakr and his contribution to the first Muslim liberation of IslamicJerusalem.

For a better understanding, this topic needs further investigation as a continuation of the strategic plan from Prophet Muhammad, Abū Bakr, until ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. The event could not be separated between the preparation at the beginning and the result at the end. According to Al-Ashqar (2010), during Abū Bakr’s reign as the Caliph, he was eager to bring IslamicJerusalem under Muslims’ rule. He also states that Abū Bakr follows the Prophet’s path and strategy to liberate IslamicJerusalem. El-Awaisi (2019) hypothesized that no one knows better than Abū Bakr about the Prophet’s plan to liberate IslamicJerusalem. To shed light on this issue, the researcher will examine this hypothesis to discover whether the role of Abū Bakr is essential to the event of the first Muslim liberation of IslamicJerusalem.

Accordingly, the imbalanced perspective among Muslims today in perceiving the position of Makkah, Madinah, and IslamicJerusalem indicates the lack of understanding of the status of these places. Therefore, the gap in scholarly writings regarding holiness and sacredness among three important cities in Islam needs a specific explanation. Thus, in the first chapter of this thesis, the concept of holy and sacred spaces in Islam will be explained to gain a comprehensive understanding.

1.2 Research Question

1. What is the significance of IslamicJerusalem and its sacred connection in Islam that could be the foundation of Muslims’ plan to liberate this region?

2. As the key figure in the initial phase of Islam in the Makkan period, is there any spiritual, religious, and political connection between Abū Bakr and Islamicjerusalem?
3. What are the contributions of Abū Bakr towards the first Muslim liberation of Islamicjerusalem, especially after the *Hijra* (migration) to Madinah and during his Caliphate period?

1.3 Research Aim

1. To investigate the basis of Muslims' plan to liberate Islamicjerusalem based on its importance and sacredness in Islam.
2. To analyze the elements which build the foundation of Abū Bakr's spiritual, religious, and political connection with Islamicjerusalem in the Makkan period.
3. To examine what Abū Bakr has done during Prophet Muhammad's life in Madinah as well as his Caliphate period as a contribution towards the first Muslim liberation of Islamicjerusalem.

1.4 Significance and Purpose of the Research

The most prominent significance of this research is to fill the gap and bridge the missing discussion between Prophet Muhammad's preparation to liberate Islamicjerusalem and 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb's successful liberation of Islamicjerusalem. According to the researcher's observation, the first Muslim Caliph, Abū Bakr, made valuable contributions to Islamicjerusalem. Indeed, Abū Bakr's connection with Islamicjerusalem in his Makkah and Madinah periods is crucial and needs to be analyzed in-depth. Accordingly, this research intends to pursue the verification that the liberation of Islamicjerusalem was a legacy of Prophet Muhammad and continues to Abū Bakr and 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

1.5 Research Methodology

This thesis uses a historical methodology to investigate the role of Abū Bakr in the first Muslim liberation of Islamicjerusalem. This research utilizes a set of methodologies and principles known as the historical method, which consists of various approaches. For example, evidence from archaeology and other primary sources are used.

Moreover, since this research is focused on the Islamic perspective, primary Islamic sources such as the Qur'an and Ḥadīth are also used.

In addition, the most important thing in the research methodology is the interpretation of the historical statement or description. For example, the conceptual framework of how Makkah, Madinah, and Islamicjerusalem were connected in the Islamic principle of sacredness has been limited to the theological and theoretical discussion. Nevertheless, the bridge between these concepts and the historical events that connected the three sacred places, such as the first liberation of Islamicjerusalem, has not been investigated by many scholars. Thus, the researcher attempts to use the historical research methodology and sources in this thesis' theme to show that it would benefit the present and future context, specifically in the effort to liberate Islamicjerusalem.

1.6 Research Scope

This research will focus on the life of Abū Bakr's relations with Islamicjerusalem, especially in his effort to liberate the region during his Caliphate reign. The sacred connection between Islamicjerusalem, Makkah, and Madinah will serve as a conceptual background to demonstrate that Abū Bakr's connection towards these three cities is already established in the Islamic concept. The discussion of Abū Bakr's connections with Islamicjerusalem will focus on the spiritual, religious, and political aspects during the Makkan and Madinah periods.

1.7 Terminologies

Islamicjerusalem is new terminology for a new concept, which may be translated into the Arabic language as Bayt al-Maqdis. It can be fairly and eventually characterized and defined as a unique region laden with a rich historical background, religious significance, cultural attachments, competing for 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 administer that land and its people, as a model for multiculturalism, cultural engagement and *Aman* (peaceful co-existence and mutual respect) (El-Awaisi 2018a, p.4).

The First Muslim Liberation is a terminology that is used in this research to reflect a better understanding of the event commonly mentioned as the Muslim conquest. In this matter, the word “conquest” does not carry the positive connotation since some conquests were executed through violence and massacre that did not reflect the Islamic ethic of war. For the event of Muslim liberation, as argued by Al-Ḥamārneh in Abu-Munshar (2008), it presents the population of Islamic Jerusalem with peace and tranquility after the oppression by the Byzantine. Hence, the word “liberation” fits better in this context. Additionally, Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi (2012) reflects the First Muslim liberation of Islamic Jerusalem as *Fatih*, since the word conquest does not portray the actual situation. According to El-Awaisi, the *Fatih* of Islamic Jerusalem means introducing new stages of the vision of Islamic Jerusalem as done by ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, which ended the destruction, killing, and displacement that characterized the region in history before the *Fatih*.

1.8 Literature Review

A variety of sources were published regarding Prophet Muhammad's connection with the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem. The scholars have analyzed the biography of the Prophet Muhammad and addressed his plan to liberate Islamic Jerusalem. Furthermore, literature discussing the event of the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem by ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb has also been numerous published. However, few studies have focused on the role of Abū Bakr as the first Caliph to continue the prophet's plan towards Islamic Jerusalem. The literature review describes the previous and current attempts to cover this issue.

One of the prominent scholars who have done excellent research on the issue of Abū Bakr and his connection to Islamic Jerusalem is Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi. In his book titled ‘Introducing Islamic Jerusalem’ published in 2007, he identifies a firm commitment by Abū Bakr to the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem. After the prophet's death, Abū Bakr continued the prophet's plan to send Usāmah Ibn Zayd's army towards Islamic Jerusalem, despite some companions' persuasion to cancel Usāmah's mission. Moreover, in El-Awaisi's book published in 2019, he compared Abū Bakr with Prophet Joshua. El-Awaisi stated that Prophet Moses, similar to Prophet Muhammad, passed away before completing

his intention to enter IslamicJerusalem. Meanwhile, Prophet Joshua has a similarity with Abū Bakr and ‘Umar continued the leadership of the prophet and liberated IslamicJerusalem. Also, this is the main source to describe vividly that Abū Bakr was likely the only one aware of the prophet’s plan to liberate IslamicJerusalem. Yet, these books have not explained how Abū Bakr could have a particular personal or exclusive connection and make contributions regarding the liberation of IslamicJerusalem. In short, the researcher intends to fill in the missing points in El-Awaisi’s book to give a more comprehensive analysis in this topic.

Another source dealing with this issue is a book titled ‘*Futuh Filistin*’ (2006) by Usāmah al-Ashqar. He is an expert on the issue of the first Muslim liberation of al-Sham and IslamicJerusalem. Al-Ashqar explained precisely how Muslims, step by step, liberated every place in the region of IslamicJerusalem. In this book, he stated that the effort to liberate IslamicJerusalem had started in the era of Prophet Muhammad. He also mentioned that Abū Bakr followed the prophet’s will in preparing to face the Byzantines on the northwestern route from Madinah to al-Sham. For example, the prophet’s plan to send Usāmah’s army to the region of IslamicJerusalem was Abū Bakr’s first decision in his initial reign as the Caliph. Furthermore, in this book, al-Ashqar discusses how Abū Bakr followed prophet’s political and military strategy to liberate IslamicJerusalem. However, al-Ashqar just focused on the political and military aspects of the work done by Abū Bakr without further discussion of spiritual and religious aspects, which this thesis will investigate deeply.

In addition, another scholar to discuss this issue is an eminent Islamic historian, Ali Muhammad Al-Ṣallābī (2007), who touches on the strong relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and Abū Bakr, which became one of the virtues of Abū Bakr compared to other companions. Al-Ṣallābī also discussed what Abū Bakr had done, including when Abū Bakr faced both internal and external challenges throughout the brief period of his Caliphate. Nevertheless, he did not connect Abū Bakr’s political and military strategy to the conquest of Iraq and al-Sham, as a part of his contribution towards the liberation of IslamicJerusalem. Thus, Al-Ṣallābī only explains Abū Bakr’s achievements to Islam in general without specifically relating it to IslamicJerusalem.

One of the most recent published sources related to Abū Bakr is a book titled ‘Golden Stories of Abū Bakr As-Siddeeq’ by Abdul Malik Mujahid (2012). The book focuses on the excellent characteristics of Abū Bakr without explicitly mentioning his connection to Islamic Jerusalem as well as his effort to liberate its land. For instance, when Abu Bakr dispatched armies against the Byzantines, it was treated as a separate event from the plan to liberate Islamic Jerusalem. Additionally, this book describes events throughout Abū Bakr’s life without concluding how Abū Bakr’s activities related to his purpose to liberate Islamic Jerusalem.

Thus, based on these published materials, the researcher aims to bridge the gaps and build a comprehensive connection of Abū Bakr with Islamic Jerusalem. This thesis analyzes the spiritual, religious, and political aspects that made Abū Bakr connected with Islamic Jerusalem. In order to build a strong argument, the researcher investigates all of these aspects both in Makkah and in Madinah because each of the Makkan and Madinah periods has its own specific context during Abū Bakr’s role as a prophet’s companion and as the first Caliph.

1.9 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters, including the introduction, main discussion, and conclusion. As for the main discussion, the researcher investigates the concept of sacredness in Islam and its connection among the three most important cities in Islam; Makkah, Madinah, and Islamic Jerusalem. Furthermore, the thesis will elaborate on Abū Bakr’s connection to Islamic Jerusalem in the Makkan and Madinah periods, especially his spiritual, religious, and political aspects. Meanwhile, the last chapter will discuss his contributions to the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem during his Caliphate.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ISLAMICJERUSALEM AND ITS SACRED CONNECTION IN ISLAM

Before discussing Abū Bakr's connection to Islamicjerusalem during his life in Makkah and Madinah, the researcher would like to emphasize that in Islam, Makkah, Madinah, and Islamicjerusalem are three inseparable places. Therefore, a strong connection with Muslims based on spiritual, religious, historical, and physical bonds exists between these places. This chapter will investigate the connection between Makkah and Islamicjerusalem, including the differentiation of their sacredness. Also, their relations with Madinah, as the sacred place in Islam, are vital as they provide the conceptual framework for Muslims regarding the connections of these cities. This chapter includes the discussion of the significance, terminologies, and geographical boundaries of Islamicjerusalem to establish a solid foundation on this topic.

2.1 The Concept of Sacred Space in Islam

Interaction between geography and religion goes much further due to transferring the idea of the divine thing from something intangible into a tangible thing that is created in protected or sacred areas. From a long time ago, human beings seemed to feel closer to their God or divine powers in areas dedicated to their religious rituals. It is also applied in the Arabian Peninsula; one of the reasons is that the area has been a pilgrimage destination. The notion of sacred spaces existed in this area, although most people in this period were polytheists. According to Ibn Hisham (2019), many tribes in area surrounding Arabia worshipped idols dedicated to different deities. A sacred region in polytheism encompasses a wide range of things, including people and artifacts (Hoyland, 2001).

According to Munt (2014), sacred spaces have three elements: a relationship with the divine, specific rules, and an exact border to distinguish between inside and outside areas. He also added that sacred spaces had functions for worship and others, such as demarcated own areas and joint functions. There are two examples of sacred spaces that

people created prior to the emergence of the prophet Muhammad based on sacred area characteristics; *haram* and *hima*. In *haram*, its area there were some prohibitions within the *haram* area, such as hunting, cutting down plants or trees, carrying weapons, and fighting or killing. Afterward, when the prophethood of Muhammad started, he confirmed most of the rules of *haram* and added some exceptions, such as the permission to cut certain plants for daily needs. In comparison, *hima* was forbidden pastureland in which the animals inside this area could be protected from seizure.

There was another example of sacred space within the area of Arabia, which is *hawtah*. According to Serjeant (2017), *hawtah* is a sacred enclave created by a member of a holy family that declares a particular piece of land, to be secured under God's law. The boundaries of the *hawtah* were demarcated by the founder using white-washed cairns. Usually, *hawtah* is located where people often meet for one reason, such as a market. At the same time, *hawtah* must be recognized by the surrounding tribesmen. When the first founder of *hawtah* passed away, one of his descendants was elected to resume his role and took the title of *mansab*, who had the authority of the area and could tax the inhabitants of the enclave.

Regarding the above discussion, the researcher argues that the concept of sacred space in the polytheistic society is not only limited to places; but also includes other aspects such as humans from notable families, tribes, animals, social activity, or other objects. It is related to the nature of polytheism, which believes humans cannot connect directly to God without mediatory. In Islam, the concept of sacred space has its perspective. When Prophet Muhammad was born, sacred space was related to the traditions of tribes or members of notable families; there was a division of tasks to each tribe to serve the pilgrims who came to worship at the sacred area around *Ka'bah*. Meanwhile, in the time of prophethood of Muhammad, sacred space was linked to the revelation of Qur'an verses from Allah. For example, *haram* boundaries in Makkah and the decision of a human appointed by Allah as a prophet were applied in the *haram* of Madinah. Thus, it could be said that the sacred place in Islam connects with religious boundaries; the one who created *haram* belongs to Allah and his messenger, there is no connection with tribes or notable families. A tribe's leader establishes *haram* to prevent conflict among its members or other tribespeople and shows its strength and independence from the influence of others

(Munt, 2014).

In short, the boundaries of the *haram* area are firm and valid until the day of resurrection, not like the administrative boundaries that could change depending on events, political situations, or leaders' decisions. Dakake (2011) states that Islam has a clear definition of sacred geography, representing access to vertical and genuine connections between the divine and the human. She added that the idea of sacred space is connected with the word *haram*, which denotes a sanctuary, a protected place, which should be free from all forms of violence and clash in its sacredness. Indeed, the most sacred center of the Islamic world is in Makkah, and within its city, the *haram* surrounds the Ka`bah, and then, most intensely, the Ka`bah itself.

2.2 *Haram* in Makkah and Madinah

There are two sacred places that Muslims will visit when they perform *hajj* or *umrah*: first, Makkah, where the *Ka`bah* is located; and second, Madinah, where the prophet Muhammad's tomb lies. Most people understand that *haram* is located in Makkah and Madinah; the main reason is that these cities had the well-known term *haramain* (two of *haram*). However, the fact is that both cities did not have the same degree of *haram*. In this section, the researcher tried to bring the discussion in order to differentiate the two *haram*.

The *haram* of Makkah was an extensive sacred area identified by the exact markers with the *Ka`bah* at its center. According to Khalid El-Awaisi (2017), the sacred region was a haven and a place of safety, given the name *al-Haram*. The name carries sacred meaning that comes from the Arabic trilateral root H-R-M. Moreover, the total area of the *haram* region in Makkah is about 550 km² and the number of markers totaled 943 (Abdul Ghani, 2004). Dhaish in Khalid El-Awaisi (2017) states most of the restoration of the markers has taken place on the main routes, not on the mountain tops, while the markers on the mountain tops have not been renovated since the reign of the Abbasid Caliph, al-Mansour (d. 158 AH/775 CE). Nevertheless, the antonym of *haram* is the word *al-hill*, from the Arabic root H-L-L, meaning to be released from restriction (K. El-Awaisi, 2017b). The word *hill* is translated into English as "profane", as Eliade (1959) defines the neutrality of space and no longer a fixed point. The following map highlights the boundaries of *haram*.



Map 1. Map of The Boundaries of *Haram* in Makkah (Al-Ateeqi, 2020)

The creation of *haram* in Makkah dates back to the era before Prophet Muhammad. Thus, what the Prophet had done was just reaffirm the rules and add some exceptions; for instance, it is possible to cut the tree called *idhkir* (Bukhārī 1997, p.394; Muslim 2007, p.986). However, there are some disputes regarding when the *haram* area was created; some sources mentioned that it was during the era of Prophet Abraham, but other sources said that it was since Allah created the universe. Al-Azraqī in Munt (2014) says the initiation of *haram* either on the day God created the earth and heaven or during the lifetime of Adam or Abraham. According to the Qur'an, the creation of *haram* was made by Allah:

I have been ordered only to worship the Lord of this territory *al-Lati Haramaha* (which He has made inviolable) (Qur'an 27:91).

Also, there is an authentic Ḥadīth recorded by Bukhārī and Muslim which associates this territory being made a Haram on the day God created the heavens and earth:

God had made this town a sanctuary since the day He created the heavens and the earth [...] (Al-Bukhārī, 1997, p.814; Muslim, 2007, p.986).

However, another authentic Ḥadīth seems to contradict this issue, since the content indicates the creation of haram during the time of Prophet Abraham:

Abraham made Makkah a Haram and I declare Madinah a Haram in the same manner as Abraham declared Makkah a Haram... (Al-Bukhārī, 1997, p.645; Muslim, 2007, p.991).

Ibn Kathīr (2000) comments that different Muslim scholars have offered various reasons, but the majority believe that the *haram* came from creating the heavens and earth. The researcher argues that to clarify this issue, one of the verses in the Qur'an mentioned the story of Prophet Abraham when he visited *Ka'bah* for the first time:

Our Lord, indeed I have made some of my offspring to dwell in an uncultivated valley, by Your Sacred House (*'inda Baytika al-Muharam*) (Qur'an 14:37).

This verse states that Prophet Abraham considered *haram* in Makkah; he did not declare anything about haram because the *haram* was there. Accordingly, from Islamic primary sources, it is clear that the establishment of *haram* in Makkah was made by Allah even before the time of Prophet Adam, from the beginning of the creation of earth and heaven.

As for Madinah, the *haram* area is quite different from Makkah. Before the advent of Islam, Madinah did not have any significance until Prophet Muhammad migrated to this city. The establishment of *haram* in Madinah is not directly instructed by Allah but by the one appointed as Allah's messenger. The Prophet Muhammad created a second *haram* in Madinah, and until now, Muslims across the world have recognized it by calling with the term *haramain* (two of *haram*). There is a Ḥadīth recorded by Al-Bukhārī that mentions regarding when Prophet Muhammad created *haram* in Madinah:

O Allah! Make the area which is in between Al-Madinah's two mountains a sanctuary as Ibrahim made Makkah a sanctuary (Al-Bukhārī 1997, p. 95).

The *haram* of Madinah does not have an exact border like in Makkah; the borders just spread from one mountain to another mountain. According to Munt (2014), there were no

strict boundary rituals such as *ihram* for entry into Madinah's *haram*. Therefore, Munt added, many scholars conclude that Madinah did not possess the same states of a *haram* as Makkah.

The researcher argues the best practice of this concept is the event after the liberation of Makkah in 630CE, Islam adds a rule which non-Muslims were forbidden to enter *haram* Makkah:

O you who believe, the polytheists are indeed impure, so do not let them come near al-Masjid al-Haram [the Sacred Mosque] after this year of theirs (Qur'an 9:28).

Whereas in Madinah, there was no such rule. Because as the capital city of the Islamic state, many delegations from Muslim or non-Muslim leaders surrounding Arabia would come to discuss various matters with the Prophet. It means, since the time of Prophet Muhammad, Madinah was not an exclusive area. Also, several Jewish tribes lived in Madinah along with Muslims. In short, because the *haram* of Madinah was created by the messenger of Allah, while Allah established the *haram* of Makkah; the degree could not be the same, such as the boundaries and rules. From the researcher's point of view, this is the main difference between Makkah and Madinah.

2.3. Holiness in Islamicjerusalem

Makkah and Islamicjerusalem are widely recognized as sacred sites for Muslims, especially since *Ka'bah* and al-Aqsa Mosque are centers for pilgrims (Munt, 2014). However, from the perspective of Islam, these cities could not be regarded as the same; each city has its differences of sanctity. For example, in Makkah, the *haram* area is exclusively for Muslims, while in Islamicjerusalem, the Holy Land is inclusive for all people. In short, it is another concept of sacred space in Islam; the area between these two cities is governed by its own set of rules.

In the Qur'an, Islamicjerusalem (Bayt al-Maqdis) is mentioned multiple times, with al-Aqsa Mosque serving as its focal point for two entities, *Qadasah* (holiness) and *Barakah* (blessing). These are the verses in the Qur'an related to *Qadasah* and *Barakah*: Qur'an 5:21, Qur'an 17:1, Qur'an 21:71, Qur'an 21:81, Qur'an 7:137, Qur'an 34:18. The Arabic word for holiness, *Qadasah*, is derived from the triliteral root Q-D-S, which

conveys the meanings of purity or purified (*Mutahar*) and blessing (*Mubarak*) (K. El-Awaisi, 2017). To understand this concept better, one should know the meaning of *barakah*, because some people often misunderstand the meaning of holy and *barakah* or even mix up both. According to El-Awaisi (2007), *barakah* can be described as growth and expansion in accordance with the Qur'an 17:1, other Qur'anic verses, and Prophetic traditions. Even though the *barakah* is unseen, its effects are evident since we can see the forms and signs of the *barakah*.

According to some Muslim exegetes, the explanation of *barakah* is divided into two types, material and spiritual (Nor, 2017). Nor explained that the material *barakah* is related to the tangible aspects of the land, for instance, its fertile soil, climate, and historical heritage. Meanwhile, the spiritual *barakah* is relevant because the land has hosted many prophets who came for various reasons. The researcher argues that holy and *barakah* are two separate entities that cannot be mixed in this discussion. For example, holiness (*qadasah/muqadas*) has two meanings: purity/purified and blessing (*barakah/mubarak*). In comparison, *barakah* has the meaning of growth and expansion. So, the definition of holy includes *barakah*, but the definition of blessing does not include holiness. Accordingly, the Holy Land is part of the Land of Barakah but not vice versa (K. El-Awaisi, 2007).

Early Muslims did not intend to declare Islamicjerusalem as *haram* because the Qur'anic concepts of *barakah* and holiness are unique to this place. In addition, neither Makkah nor Madinah possess them, especially in terms of the tangible *barakah* found in Islamicjerusalem (K. El-Awaisi, 2017a). Thus, while Makkah became exclusively for Muslims, the Holy Land could not have the same exclusivity because its *barakah* is inclusive for all Muslims, Christians, Jews, and others. Furthermore, Burckhardt (2009) argues that from the Islamic point of view is contrary to the Jewish concept of a people chosen to the exclusion of all others and from the Christian belief in a unique savior, the Son of God.

The idea of *haram* was later attached to both Islamicjerusalem and Hebron, but this was met with strong opposition from prominent Muslim scholars. They argued that the concept of *haram* could only be accomplished via divine revelation. Furthermore, if the same restrictions in Makkah were imposed on this bountiful region, it would become

barren, which is in direct opposition to the divine favor that has been given to this land. According to K. El-Awaisi (2017), the Holy Land is not reduced in any way by the position of Islamic Jerusalem not being a haram, nor are Makkah and Madinah reduced by not being referred to as the Holy Land or Land of Barakah. Hence, according to the researcher, this clarification of *haram* and holy within the concept of sacred place in Islam is essential to analyze the significance of these two cities.

2.4 The Significance of Makkah and Islamic Jerusalem

Makkah and Islamic Jerusalem have great significance in the Muslim faith. The significance extends not only from the time of the Prophet Muhammad but since the time of the Prophet Adam. The authentic Ḥadīth mentioned when Abū Dhar asked the Prophet Muhammad regarding the first two mosques built on earth:

He said, “*Al-Masjid al-Haram.*” I said, “Which (was built) next?” He replied, “*Al-Masjid al-Aqsa.*” I said, “What was the period of construction between the two?” He said, “forty years.” (Al-Bukhārī 1997, v.4:359).

This Ḥadīth strengthens the information from the (Qur’an 3:96) which mentioned that the first house of worship for humankind is Makkah. These Islamic primary sources clearly state that Makkah and Islamic Jerusalem have become the first two worship centers on earth. Although current technology could not backdate the building to the time of Prophet Adam, this narration is deep-rooted within the historical sources of Makkah. For example, al-Azraqī in Al-Ratrout (2008) says that God directed the construction of the *Ka’bah* on earth carried out by either Angles or Adam. In addition, Ibn Hajar in K.El-Awaisi (2017) comments that the establishment of *Ka’bah* and al-Aqsa Mosque is related to the time of Prophet Adam by the majority of Muslim scholars.

The link between Makkah and Islamic Jerusalem in the Qur’an and Ḥadīth needs to be completed from other disciplines’ approaches. As an architect and archeologist who researched the architecture of al-Haram Mosque and al-Aqsa Mosque, Al-Ratrout (2008) argues that to deal with the objective comparison between Makkah and Islamic Jerusalem, one should use the physical relationship, not the religious connotation. He also argues that the Qur’an and Ḥadīth provided an apparent reference as historical and geographical sources, which give general statements on the historical link between these two sacred places regarding their establishment. So, Al-Ratrout reconstructed the form of *Ka’bah*

when Ibrahim and his son Ismail elevated its foundation. He added that when comparing the *Ka'bah* prototype with the outline of the ancient foundations of the al-Aqsa Mosque, he achieved something that drew his attention. The plans of the *Ka'bah* and al-Aqsa Mosque carry the same form, same outlines, similar diversions in the plan, and identical inner angles. However, there is a difference: the area of al-Aqsa Mosque's enclave is nearly 28 times bigger than the area of *Ka'bah*. A similar plan for *Ka'bah* and al-Aqsa mosque is illustrated in the figure below.

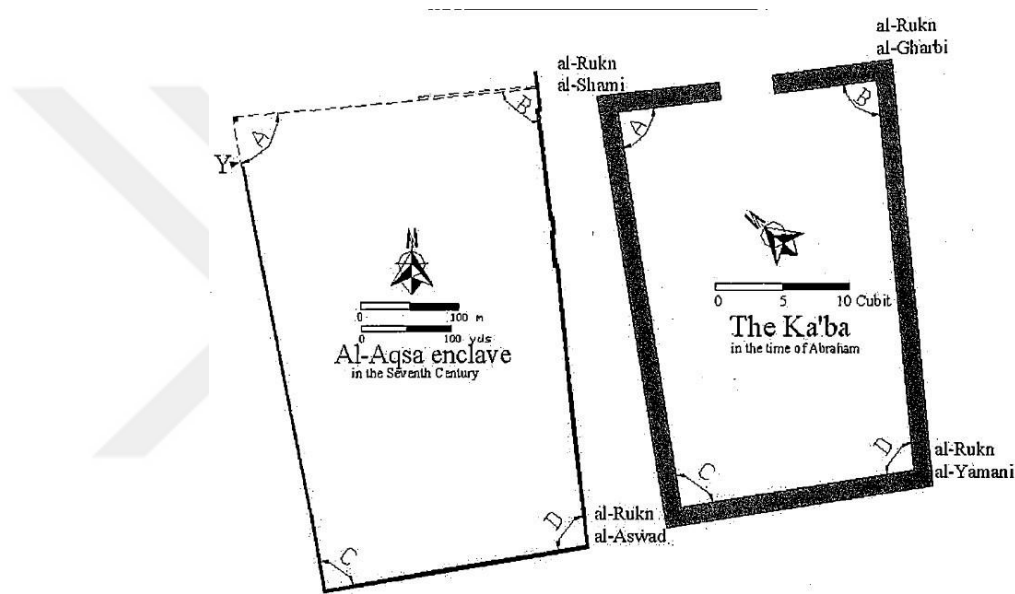


Figure 1. The Similarity Between the Plan of *Ka'bah* and Al-Aqsa Mosque (Al-Ratrout, 2013).

The researcher inclines to Al-Ratrout's argument that because the area of al-Aqsa Mosque is bigger than *Ka'bah*; therefore, as reflected in the construction process, the architect will build a small prototype before building the bigger one. Furthermore, Al-Ratrout argues that when examining the orientation of the earliest archaeological traces of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and its direction, it can be argued that the foundation of the southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque is linked with the *Qiblah*. Thus, the Al-Aqsa Mosque's enclave is oriented towards Makkah and the *Ka'bah*. Therefore, it reflects the same way as what is mentioned in Muslim primary sources, the Qur'an and Hadith. Additionally, it is in line with Hamawi's argument in Al-Ratrout (2008) that if the *Ka'bah* was the first Islamic religious place established on earth, the second (Al-Aqsa Mosque) must

have been oriented towards the *Ka'bah* as the *Qiblah* of the early mosques. The illustration of the al-Aqsa Mosque's position facing *Ka'bah* is captured in the figure below.

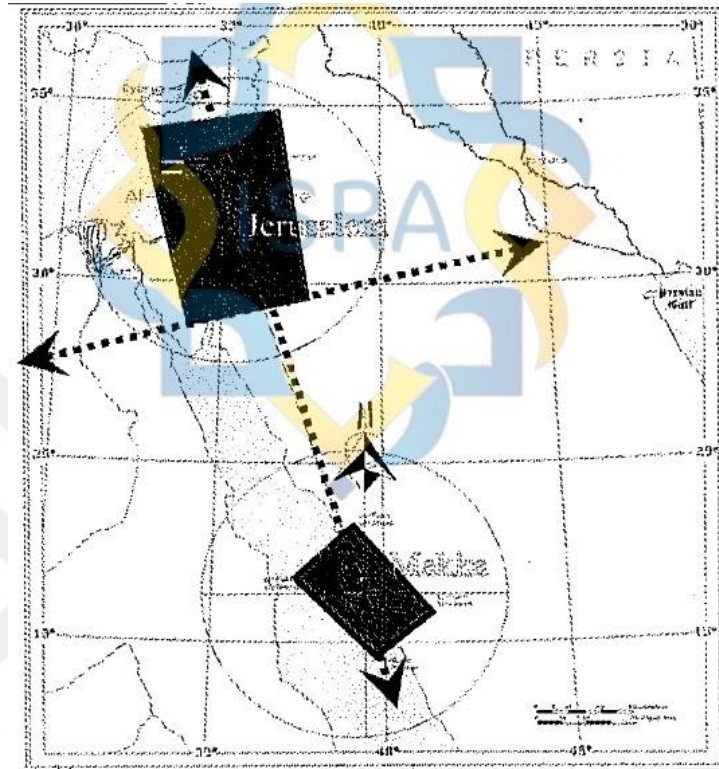


Figure 2. Al-Aqsa Mosque's Orientation Towards *Ka'bah* (Al-Ratrout, 2013).

Presently, Muslims have a strong connection with Makkah because it is the current *Qiblah*. Therefore, Muslims around the world will face the *Ka'bah* every day, at least five times a day as a ritual of their prayer. Nevertheless, in the time of Prophet Muhammad, especially in the thirteen-year Makkan period, Muslims prayed towards al-Aqsa Mosque (Al-Rabi, 2009). Then came the revelation that the *Qiblah* should be changed from al-Aqsa Mosque to *Ka'bah*. So, for the followers of Prophet Muhammad, the al-Aqsa Mosque in Islamic Jerusalem is significant because it was their first *Qiblah*, while the *Ka'bah* in Makkah is the second *Qiblah*. Thus, Makkah and Islamic Jerusalem for Muslims are the main points of interest across Islamic history.

The Prophet Muhammad's event of the Night Journey from Makkah to Islamic Jerusalem indicates a combination of these two significant places, as recorded in the Qur'an 17:1. From the researcher's perspective, the event was monumental in Islam

because several special occasions happened here. First, Prophet Muhammad visited his *Qiblah* (al-Aqsa Mosque) for the first time; second, Prophet Muhammad led the prayer of all prophets; and third, Allah's command of the obligation of prayer five times. Moreover, the Night Journey re-established a twinning relationship between the two mosques, which had initially been started by previous prophets (Nor, 2017). As for the non-Muslims' view regarding the Night Journey, Armstrong (1997) argues that Makkah and Jerusalem were already physically connected, especially during Prophet Muhammad's flight from Makkah to Jerusalem. It conveyed the primal sanctity of Makkah and the Distant Mosque (al-Aqsa Mosque) in Jerusalem. Additionally, she states that this connection, which combines the two cities, will stay forever in the Muslims' minds.

The idea of combining all three sacred cities in Islam was well established. Previously, the rite of *hajj* would include all three sacred places in Islam: Makkah, Madinah, and Islamic Jerusalem. It is based on the intention of most pilgrims to make *hajj* their unforgettable journey, because they come from many places worldwide. Moreover, the *hajj* might become their last journey since it requires a considerably high cost of money and a long duration. So, for the pilgrims, once in their life, the *hajj* was the only chance to visit all three holiest places in Islam. Due to the distance between Makkah and Madinah being quite close, both places are the common destination for pilgrims during *hajj*. However, for Islamic Jerusalem, the pilgrims needed an extra effort because this city was outside the Arabian Peninsula. One of the reasons that pushed the pilgrims to visit Islamic Jerusalem was the virtues mentioned in the prophetic traditions, as narrated by Umm Salamah (one of Prophet Muhammad's wives) when she heard the Prophet say:

Whosoever set off for *hajj* or *umrah* from al-Masjid al-Aqsa would be forgiven or guaranteed Paradise (Abū Dawūd 2008, v.2:341).

On this Ḥadīth, setting off for *hajj* or *umrah* means the pilgrims commencing *ihrām* from al-Aqsa Mosque. Moreover, many companions of Prophet Muhammad tried to practice the Ḥadīth about starting *hajj* from al-Aqsa Mosque to gain its virtue; one of them is Mu'adh Ibn Jabal. According to Al-Ashqar (2016), Mu'adh Ibn Jabal was the companion of Prophet Muhammad, who joined the army of the first Muslim liberation of Islamic Jerusalem. 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb also appointed him to teach Qur'an to the people of Islamic Jerusalem. Al-Ashqar added narration from Yusuf Ibn Malik; he says, "I have been done *ihrām* from Islamic Jerusalem with Mu'adh Ibn Jabal." Furthermore, there is a

narration from Abdullah Ibn Abi Ammar who states, “I depart with Mu‘adh Ibn Jabal and Ka‘b, both of them in the state of ihram for *umrah* from Islamicjerusalem.” It indicates that the companions try to implement the Ḥadīth to initiate the *hajj* or *umrah* from Islamicjerusalem. However, it is tricky since they must go to the north first towards Islamicjerusalem and then back to Makkah on the south. Indeed, to receive a big reward from this Ḥadīth, which is paradise, needed some sacrifices.

At present, the tradition of performing pilgrimage from Islamicjerusalem continues. It is clear evidence that what Prophet Muhammad says in his Ḥadīth will stay in the Muslims’ mind. Elad (1999), in his book *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship*, says that there is a tradition to combine the pilgrimage to Makkah and visiting Madinah with Islamicjerusalem while praising and recommending prayer in the three mosques of these cities during the same year. She also added that some pilgrims came to Islamicjerusalem before the beginning of the *hajj* season, or they would do so after *hajj* to sanctify the place. Accordingly, it indicates that the pilgrims should go to three places simultaneously: Makkah, Madinah, and Islamicjerusalem. However, this situation was the case before the Zionist occupation of Islamicjerusalem since 1967. Because, after the occupation and the restriction to visit, the position of Islamicjerusalem has changed in the Muslims’ minds as it became separated from the other two sacred cities.

2.5 Terminologies of Islamicjerusalem

Islamicjerusalem is one of the three most important areas in Islam. It has been mentioned in various verses in the Qur’an and Ḥadīth. Islamicjerusalem has many terminologies that demonstrate this region is significant for three monotheistic religions: Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. Occasionally, this area is referred to as Bayt al-Maqdis, al-Aqsa Mosque, *al-Arḍ al-Mubarakah*, *al-Arḍ al-Muqaddasah*, Jerusalem (al-Quds), and Palestine. However, these terminologies are used without a clear distinction leading Muslims in general or historians and researchers in particular to the confusion. Moreover, they might cause a problem understanding this area because these terminologies have numerous differences. Thus, this section will explore several terminologies that have been used in the area.

2.5.1 Qur'anic Terminologies of Islamic Jerusalem

Three terminologies related to Islamic Jerusalem in the Qur'an appear as *al-Ard al-Mubarakah*, *al-Ard al-Muqaddasah*, and al-Aqsa Mosque. **First**, *al-Ard al-Mubarakah* which is a Qur'anic terminology as mentioned in Qur'an 21:71: "And We rescued him [Ibrahim] and Lut [and brought them] to the land which We have given barakah for (all) the nations." and in Qur'an 17:1: "... to al-Aqsa Mosque which has been given barakah to its surrounding (*Hawlahu*).". El-Awaisi (2018), in his Barakah Circle Theory, states that the current time this terminology refers to *Bilad al-Sham* that consists of four modern countries: Syria, Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon, together with parts of Egypt.

Second, *al-Ard al-Muqaddasah* is the Qur'anic terminology stated in Qur'an 5:21; "O my people, enter al-Ard al-Muqaddasah which Allah has assigned you, and turn back not ignominiously, for them you will be overthrown to your ruin." Therefore, there is a need to examine the Qur'an's exegetes' opinions and interpretation to know the meaning of the term *al-Ard al-Muqaddasah*. For example, Qur'anic exegesis and great scholars of *tafsir* Ibn Kathir (1994) interpreted *al-Ard al-Muqaddasah* as *Ard Bayt al-Maqdis*, where he explained the word *al-Maqdis* meaning in Arabic is *Tahara* or *Mutahar* (purity or purified). So, the term *al-Ard al-Muqaddasah* refers to Islamic Jerusalem, suggesting that the region is *Mutahar* (purified). As a result, one might conclude that *al-Ard al-Muqaddasah* is the same region as Bayt al-Maqdis or Islamic Jerusalem.

Third, the terminology of al-Aqsa Mosque is a Qur'anic terminology that can be seen in Qur'an 17:1; "... to al-Aqsa Mosque which has been given barakah to its surrounding (*Hawlahu*).". This verse relates to the event of the Night Journey by Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, the term al-Aqsa Mosque refers to a specific location within the region Islamic Jerusalem. According to Nor (2017), many early historical reports explain that al-Aqsa Mosque refers to a mosque in Bayt al-Maqdis. Al-Tabari in Nor (2017) says the most reliable meaning of al-Aqsa Mosque is *Masjid Bayt al-Maqdis* or the mosque of Bayt al-Maqdis. The question that might have occurred is the specific location of the al-Aqsa Mosque because many people often misunderstood al-Aqsa Mosque as only the Dome of The Rock (golden dome) or *Jami al-Aqsa* (al-Aqsa Congregation Mosque). However, Al-Ratrout (2004) states that al-Aqsa Mosque is the whole of a vast complex

sized 142.000 square meters, including two main buildings: *Jami al-Aqsa* and the Dome of the Rock. Thus, al-Aqsa Mosque is not the same as Bayt al-Maqdis or Islamicjerusalem, but it is part of them.

2.5.2 Historical Terminologies of Islamicjerusalem

The historical terminologies referring to the Islamicjerusalem region were Bayt al-Maqdis, *al-Quds*, and Palestine. **First**, Bayt al-Maqdis could also be the prophetic terminology since he used it in many *Aḥādīth*. Al-Tel (2003) argues that the Arabic term Bayt al-Maqdis has been used in primary and early Muslim narratives refers to the Aelia region. Aelia was the name given by the Roman Emperor Hadrian, which refers to the province comprising many cities, towns, villages, and its capital was Aelia Capitolina. Moreover, Prophet Muhammad mainly used Bayt al-Maqdis in the majority of the narrations, as well as being aware of other names used in that era, such as Aelia, which he rarely used though his companions used it frequently (K. El-Awaisi, 2007). However, the meaning of Bayt al-Maqdis in Ḥadīth is used interchangeably to refer to the mosque, city, and region. Thus, K. El-Awaisi concludes that the name Bayt al-Maqdis can be used to refer to all three, but each must be interpreted in its context.

Second, *al-Quds* was not a prominent name before Islam. In the Roman and Byzantium period, this area was known as Aelia. According to Meshorer in Nor (2017), the usage of the term *al-Quds* historically was found in the year 832 CE. The coin, made out of bronze, was believed to be made in Islamicjerusalem during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph, al-Ma'mūn (813-833 CE). In this regard, it was suggested the term *al-Quds* used in the region at that time, also indicating the time the terminology first started to be used. It could also well be the official attempt to change the region's name, from the last name Aelia to the new name *al-Quds*. For this reason, Abd Rahman in Nor (2017) argues that the change which happened during the ruling of Caliph al-Ma'mun seems appropriate; at that time, Muslims were increasing in number, and the native population of the region was then more prepared to adapt to the change. Furthermore, *Al-Quds* has been translated into English by B. Collins as the Holy City, so one could argue that *al-Quds* refers to a limited area within Islamicjerusalem. El-Awaisi (2018) states that *al-Quds* refer to a walled or old city of 868.000 square meters. Therefore, it can be concluded that *al-Quds* is perceived today as referring to the walled city of Islamicjerusalem, not the whole

region. Later, in the time of Salah al-Din, continued until the reign of the Ottoman, the term *al-Quds* was added with *al-Sharif* to elevate its significance after being occupied by the crusaders.

Three, another prominent historical terminology is Palestine. According to popular belief, this term is not the present designation but rather a historical terminology. For instance, in the Roman and Byzantium period, they used the word Palestine to refer to *Palestina Prima* (I), *Palestina Secunda* (II), and *Palestina Tertia* (III). So, Palestine at that time was used to cover the region. In addition, K. El-Awaisi (2007) states that when Abū Bakr sent the army of Usāmah to *Palestina III* and I. Abū Bakr sent another four armies and instructed them into the region on their return. He directed one of them toward the regions of *Palestina III* and *Aelia* and stated to ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Ās, “*You are assigned for Palestine and Aelia*”(Al-Wāqidī 2005, p.31). Furthermore, in the Ottoman map during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, the term Palestine is still used to refer to a province.

According to K. El-Awaisi (2007), places and locations are given names by their first inhabitants. Although these names are sometimes replaced by entirely new ones, they are sometimes just partially replaced and sometimes restricted to certain places or expanded to encompass broader areas. For example, new boundaries have been established in Palestine, which resulted in some regions from one side being removed and areas to the other side being added. Nevertheless, the current Palestine map was decided by the Sykes-Picot agreement (between Britain and France), Balfour Declaration, and the British High Commissioner. Accordingly, the border of Palestine today was designed by a colonial power in the twentieth century. The table below summarizes the division of various terminologies.

Several Terminologies that Refer to Islamicjerusalem in the Quran, <i>Hadith</i> and Historical Sources			
No.	Quranic Terminology	<i>Hadith</i> Terminology	Historical Terminology
1.	al-Ard al-Mubarakah	Bayt al-Maqdis	Aelia
2.	al-Ard al-Muqaddasah	Aelia	Bayt al-Maqdis
3.	Al-Masjid al-Aqsa	Al-Masjid al-Aqsa	Al-Quds + al-Sharif

Table 1. Several Terminologies of Islamicjerusalem (Nor, 2017).

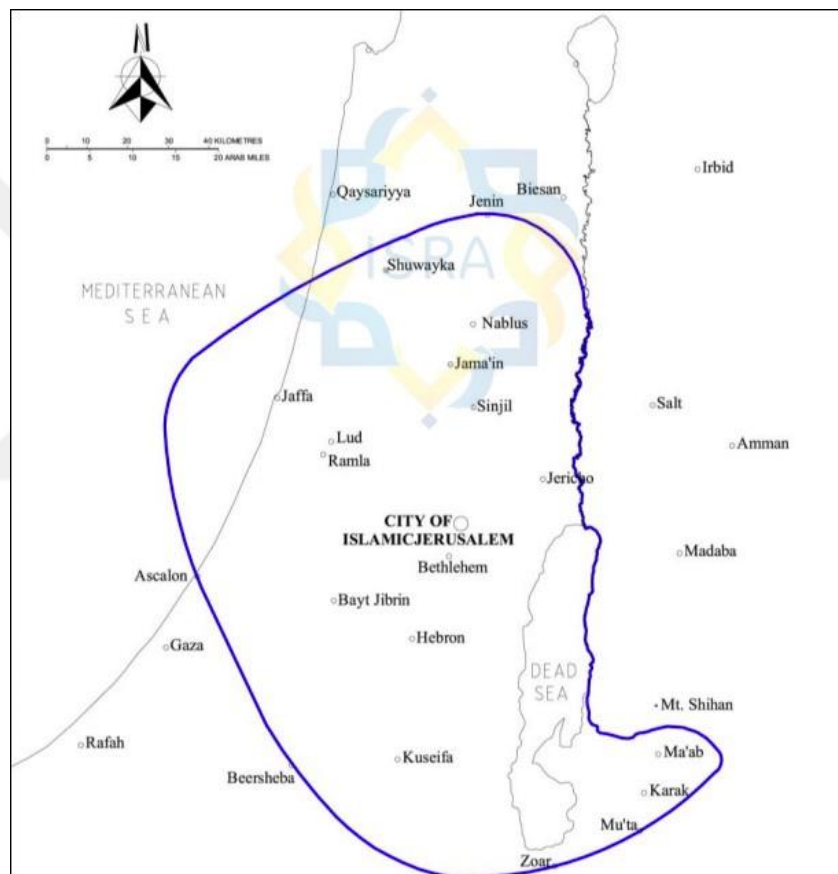
2.6 Geographical Boundaries of Islamicjerusalem

For Muslims, it is essential to have a clear distinction of the Holy Land based on their Islamic primary sources. Unfortunately, it has been a century when most Muslims were forced to admit the colonial boundary of their Holy Land based on their interest. Although, in the previous section, the researcher has discussed the Holy Land's terminology, subsequently identifying its boundaries is an important thing. There are several opinions regarding the boundary of Islamicjerusalem based on reading the historical sources. According to Abu-Munshar (2007), Islamicjerusalem is the designation given to a region around fifteen thousand square kilometers in size. The area not only included the walled city of Aelia Capitolina (the Roman name for Jerusalem), but it also included the towns of Jenin in the north, Jericho in the east, Karak (in modern Jordan) and Zoar in the south, and Jaffa in the west, as well as the lands between them. For the same reason, El-Awaisi (2013) states that Islamicjerusalem is more than just another urban settlement; it is an area that comprises multiple cities, towns, and villages as well as many religious sites. However, the explanations seem not to give a clear picture about the limit of the Holy Land, although the Islamic primary sources and Muslims historical sources have been described many times.

Accordingly, based on systemic research on Qur'an, Ḥadīth, and other early Muslim historical and geographical accounts, K. El-Awaisi (2007) presented the boundaries of the region of Islamicjerusalem as a religious boundary. The researcher argues that the Holy Land's religious-based boundary is groundbreaking research because it does not change according to the administration or political event. Therefore, not like the current boundary of Palestine that came from an agreement between the winning party of the war, the religious boundary will stand over time as the *haram* boundary in Makkah. Notably, with this discovery, Muslims now have a reference to the Holy Land based on their knowledge. They could also be benefited by using this as the basis of strategic planning to accomplish the future liberation of Islamicjerusalem.

Furthermore, according to K. El-Awaisi, the region of Islamicjerusalem encompasses the area surrounding its walled city, which can extend up to a maximum distance of forty Arab miles (85,04 kilometers) in various directions. To the west, there is Ramla and the towns and villages surrounding it and a distance of twelve Arab miles

(25,51 kilometers) from the seashore. To the north, the area beyond Nablus bordering Jenin. To the east, there is the River Jordan and the northeastern bank of the Dead Sea until reaching the area parallel to the *lisan*, from there on is a gradual increase to the maximum extent to the area east of Rabbah (Ma'ab). Finally, this would stay at the maximum limit in the south, moving westward to cover Zoar and the territory beyond Kuseifa that borders Karnab/Dimona, Beersheba, and Ascalon. Thus, the map below shows that Islamicjerusalem comprises several cities, towns, villages, and even part of the Mediterranean Sea.



Map 2. Geographical Boundaries of Islamicjerusalem (K. El-Awaisi, 2007).

After clarifying some misconceptions regarding the status of sacred spaces, including Islamicjerusalem, which emphasizes the significance of this Holy Land, this chapter also sets the foundation regarding the terminology and boundaries. Indeed, these Quranic and historical terminologies are required to better understand the next chapters. For instance, some differences in the dates of some battles in historical records are due to the variety of names for the location and geographical boundaries. Thus, the description

of these elements is vital before analyzing the connection and contributions of Abū Bakr towards the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem, which will be investigated in the next chapter.



CHAPTER THREE

CALIPH ABŪ BAKR'S CONNECTION WITH ISLAMICJERUSALEM IN THE MAKKAN PERIOD

The situation in Islamicjerusalem in the twenty-first century is similar to that in the era of Prophet Muhammad, which is under occupation. Thus, it is crucial to understand howthe early Muslims prepared to liberate Islamicjerusalem for the first time because this is exemplary of the best generation led and taught by the Prophet Muhammad. The first Muslim liberation of Islamicjerusalem might not have happened without a well-planned strategy. This great achievement did not come suddenly; it was part of a long-staged preparation. This chapter investigates the elements of the connection early Muslims had with Islamicjerusalem. Therefore, this part of the thesis is intended to set the foundation of the whole idea of Abū Bakr's connection with Islamicjerusalem since the Makkan period.

Early Muslims' connection with Islamicjerusalem is divided into three aspects: spiritual, religious, and political, based on the concept by K. El-Awaisi, which he has presented on numerous platforms. This concept intrigues the researcher's interest since K. El-Awaisi presented it in lectures and face-to-face consultations, so the scrutinization of this connection could emphasize the novelty of this thesis. Therefore, the research presented in this chapter is divided into these major parts: the spiritual connection relates to the soul of Muslims and includes when Muslims prayed to face Islamicjerusalem as their *Qiblah*; the religious connection reflects the value of Islamic principles and then connects to their hearts, it is related to the Qur'anic stories and the event of the Night Journey and Ascension; the political connection is associated with the Muslims' minds responding to the situation at that time, which comprised the revelation of chapter *al-Rum* and following the news from there. Finally, the researcher combined all these connections with Abū Bakr as the leading actor.

3.1 Spiritual Connection

3.1.1 Islamicjerusalem as The First *Qiblah* (Direction of Prayer)

The Muslims' connection to Islamicjerusalem started in the Makkan period since it relates to their *Qiblah*. For about 14 years, Muslims faced Islamicjerusalem as their *Qiblah* for about 14 years until a revelation from Allah changed the *Qiblah* to Makkah during the Madinah period. That is a spiritual connection Muslims have experienced with this important place as their daily direction during prayer for a long time. In particular, Abū Bakr was among the first four people, after Khadijah, Zayd Ibn Harithah, Ali Ibn Abi Thalib, who embraced Islam in the early period of prophethood (Al-Mubarakpuri, 2002). His relationship, which has been connected with Islamicjerusalem since the beginning, gives Abū Bakr an advantage over the other companions and also becomes an added value for himself later when he was given the mandate as the Caliph to lead the liberation of Islamicjerusalem directly.

The Qur'anic chapter, *al-Alaq*, was the first chapter revealed in Makkah, which designated Muhammad to be officially recognized as a prophet. Afterward, among the earliest revealed chapters of the Qur'an was chapter *al-Muzzammil* (73:2) which contained a command for Prophet Muhammad to pray for a large portion of the night. On top of that, because Muslims believe the direction of prayer in Makkah was facing Islamicjerusalem, al-Aqsa Mosque in Islamicjerusalem is well-known as their first *Qiblah*. However, there are two disputes among Muslims about this issue. Firstly, the debate is whether the command of prayer started later after the Night Journey, which took place in the tenth year of prophethood, or soon after the beginning of prophethood. Secondly, whether the early Muslims' *Qiblah* in Makkah was *Ka'bah* or al-Aqsa Mosque.

One could refer to exegetes regarding the meaning of a verse in (Qur'an 73:2). According to Ibn Kathīr (2000), this verse talked about the command of Allah to his prophet to get up and stand in prayer at night. Omar (2008) also states that the majority of exegetes, for example, al-Ṭabarī, al-Zamakhshari, al-Razi, and al-Alusi, all assert that the verse's meaning is praying throughout the night. Thus, the researcher argues that it is confirmed from the Qur'an that there is evidence in the early time of prophethood that there was a prayer command. On the other hand, an authentic Ḥadīth explains that during

the Night Journey was the official command of five times of prayer (Muslim, 2007). In this context, the researcher states that there is no need to contradict the Qur'an and Ḥadīth; the two could complement each other. From the two narrations, it could be concluded that there was a command of prayer prior to the Night Journey but with different rites, not five times a day. This opinion is in line with Al-Būṭī (2015), who states that before Allah assigned five times of prayer, Prophet Muhammad used to pray two times a day in the morning and evening, as Prophet Ibrahim did. Some other narrations mentioned that the night prayer was an additional prayer at that time, as (Qur'an 73:2) said. Whereas the Night Journey serves as the starting point for the command to pray five times.

A piece of information needs to explain where the early Muslims were facing because prayer included prostration and bowing down needed a direction. There are two opinions regarding the *Qiblah* in the Makkan period; the *Qiblah* faced *Ka'bah* or al-Aqsa Mosque. The first opinion is based on a narration stated by Al-Ṭabarī:

When the sun came up and rose into the sky, while I was looking at the *Ka'bah* a young man came up and gazed at the sky. Then he turned to face the *Ka'bah* and stood facing it. (Al-Ṭabarī 1988, v.6: 81)

This narration explains that Prophet Muhammad prayed to face the *Ka'bah* but did not mention that *Ka'bah* was his *Qiblah*. Therefore, the researcher inclines that the narrator just told what his eyes see that Prophet Muhammad stood in front of the *Ka'bah*, yet not recognized whether the *Ka'bah* was his *Qiblah* or not. Thus, this narration is not enough evidence to determine *Qiblah*'s direction. Also, another source from Ibn Hisham shows a narration to support the *Ka'bah* as the *Qiblah* in Makkah in the event of the second al-Aqabah pledge that highlights al-Bara's suggestion of praying towards the *Ka'bah*:

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 Bayt al-Maqdis]."

[...] The Messenger of God said: "You were on a *Qiblah* that you should have been patient [and pray] towards it" (Ibn Hisham 2019, p.222).

The narration seems not convincing because it clearly states al-Bara's own opinion. However, other companions in his group have different opinions, yet they mentioned another possibility of *Qiblah*, the al-Aqsa Mosque in Islamic Jerusalem (Bayt al-Maqdis).

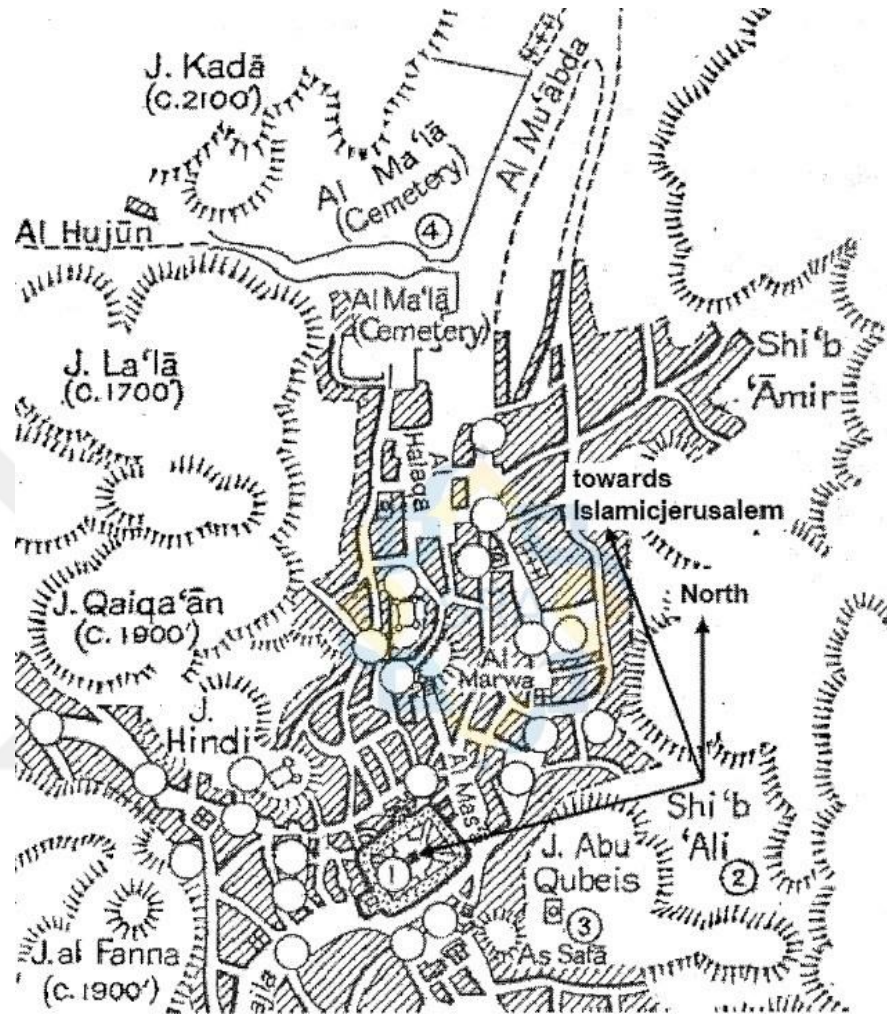
Moreover, at the end of the narration, Prophet Muhammad said that the current *Qiblah* that al-Bara faced, he has to be patient to face it. Thus, the researcher argues that the *Qiblah* has not changed into *Ka'bah* because al-Bara had to be patient until the *Qiblah* changed. Therefore, both narrations suggested another *Qiblah*, which is towards Islamicjerusalem. The second opinion indicating the *Qiblah* towards al-Aqsa Mosque related to an authentic Ḥadīth narrated by Ibn Abbas:

“When he was in Makkah, the Messenger of Allah used to pray facing Bayt al-Maqdis, with the *Ka'bah* in front of him (and he used to pray facing Bayt al-Maqdis) for sixteen months after he migrated to Madinah, then he was told to change (the *Qiblah*) to the *Ka'bah*.” (Ibn Hanbal 2012, v.3:66).

The narration is convincing to the researcher because it states Prophet Muhammad stands in front of *Ka'bah* to combine the direction of *Qiblah* to Islamicjerusalem and at the same time facing *Ka'bah*. Moreover, he is eager to face both *Ka'bah* and Islamicjerusalem (Bayt al-Maqdis) since the location of Islamicjerusalem is in the north of Makkah, so it was possible to face one direct line between both places. Above all, in the last part of the Ḥadīth, there is a specific statement regarding Islamicjerusalem as Prophet Muhammad's direction of *Qiblah* which later changed to the *Ka'bah*.

One could argue that Prophet Muhammad's *Qiblah* in Makkah was both Islamicjerusalem and *Ka'bah*. Nevertheless, Al-Rabi (2009) provides an argument that during the Makkan period, the Prophet Muhammad prayed in several places not only in front of *Ka'bah*. For example, he prayed in the house of al-Arqam located on the mount of Safa, the valley of Abū Ṭalib -where Muslims were boycotted for three years-, and Taif -when the Prophet visited during the tenth year of prophethood. In this issue, Ibn Hisham (2019) also recorded that Prophet Muhammad and his companions went to the hillsides around Makkah to pray secretly during prayer time. Al-Rabi concludes that in these places, it was impossible to pray towards both *Ka'bah* and Islamicjerusalem; in other words, Prophet Muhammad prayed towards both *Ka'bah* and Islamicjerusalem only if possible to do such thing. Moreover, Omar (2017) states that because such a significant event would have been well-recorded, there is no evidence of a change in the *Qiblah* before the second year of *Hijra*. It means Muslims have been praying toward the al-Aqsa Mosque since the beginning of the Makkan period. As a result, the Prophet and Muslims prayed to al-Aqsa Mosque for more than 14 years, only about 16 months in Madinah. The figure below

clearly shows that in some places, the *Qiblah* had to be either *Ka'bah* or IslamicJerusalem.



Map 3. The Location of Three Places: (1) *Ka'bah* (2) Valley of Abū Tālib (3) House of Al-Arqam (Plan of Mecca 1946 in Al-Rabi, 2009)

The researcher argues that the above narrations and opinions strongly suggest that the *Qiblah* in Makkah was IslamicJerusalem. In addition, the command of changing the *Qiblah* towards *Ka'bah* (Qur'an 2: 144), according to the majority of exegetes, was revealed in Madinah after the migration. As a result, Prophet Muhammad spent more than half of his twenty-three years of prophethood (about fourteen and a half years) praying towards IslamicJerusalem. It implies that the early Muslims in general and Abū Bakr in particular, have a long-term connection with IslamicJerusalem. Indeed, this is the first link that attaches Abū Bakr's soul to IslamicJerusalem during his prayer. Furthermore, as

Imam Abū Hanifah in Al-Suyūṭī (1995) said, Abū Bakr was the first man to accept Islam; thus, during more than two decades, his spiritual connection with IslamicJerusalem was developed deeply since the beginning of prophetic time until he became the Caliph.

3.1.2 The Mosque of Abū Bakr

Abū Bakr's spiritual link with IslamicJerusalem was not limited to the direction of the *Qiblah* but developed further into action. According to historical sources, he was the only one who built a mosque in his courtyard in the Makkan period. The event happened in the era of open preaching of Islam; according to Ibn Hisham (2019), Prophet Muhammad declared the stage of preaching Islam openly three years after the first revelation. Abū Bakr followed the Prophet's command by trying to convey the message of Islam publicly to the Makkan people by building a mosque adjacent to his residence, which attracted non-Muslims at that time. An authentic Ḥādīth recorded this event highlights how the reaction of people in Makkah after Abū Bakr built his mosque:

....Later on Abū Bakr had an idea of building a mosque in the courtyard of his house. He fulfilled that idea and started offering *Salat* (prayer) and reciting Qur'an there publicly (Al-Bukhārī 1997, v.3:276).

The researcher argues that Abū Bakr proved his quality of faith; he was an extraordinary man, whenever he believed the truth, he wanted to convert it into good deeds. His character was still the same when he believed in the truth of Islam, and then he immediately embraced Islam without any single doubt. Abū Bakr was very close to his people, loved by them, and accessible in socializing; this is due to the capacity of his knowledge, commerce, and kindness (Ibn Hisham, 2019). The establishment of Abū Bakr's Mosque is evidence that he was eager to preach Islam to the people of Makkah by utilizing his prominent position among the Quraysh to spread the message of Islam through prayer and recitation of the Qur'an. Also, with his bravery in building a mosque, his preaching became mighty because he could worship openly.

According to the researcher, it could be said that Abū Bakr's idea to build a mosque reflected his daily prayer towards IslamicJerusalem. It was a unique character of Abū Bakr; he wanted something beyond which another Muslim did not do by building a specific place for prayer to increase his spiritual connection to IslamicJerusalem. This

happened in all of the other connections; although all of the Prophet's companions have the same connection, Abū Bakr went the extra mile in his relation to Islamic Jerusalem.

Another point to be discussed is the location of Abū Bakr's Mosque, which some narrations mention that Abū Bakr had a house around the *Ka'bah*. At the same time, other sources said in the area around the settlement of his tribe, Bani Taim, which is located south of the *Ka'bah*. From the researcher's point of view, the problem is that besides the house, he also has a shop, which could confuse the exact location of his mosque. According to Al-Ateeqi (2020), Abū Bakr has a house used as a shop where he sold fine fabric and silk to the Makkan people, located northeast close to *Ka'bah*. Because the location of his house was in the very center of Makkah, a Ḥādīth recorded by Bukhārī mentioned before seems to fit with the place of the mosque. Because the narrations clearly stated that many people were looking at him while he wept in prayer, and the pagans disliked that their families and children would see him making the Islamic prayer. Thus, this illustration makes it even more credible that the mosque was part of his house with a shop linked to it.

However, Ibn Hisham provides information that Abū Bakr has another house in the south far of *Ka'bah* where the Jumah Tribe was located; it was next to the area where Taym Tribe (Abū Bakr's tribe) had their homes. Therefore, the researcher inclines the location of Abū Bakr's mosque at the courtyard of his house in the south because it clearly mentioned in the historical source:

Abū Bakr had a mosque near the door of his house in Bani Jumah. He used to pray there. Abū Bakr was a softhearted person and could not help weeping while reciting Qur'an. The men, slaves, and women started gathering around him and looking at him in astonishment (Ibn Hisham 2019, p.180).

This narration refers to the mosque's location in the southern area of Makkah, not at the house he used as a shop located close to the *Ka'bah*. Also, this narration specified the exact place; Abū Bakr's mosque was at Jumah Tribe. Moreover, this narration has a supporting argument stating that during the event of Abū Bakr freeing Bilal, and the location was surrounding his house adjacent to Jumah Tribe:

Bilal Ibn Rabah, whom Abū Bakr later freed, belonged to one of the Jumah Tribe, and he was born as a slave among them (Ibn Hisham 2019, p.147).

This fact proves Abū Bakr's daily life was concentrated within the area of Jumah Tribe residence. Abū Bakr's main house was in the south of Makkah, where his mosque was located in its yard. As for the house near the *Ka'bah*, Abū Bakr used it only for trading activity. Accordingly, the researcher sees that Abū Bakr's relationship with Islamicjerusalem was stronger because he has a special place in his house to face the *Qiblah* every day. In addition, Abū Bakr would read the Qur'anic verses in his mosque, some of which would refer to Islamicjerusalem.

Furthermore, Abū Bakr's mosque, located south of the *Ka'bah*, strengthens the opinion that the *Qiblah* in Makkah leads to Islamicjerusalem because it was impossible from his house to face the *Ka'bah* and Islamicjerusalem at the same time. Finally, this study is surprising given the new fact that the first mosque built during the time of Prophet Muhammad was not the Quba Mosque in Madinah, but a mosque was built in Makkah, and its architect was Abū Bakr. The following map shows the two locations of Abū Bakr's house.



Map 4. Number 38: Abū Bakr's Shop; Number 61: Abū Bakr's House (Al-Ateeqi, 2020).

3.2 Religious Connection

3.2.1 Qur'anic Verses Related to Islamic Jerusalem

In the early period of Makkah, the religious aspect connected with Islamic Jerusalem was imprinted on Muslims' hearts through the revelation of verses in the Qur'an that told stories and described things related to this blessed land. In the meantime, the spiritual connection has already resided in Muslims' souls through their prayer towards the *Qiblah*. Thus, this section will examine the gradual impact on the souls and hearts of Muslims being connected to Islamic Jerusalem, especially for Abū Bakr. Moreover, the researcher wants to emphasize that the religious connection to Islamic Jerusalem for Abū Bakr started at the beginning of the Makkan period.

Numerous sites and stories are mentioned in the Qur'an based on events in Islamic Jerusalem. For example, al-Aqsa Mosque in Islamic Jerusalem is one of the two mosques mentioned in the Qur'an, together with al-Haram Mosque in Makkah. Furthermore, because a third of the Qur'an content is stories, especially stories of the Prophets, Ibn Kathīr (2004) states that the majority of twenty-five prophets mentioned in the Qur'an are related to Islamic Jerusalem. Therefore, it could be said that the Qur'an talks about the stories, most of them Islamic Jerusalem as its setting.

According to K. El-Awaisi (2007), there are five verses relating to Islamic Jerusalem in the early period of Makkah; one referring to the al-Aqsa mosque in the Night Journey event, and another four relating to the land of Islamic Jerusalem, which were revealed mainly before *al-Isrā'*. In this chapter, the explanation will be focused on the four verses since the verse about *Isrā' Mi'rāj* will be discussed in the next chapter. These four verses introduce the Qur'anic terminology of Islamic Jerusalem, the Land of Barakah or *al-Arḍ al-lati Barakna fiha*. The importance of understanding what the terminology refers to is for answering modern academics' claims that Islamic Jerusalem is not essential in Islam because it has not been mentioned explicitly in the Qur'an (Hasson, 1996). These Qur'anic verses are:

And to Sulaimān We gave the fiercely blowing wind, speeding to his command to the land which We have given Barakah (*al-Arḍ al-lati barakna fiha*)... (Qur'an 21:81)

And We saved him (Abraham) and Lot to the land which We have given Barakah (*al-Arḍ al-lati barakna fiha*) for all beings (Qur'an 21:71)

And We granted inheritance to the people who were persecuted, the East and West of the land which We have given Barakah (*al-Arḍ al-lati barakna fiha*).... (Qur'an 7:137)

and We made between them and the towns which We placed Barakah (*al-Qura al-lati barakna fiha*), towns in prominent positions, and had appointed stages of journey in due proportion... (Qur'an 34:18)

The verses talked about Islamicjerusalem as the Land of Barakah, also the interesting fact that most of the verses connect with the prophets prior to Prophet Muhammad. The first verse is related to the Prophet Sulaimān story. The second verse connected with Prophet Abraham and Prophet Lot when Allah commanded them to migrate. Lastly, the third verse talked about the inheritance of Israelites, which were linked with Prophet Moses. The prophets' stories above are associated with the condition of persecution, which means the same condition felt by Muslims in the early stage of Makkah. The researcher argues that this was guidance from Allah to Muslims, particularly Abū Bakr, to face their problems in Makkah with the lesson from the Qur'an. Also, it could be said that Islamicjerusalem was Muslims' point of interest to solve their problem regarding persecution in Makkah.

In the early stage of Makkah, Muslims did not have any reliable strength or alliances, so the only source of strength was spiritual and religious aspects. This fact caused Allah to continue supplying the strength of Muslims in the form of the Qur'anic verses that told the struggles of previous Prophets with various conditions and challenges. According to Nor (2017), the reasons for the prophets coming to Islamicjerusalem are diverse; some of the prophets were born there while others migrated to the region, and some of them passed away and were buried there. On the other hand, other prophets went to Islamicjerusalem to seek hope while others became chosen rulers of the region. In the same vein, K. El-Awaisi (2014) states that the prophetic stories make up a third of the Qur'an, and the majority of them were born, dwelled, visited, migrated to, ruled, or died on this blessed land.

Historically, Islamicjerusalem has unique features, with two great prophets as an example, Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Muhammad. Both prophets traveled by Allah's

command to IslamicJerusalem when they were under oppression in their land, preaching of Islam was rejected, people boycotted them, and they were receiving harsh challenges from their people. Prophet Ibrahim was oppressed in southern Iraq and then traveled by Allah's command to IslamicJerusalem; on the other hand, Prophet Muhammad was oppressed in Makkah, then Allah sent him to IslamicJerusalem during the event of Night Journey. The same patterns of some prophets who came to IslamicJerusalem to seek hope from Allah has portrayed this land as the Land of Hope (Nor, 2017). The researcher argues that the variety of the prophets' reasons in IslamicJerusalem gives the broad spectrum for Abū Bakr to see this land as a source of inspiration to solve the various problems in the future. Moreover, it equips him with a strong connection with the Holy Land and knowledge for being a great leader. The figure below summarizes the association of the prophets with IslamicJerusalem.

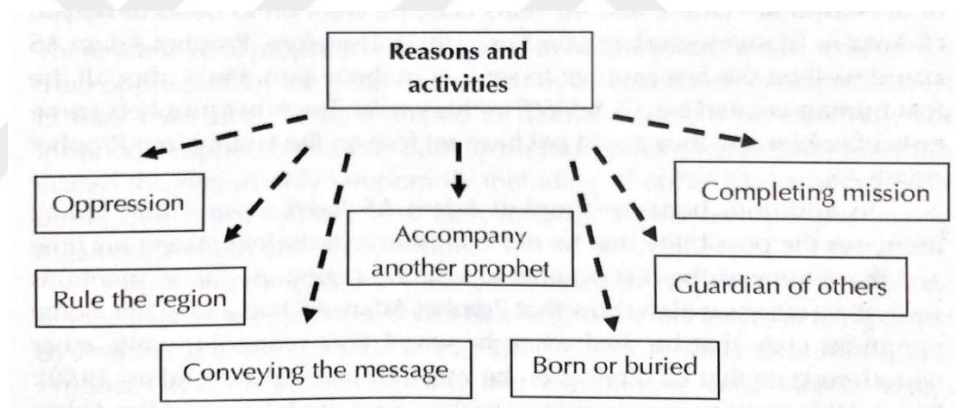


Figure 3. The Reasons and Activities of The Prophets (Nor, 2017).

Another verse related to IslamicJerusalem revealed in the early Makkan period mentioned things within the land, chapter *al-Tin*. This chapter was one of the early revelations which in the first verse mention the name of two fruits, *al-Tin* (the fig) and *al-Zaytūn* (the olive). Many exegetes argue that *al-Zaytūn* refers to the mosque of IslamicJerusalem (Ibn Kathīr, 2000). Also, al-Qarāḍawī in Al-Ahlas (2016) stated that the meaning of *al-Tin* and *al-Zaytūn* was land, or an area overgrown by crops and the area was IslamicJerusalem. However, some exegetes said that *al-Zaytūn* was the olive which the oil extracted from it. On top of that, since many of the Makkan people were merchants, they knew the olive came from the area of IslamicJerusalem. Therefore, El-Awaisi (2019)

argues that the words *al-Tin* and *al-Zaytūn* are manifestations of the physical *barakah* of Islamicjerusalem.

Furthermore, more verses revealed in Makkah were associated with specific sites inside the Islamicjerusalem region, such as those associated with the Prophet Jesus and his Mother's residence (K. El-Awaisi, 2014). For instance, some sites as *makanan sarqiya* (an eastern place) (Qur'an 19:16), *makanan Qasiya* (a faraway place) (Qur'an 19:22), *rabwatin thati qararin wa ma'in* (a high place with meadows and flowing springs) (Qur'an 23:50). Also, the verse describes the group of ants that tried to avoid Prophet Sulaimān's soldiers; according to the exegetes, it was located in Islamicjerusalem since Prophet Sulaimān with Prophet Dawud had ruled on this area (Qur'an 27:18). Subsequently, in the middle of the Makkan period, chapter *al-Rum* (the Romans) was revealed after the Persians won over the Romans in *Adna al-Ard* around the region of Islamicjerusalem in 614 CE; it predicts a future Byzantine triumph over the Persians. Finally, the verse refers to the events when the day of resurrection comes; all of the humans will be called by the angels in Islamicjerusalem as the place of rising raising? and gathering (Qur'an 50:41).

From these verses, it is clear that in the Makkan period, Muslims linked religiously with Islamicjerusalem. Moreover, the theme of the verses explained a wide topic, from the event that happened in the past, the recent, and the future in Islamicjerusalem. The researcher argues this gives the foundation of knowledge about this crucial area for Muslims, especially Abū Bakr. Moreover, at that time, the methodology of transferring the knowledge of Islamicjerusalem from Allah to Muslims' hearts through prayer, since they read the verses within it. Indeed, it was strengthened that a religious connection was established in their hearts. Accordingly, this stage is the primary connection with Islamicjerusalem for Prophet Muhammad and early Muslims. It means Abū Bakr is a part of the Muslims, whom Allah gives the religious connection to be aware of the important place although the location is quite far from Makkah.

3.2.2 The Night Journey and Ascension: The Beginning of Al-Siddīq Title

Islamicjerusalem was the location of Prophet Muhammad's miracle, *al-Isrā' wa al-Mi'rāj* (the Night Journey and Ascension). It was the event when the Prophet Muhammad traveled during the night from al-Haram Mosque in Makkah to al-Aqsa

Mosque in Islamic Jerusalem and ascended from that place to the Heavens. This event connected Muslims religiously with Islamic Jerusalem because it was beyond human imagination; the prophet's journey took just a night. Even though, well known among the people of Makkah as merchants, they used to go to Islamic Jerusalem and Syria spending two months on a round trip (Ibn Hisham, 2019). The first verse of chapter *al-Isrā'* mentioned the destination of Prophet Muhammad during the miraculous event:

Exalted is He who took His Servant [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad] by night from al-Masjid al-Ḥaram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing (Qur'an 17:1).

Along with the above verse, the Qur'an explains this event in several verses such as (Qur'an 17:60) and (Qur'an 53:11-15). From these verses, it could be said that Islamic Jerusalem is the hub of the great event because it was the place where the Night Journey ends; on the other hand, it was the starting point of the Ascension to heaven. As El-Awaisi (1998) says, Islamic Jerusalem was the center point for Prophet Muhammad's earthly journey and the heavenly one. Moreover, the event also has been mentioned in Ḥadīth by several narrators. Nor (2017) summarizes regarding the event of the Night Journey that there are several narrations narrated by the companions of Prophet Muhammad: Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas, Anas Ibn Mālīk, Abū Hurayrah, Abū Dhar, Jabir Ibn Abdullah, and Malik Ibn Sa'sa'ah. In short, it confirms that this is a remarkable event for Muslims.

However, some modern scholars who researched the Night Journey and Ascension used their point of view to claim the facts contradicting Muslims' primary sources, Qur'an and Ḥadīth. One of the prominent academics is Rubin (2008), who claims many modern scholars believe the Qur'anic terminology al-Aqsa Mosque is an allusion to a heavenly sanctuary that is not necessarily related to Jerusalem. Additionally, he claims Qur'anic *al-Masjid al-Aqsa* come later than Jerusalem, and *al-Masjid al-Aqsa* nowadays is the same with Israelite Temple. Rubin's claim uses Orientalist B. Schrieke's opinion who states that the traditions about Muhammad's Night Journey to Jerusalem came into being only as late as the Umayyad period. The researcher argues that Rubin's claim only focused on the present building of the al-Aqsa Mosque. He tried to conclude; if there is no building, then the Night Journey's destination could be to other places not in

Islamic Jerusalem, or the miraculous journey is true to Jerusalem but happened later in the period of Umayyad Caliph. Indeed, most of the buildings within the al-Aqsa Mosque enclave were constructed in the time of the Umayyad Caliph in the late seventh century (Duri, 1990).

On the other hand, the absence of a physical building does not mean it did not exist because the first chapter of *al-Isrā'* specifically mentioned the mosque as the prophet's destination of Night Journey. Consequently, Rubin's claim tried to undermine the core source of Islam, the Qur'an. He created an opinion among the Muslims that the explanation of Night Journey in the Qur'an could be invalid, thus it seems not holy anymore. His claim is in line with El-Awaisi's argument (2011); the orientalist tends to underestimate the relevance of the Qur'an and Ḥadīth to the thinking of the Muslims.

The researcher argues that the critical question that needs to be answered is the terminology of *masjid* (mosque), because the usage of this term might be different during the time of prophet compared to the current situation. According to Al-Ratrout (2004), the word *masjid* derives from its roots word, *sa-ja-da*, meaning to submit and prostrate (*sujud*). Prostration is the action where one places the forehead on the ground as part of the prayer ritual and is the most honorable act in prayer because of the nearness of the servant to Allah. In brief, this is the reason why it is called *masjid*, which means the location of *sujud*. Moreover, the definition of the mosque may refer to any corner on earth, since in a Ḥadīth, the prophet did not mention a specific location:

the earth has been made a means of purification and a *masjid* (mosque) for me (Muslim 2007, v.2:18).

According to this Ḥadīth, any place on the earth is a mosque for Muslims, which needs neither a proper roof nor walls. Hence, Nor (2017) believes that when the Prophet was taken to the location of al-Aqsa Mosque during the Night Journey, it was irrelevant whether or not the actual physical building of al-Aqsa Mosque existed. Consequently, it seems inappropriate for someone to claim a mosque in Islam refers directly to a physical building. In short, the mosque does not necessarily refer to a building but rather to a location. In other words, the terminology of *al-Masjid al-Aqsa* in the first verse of chapter *al-Isrā'* clearly refers to a place of prostration, regardless of the presence or absence of a physical building at the time of the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey. Furthermore,

Al-Ratrout (2004) has strengthened the mosque concept as he argues that it comprises at least three essential elements: location, boundaries, and direction of prayer (*Qiblah*), which interrelate to construct the meaning of mosque. So, with these three elements, it is unnecessary to have a complementary part of the mosque such as a wall, minaret, dome, and carpet as the current mosque has. Accordingly, the researcher agrees with Al-Ratrout's argument that the al-Aqsa Mosque existed because the three elements of the mosque mentioned before were already there when the Prophet was taken for the Night Journey to Islamic Jerusalem. The three main elements of a mosque are illustrated in the figure below. Thus, from archeological and historical evidence, the walls of the al-Aqsa enclave existed during the Night Journey, which is sufficient to fulfill this concept. In addition, the mosque of Abū Bakr in Makkah would have been a simple one with these main elements, possibly fitting only a few people at a time.

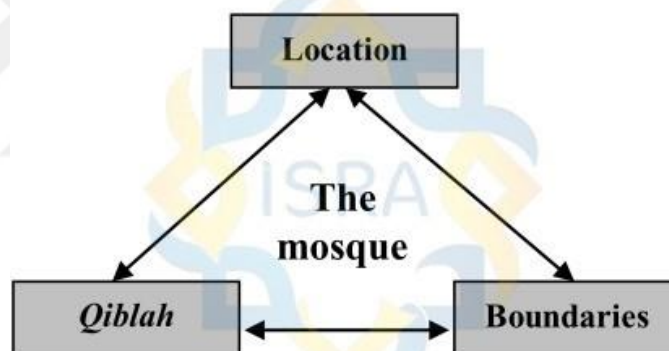


Figure 4. The Main Elements of Mosque (Al-Ratrout, 2004).

The Night Journey intensifies the spiritual link between Muslims and Islamic Jerusalem as their *Qiblah* of prayer for ten years before this event. The most important result from the Prophet Muhammad's Ascension was the command of prayer five times a day. At the same time, this event strengthened Muslim's connection to Islamic Jerusalem because every time during prayer, they will always remember the event. For Prophet Muhammad, the Night Journey was also an extraordinary experience, because for the first time, he received the command from Allah without any intermediaries. Previously, most of Allah's commands for His prophets, were revealed through *Jibril*. Awad (2007) states that Muslims should think of a set of worship that

Allah had prescribed above the seventh heavens, while the rest of our obligations were prescribed on earth. This fact shows how important prayer is and explains how significant the events of Night Journey and Ascension are.

Moreover, the Muslims' connection with Islamic Jerusalem even increased because, before the Night Journey, the prayer was three times a day: in the morning, evening, and night. Therefore, it could be said that since the miraculous event, Muslims' spiritual and religious connection with the Holy Land became sturdier throughout the day. Moreover, because now Muslims were commanded to perform prayers five times a day, it means prayers are not only in the morning, evening, and night, but also including working hours. Furthermore, for Prophet Muhammad, the Night Journey was a memorable experience since he could see the *Qiblah* he faced with his bare eyes; his feeling maybe compared to the current situation when Muslims go for the first time to Makkah to see the *Ka'bah*. As for Muslims, notably Abū Bakr, prayer five times a day towards Islamic Jerusalem could grant a spiritual connection with this blessed land. So, these facts indicate that Islamic Jerusalem is significant for Muslims.

The Night Journey and Ascension was an event that people commonly find challenging to accept. After this event, Prophet Muhammad was tested by the Quraysh, who questioned the truth of this miracle journey. This event was abnormal since the Prophet's journey from Makkah to Islamic Jerusalem, then to the heavens and back to Makkah, spent only one night. For Quraysh, it does not make sense because, as merchants, they knew very well that traveling to Islamic Jerusalem was impossible to be traveled in one night. In this regard, the Quraysh had the chance to undermine what Prophet Muhammad has preached. So, ordinary people who tried to believe this event needed strong faith and understanding of something divine. In this stage, Abū Bakr's responses play a significant role in strengthening the believers' faith. Later, the Quraysh approached Abū Bakr as one of the Prophet's closest companions and asked about his opinion. According to Ibn Hisham, Abū Bakr said:

By Allah, if he says so, then it is true. [...] O Prophet of Allah, describe Bayt al-Maqdis to me, for I have been there. He (PBUH) kept on describing it, while Abū Bakr said, That is true. (Ibn Hisham 2019, p.195)

The above narration recorded three crucial parts of Abū Bakr's statement; first, his words directly answer the Quraysh's question with a strong argument that broke their

arrogancy since they tried to reject Prophet Muhammad's message and Islam in particular, as a nonsense idea. Second, he gave a chance to the prophet to describe the details of the area, so the Quraysh would be able to recheck the truth based on their travel experience in Islamic Jerusalem. Moreover, Abū Bakr highlighted that he had previously been to Islamic Jerusalem. Indeed, even though he would believe anything that Prophet Muhammad said, the exact situation of Islamic Jerusalem in Prophet Muhammad's description confirms the truth even deeper. Lastly, at the end of the public forum, Abū Bakr confirmed his trust in the Prophet Muhammad's prophethood by re-stating the word of affirmation. The sermon of Abū Bakr was his brilliant initiative, defeating the ill-intention that Quraysh tried to develop; on the other hand, it leveled up the faith of Muslims in Makkah.

What Abū Bakr has done was not something new, considering in the early prophethood, he was once beaten so severely and almost died. It was because he tried to preach the message of Islam openly in Makkah. However, the prophet prevented him because it would provoke the Quraysh. The Prophet wanted to protect the Muslims that were still a few at that time. Al-Ṣallābī (2007) stated that on that day, Abū Bakr stood up to deliver a sermon, while the prophet remained seated, so he became the first person to deliver a sermon in which he invited people to submit to Islam. Thus, Abū Bakr's response to the Night Journey describes his notable character; during the Prophet's lifetime, Abū Bakr was the first person who suffered in the way of Allah. Indeed, he was the first to defend the Prophet, and he also was the first companion to invite others to Islam.

From the researcher's point of view, it is not just an ordinary statement from Abū Bakr; it is also a powerful word that affects the entire Makkah. Abū Bakr's opinion strengthens the hearts of the Muslims and breaks the arrogance of the Quraysh, which intends to weaken the Muslims' faith in Makkah. Therefore, it could be argued that the Night Journey was the historical occasion when Abū Bakr became the central person throughout the Prophet's life in Makkah. This event was the trial for the Muslims in Makkah, whether their faith was stronger or even reverted to idolatry. According to Al-Suyūṭī (1985), when the Prophet Muhammad told about the Night Journey, some Muslims rejected the truth and became *Kāfir*.

Accordingly, regarding this event, because Abū Bakr believed in the prophet's miracle without any single doubt, he received the title from the prophet, *al-Siddīq* (trustworthy) (Ibn Hisham, 2019). Among other companions who also believe in this event, only Abū Bakr was given the everlasting title; it is a sign that this person is highly significant related to Islamic Jerusalem. In other words, as long as the title of *al-Siddīq* keeps in Muslims' minds, it is difficult to separate Abū Bakr from Islamic Jerusalem because he has a sturdy spiritual connection to the Holy Land.

3.3 Political Connection: Persian-Byzantine Wars

Abū Bakr's Connection to Islamic Jerusalem in terms of political aspect was associated with the revelation of the first five verses of the Qur'an chapter *al-Rum* (Eastern Roman Empire or the Byzantine). The chapter describes the encounter between two superpowers in the early seventh century, Byzantines and Persians. One of the important events mentioned in this verse is the victory of the Persians over Byzantines, and after their defeat, the Qur'an predicts Byzantines will be victorious, which is mentioned in the (Qur'an 30:1-5).

The revelation contradicts the situation of Muslims in Makkah. On the one hand, Muslims could not do anything since they were under persecution by the Quraysh. Nevertheless, on the other hand, Allah gave the information on the place far away outside Arabia there is an international conflict between the most powerful parties in the world. Regardless of the weak condition of Muslims, this is a strong message from Allah that Muslims must open their mind regarding the geopolitical situation in the current time. Because this is essential knowledge for involving the rivalry with two superpowers in the future, this is the lesson from Allah that Muslims would be the leading player in the region, not just be a spectator.

The prior section on this thesis examined the spiritual and religious connection; now, the connection going further into politics linked the Muslims with the international conflict at that time. These verses talked about the specific place regarding the conflict and forecast when the Romans would be victorious after their defeat. The verses were revealed in Makkah, as evidenced by the initial use of *Alif Lam Mim*. Many Qur'anic scholars argue, except for chapters *al-Baqarah* and *al-Imran*, all of the chapters in the

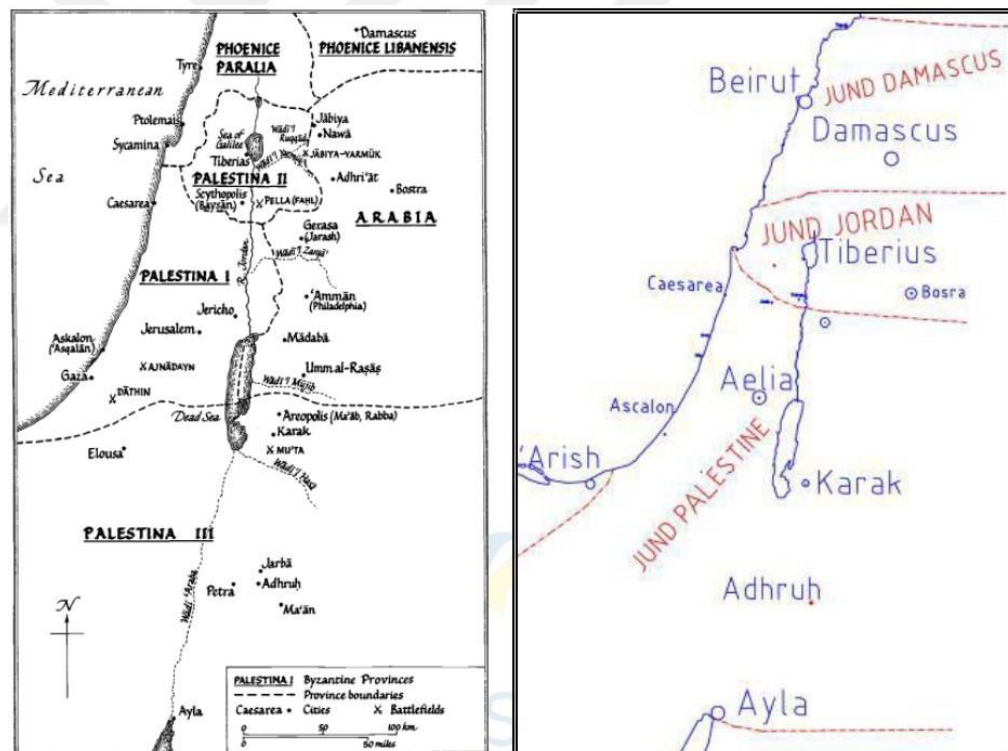
Qur'an that begin with separate letters, such as *Alif Lam Mim*, are classified as one of the Makkan verses (Omar, 2009). According to the researcher, this verse indicates that Muslims in the Makkan period must consider the place they are interested in. In other words, the Qur'an guides the Muslims to follow the news from the war since it would impact politically not just at the current time but also for the future.

Regarding the place of war between Byzantines and Persians, the exegetists have different opinions related to the word *adna al-Ard* in chapter *al-Rum*. Linguistically, the meaning of *adna al-Ard* could be both the closer or lower area, so it could be understood either horizontally or vertically in terms of geography. Ibn Kathīr (2000) argues that the war was in the area between Adhri'at and Busra, quoting Ibn Abbas and Ikrimah. He also suggests another argument from Mujahid argues the place was Al-Jazeera in Mesopotamia. Moreover, al-Najjar in Omar (2009) states that because the Jordan valley lies at the lowest area on earth, he believes the term *adna al-Ard* refers to the area between modern day Palestine and Jordan. Therefore, based on many exegesis opinions, K. El-Awaisi (2015) summarizes three classical opinions and one modern interpretation of the place in the verse. Firstly, Al-Jazeera, Mesopotamia the nearest land of Byzantium to Persia. Secondly, Adhri'at (Dara'a) is the land between Arabia and Syria; it is the nearest land of Byzantine to the Arabs. Thirdly, Jordan and Palestine (The Byzantine provinces of Palestina I and II). Lastly, The Dead Sea basin and Jordan Valley (Palestina I).

According to the researcher combining the four opinions with two meanings, the closer and the lower area, is the best way to match the place's characteristics. Therefore, it could be eliminated which area intersects with both understandings. Furthermore, the first and second options are quite far from the dead sea, they could not have the meaning of closer and lower, so it could be removed. In comparison, the third and fourth option seems suitable for the meaning because Jordan and Palestine are quite near to both the Arabian Peninsula and the dead sea as the lowest part of the earth. Moreover, Ibn 'Asākir in K. El-Awaisi (2007) stated that when Prophet Muhammad was in Tabuk, he stood on a hill and said al-Sham was to the north. In short, if Tabuk is the limit of the region of al-Sham, it means today's Jordan and Palestine (Palestina I and II) are the areas nearer to the Arabs than Al-Jazeera and Adhri'at. So, the third and fourth opinion includes both the meaning of closer and lower area, which are within the intersection area of Palestina I

and III (Map 5).

Although there is no other evidence to know the specific place of the war, the area near the dead sea is recognized as within the region of Islamic Jerusalem. According to Omar (2009), the chapter denotes the history of the Holy Land because it illustrates the relationship between Prophet Muhammad with the place that hosted the big wars, which is Islamic Jerusalem. Thus, the area is most likely mentioned in the Qur'an as *adna al-Ard*. The researcher argues it is the guidance from Allah for Muslims in Makkah to direct their vision to their *Qiblah*. Also, from a political view, Muslims need to think globally in the future since Islamic Jerusalem is an international issue. Gil (1992) argues that the Makkan people were undoubtedly aware of what had occurred with the event mentioned in chapter *al-Rum*. The map below captures several possibilities of the battle area between Byzantines and Persians:



Map 5. The Place of The Battle Byzantines and Persians (K. El-Awaisi, 2005)

The chapter of *al-Rum* also explains that the war between Byzantines and Persians occurred during the Makkan period. Because as abovementioned, this chapter is categorized as Makkan verse which means it was revealed before the migration to

Madinah. However, to understand why chapter *al-Rum* is regarded as one of the miracles of Qur'an, a deeper analysis is needed to get the exact time of its revelation. Some narrations explain that Abū Bakr responded to this chapter by placing the wager to support the victory of Byzantines after their defeat. Meanwhile, the Quraysh is represented by Ubayy Ibn Khalaf to put his bet on the Persians. This narration could be used as a clue to explain the time of revelation.

[...] Abū Bakr al-Siddīq went forth to the pagans and said: are you rejoicing the victory of your brethren over ours! Don't rejoice, may God never give comfort to your eyes! I swear by God, the Romans will be victorious over the Persian, our prophet has told us so. [...] He added: I wager you ten of my young she-camels, and ten of yours, if the Romans are victorious over the Persians, you lose and if the Persian win, then your victorious to a period of three years. Then Abū Bakr went to the Prophet (PBUH) and informed him. The Prophet replied: this is not what I have told you, the [term] *bid'* (few) is a number between three and nine, so increase your wager and extend the period of time. Abū Bakr went out and met Ubayy who said to him: maybe you regretted [the wager], he replied not at all; Come on, I will raise the wager and extend the period of time; make it one hundred young she-camels for a period up to nine years. Ubayy replied I accept (Al-Ṭabarī 1999, v.5:326).

From this narration, the researcher argues chapter *al-Rum* might be revealed in the early prophethood, between the event of preaching Islam secretly and the boycott held by the Quraysh. Seeing that Ubayy Ibn Khalaf knew about the divine book (Qur'an), there was also an open confrontation between him and the prophet's companions. The situation was clearly described when Muslims preached Islam openly since Ubayy knew much regarding the Qur'an and recognized anyone who accepted Islam among the Makkan people. Thus, this event should be occurred at least after three years of the Makkan period, as Ibn Hisham (2019) stated that the stage of preaching Islam in secret was within three years.

Moreover, the narration was seemed impossible to describe the situation during the boycott because for three years (616-619 CE), the Muslims were put under severe economic and social boycott by Quraysh in the valley of Abū Ṭalib. The time of revelation matches with the researcher's opinion based on historical accounts. For example, according to Theophanes (1982), the Persians conquered Jordan and Palestine, as well as its holy city, in the year 614 CE. In addition, Gil (1992) stated that in 614 CE, during the

Persian conquest of Jerusalem, Muhammad struggled against the people of Makkah with small numbers of believers. Also, Omar (2009) agrees with Strategos' account that the fall of the city of Jerusalem on 6 May 614 CE (the fifth year after the prophethood of Muhammad). Accordingly, the year 614 CE seems acceptable for the revelation of chapter *al-Rum* because it took in the fifth year of Muhammad's prophethood; as mentioned before, the researcher inclines that it happened after the third year of prophethood.

Regarding the Qur'an's prediction that Byzantine victory will take place within nine years, and how Abū Bakr extended the period for his wager, it needs to be studied in the historical context. According to K. El-Awaisi (2015), there is nothing mentioned in the literature regarding Heraclius' military campaigns from 613 until 620 CE, after the fall of Jerusalem and the loss of the Holy Cross. Another point the researcher wants to be considered that there were several battles between Byzantines and Persians nine years after the defeat of Byzantine. In some battles, both sides confronted on the battlefields, but the result has not changed the rivalry status between the two parties. On the other hand, there was a decisive battle that radically changed the competition of Byzantines-Persians. According to Theophanes, there was a battle in Armenia between 622-623 CE in which Byzantines, led by Heraclius, triumphed over Persians (Theophanes, 1982).

However, the decisive battle took place around 627-628 CE in the northern part of Mesopotamia near the ruin of ancient Nineveh, in which Byzantines recovered all their lost lands, and they could return their Holy Cross (Gil, 1992). At the same time, Prophet Muhammad sent the letter to Heraclius, Emperor of the Byzantine, in Bayt al-Maqdis (Islamic Jerusalem) for calling him to Islam (Al-Mubarakpuri, 2002). To deal with this issue, Omar (2009) proposes that to understand better, one should examine the Arabic words used by the Qur'an to describe the event. Ibn Manzur explained that the Qur'an uses the word *Ghulibat*, not *Huzimat*, for the defeat of Byzantine, which means merely defeat but could be followed by a victory or even more defeats, while *Huzimat* means the final defeat. As for the victory of Byzantine, the Qur'an uses the word *Sayaghlibun*, not *Sayantasirun*; the first one means an extraordinary but not a final victory, whereas the second one means a decisive victory. Thus, the Qur'anic prediction matches the historical events; the Byzantines could be victorious over the Persians within nine years. This is

confirmed that chapter *al-Rum* was a prophecy of future events.

The effect of chapter *al-Rum* was a bet between Abū Bakr and Ubayy Ibn Khalaf to support each party held on the battles. However, for Abū Bakr, it was not just a bet, yet to prove the truth of the story that the Qur'an mentioned. Ubayy has the upper hand over Abū Bakr because, at that time, the Byzantine empire was going to collapse in almost every aspect; economically, militarily, and politically. The Slavs and Avars snatched parts of the Empire from one side, while the Persians advanced from the other, reducing Heraclius to the walls of Constantinople at a later stage (Gil, 1992). So, what Abū Bakr believes on the Qur'anic prediction is opposite the current condition of the Byzantines and the common opinion developed among the people of Makkah. Their opinion was the Byzantines, after the defeat from Persians, will never rise again.

In contrast, Abū Bakr, with his strong faith, believes what the Qur'an said in chapter *al-Rum* without any single doubt. Therefore, even though he was against the majority of the opinions at that time, this event reinforced Abū Bakr's position as a central figure among Muslims because many people accepted Islam as a result of Allah's fulfilled promise about the victory of Byzantines (Ibn Kathīr, 2000). The researcher argues this event as the selection among the Makkan people who strongly believed in Islam as the similar situation happened during the Night Journey and Ascension. In Night Journey, Abū Bakr was a person who defended his belief, although most people in Makkah opposed him. However, he still insisted on his decision based on his character, which did not compromise his religion.

Thus, Abū Bakr's bet with Ubayy confirms his position as an important person among Muslims since he became the indicator of a person standing on the Prophet's side. The reason for this, he was brave and did not fear being blamed. Instead, he concentrated on promoting Islam, obeying Allah's orders, and defending the Prophet (Al-Ṣallābī, 2007). Furthermore, Abū Bakr's action showed that he followed the news from Islamicjerusalem from the early prophethood until the following nine years. His attention to Islamicjerusalem made Abū Bakr to be more knowledgeable about this region in comparison to other companions. Through this sequence of events, Abū Bakr became aware with the political constellation in Islamicjerusalem. Later on, his comprehension will positively impact his decision regarding the liberation of Islamicjerusalem,

particularly after Prophet Muhammad passed away.

In short, Abū Bakr has shown a high level of connection to Islamic Jerusalem during his life in Makkah. He connected the spiritual, religious, and political aspects of his life to Islamic Jerusalem and took immediate actions as good deeds whenever he could. The everlasting title of al-Ṣiddīq is one of the manifestations of his deep connection with Islamic Jerusalem. In the next chapter, which is about the Madinah period, these connections will be portrayed even clearer and become the foundation of his contributions towards the liberation of the Holy Land.



CHAPTER FOUR

CALIPH ABŪ BAKR'S CONNECTION WITH ISLAMICJERUSALEM IN THE MADINAH PERIOD

After all connections presented in the Makkan period, Abū Bakr's relation to Islamicjerusalem grew even stronger in Madinah. The Makkan period granted Abū Bakr all three connections with Islamicjerusalem; spiritual, religious, and political. These aspects laid a basis for him to be tied to the blessed land more strongly in the Madinah period. For instance, the continuation of Islamicjerusalem as the *Qiblah* and the promise of victory from Prophet Muhammad are part of the spiritual connection. Furthermore, the revelation of the verse talked about the Holy Land, the merits of worship in Islamicjerusalem, and the *fatwa* to visit it counted as a religious aspect. Finally, the battle of Mu'tah and Tabuk covered political aspects. In addition, this chapter will investigate Abū Bakr's contributions to the liberation of Islamicjerusalem during his Caliphate period, such as sending Usāmah's army, fighting against the apostates, and directing major campaigns into Islamicjerusalem.

4.1 Spiritual Connection

4.1.1 The Continuation of *Qiblah* Towards Islamicjerusalem

In Madinah, the spiritual connection that Muslims had with Islamicjerusalem also related to the direction of *Qiblah*. In the previous chapter, the researcher provides evidence that the *Qiblah* from the Makkan period was towards Islamicjerusalem until the verse revealed in Madinah changing the *Qiblah* to the *Ka'bah* (Qur'an 2: 144). This argument aligns with an authentic Ḥadīth stating that Muslims still prayed toward Islamicjerusalem for sixteen months after the migration to Madinah (Ibn Hanbal 2012, v.3:66). Indeed, the issue of *Qiblah* towards Islamicjerusalem needs to be clarified because it still sparks some debates. For instance, Duri (1990) claims that immediately

after the migration, Bayt al-Maqdis (IslamicJerusalem) was elevated even higher and became the first *Qiblah* in Madinah. Moreover, according to Jabareen (2006), many Israeli researchers such as Yetzhaq Hassun claim that the Prophet Muhammad began facing IslamicJerusalem in Madinah to entice Jews into Islam. These claims seem inaccurate because the *Qiblah* was already directed to IslamicJerusalem since the Makkan period for thirteen years. In other words, the Prophet continued what was already settled in Makkah in terms of the direction of *Qiblah*. So, the reason for the Prophet facing IslamicJerusalem to attract Jews to embrace Islam is unacceptable.

Furthermore, the researcher argues that the Israeli academics tried to drive an opinion that Judaism was a reference point for Muslims. Therefore, this claim could build an argument that the Jews were the ones who made IslamicJerusalem important to Muslims. Although the fact was the opposite, Muslims had an apparent reference from Allah through divine revelation. In brief, the direction of *Qiblah* was not the Prophet Muhammad's decision; instead, Allah ordered it. Thus, the Prophet Muhammad changed the *Qiblah* after receiving the revelation from Allah as stated in the (Qur'an 2:144).

To better understand the issue of *Qiblah* in Madinah, it could be explained through the mosque's architecture in the early Prophet Muhammad's life in Madinah. Historically, Prophet Muhammad arrived in Madinah, stayed four days in the area named Quba, and established the mosque there (Ibn Hisham, 2019). Therefore, the source that could be used was the following mosque built after it, the Mosque of the Prophet. The reason for it is that the duration between the establishment of the Mosque of Quba and The Prophet's Mosque was relatively short, so most probably facing the same direction of *Qiblah*.

Ibn Kathīr states that when Prophet Muhammad built his mosque, he paid attention to the *Qiblah* by positioning palm trees' trunks to represent the mosque's *Qiblah* (Al-Ratrout, 2004). Moreover, Al Ratrout argues that the Prophet's Mosque took the shape of a simple square open space with one of its sides facing *Qiblah*. The enclosing walls, made of dried clay and resting on stone foundations, were nearly 3.5 meters high and 50 meters long. At the southern end of the Mosque, trunks were utilized as columns to support a mud-filled roof built of palm trunks. In this narration, the trunks used in the south part of the mosque indicate the *Qiblah* towards the south of Madinah, which means facing al-Haram Mosque in Makkah.

Whereas Al-Būṭī (2015) said that Prophet Muhammad was directly involved in building the mosque with his companions; for example he helped lift the stone, and at that time, the *Qiblah* direction was still facing Bayt al-Maqdis (Islamic Jerusalem). Therefore, the researcher argues that the narrations show that there were two directions of *Qiblah* facing south and north in the Prophet's Mosque. In short, this fact resonates with the argument that *Qiblah* in Madinah was towards Islamic Jerusalem in the north for about sixteen months, then changed into the south area, al-Haram Mosque in Makkah. Another event related to *Qiblah* happened in Madinah, in Qiblatayn Mosque (two directions of *Qiblah*). The name came because when Allah's command to change the direction of prayer from al-Aqsa Mosque towards *Ka'bah* was revealed, Muslims who were praying there had to change the *Qiblah* in the middle of their prayer. The figure below describes the direction of the Prophet Mosque's *Qiblah*.

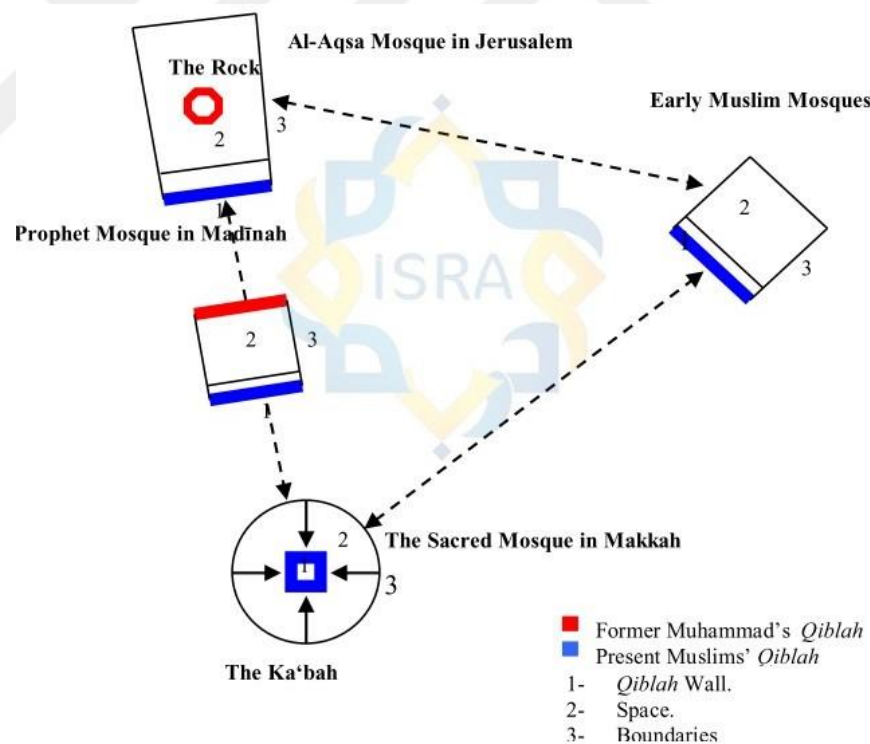


Figure 5. The Direction of *Qiblah* in The Prophet's Mosque (Al-Ratrout, 2004)

Even though in Madinah Islamicjerusalem as a *Qiblah* merely for a short period, the continuous spiritual relationship started in Makkah has a significant role for Muslims in a new land. The researcher argues that amid the busyness of Muslims establishing a new state in Madinah, Allah wanted them to remain focused on Islamicjerusalem. Notably, at the beginning of his arrival in Madinah, Abū Bakr keeps waiting for the news from Islamicjerusalem since the event coincides with the end of his bet in Makkah regarding the political event, the Byzantines-Persians war. On the other hand, the war situation was kept on status quo; based on a report by Gil (1992), in the year 622 CE, Persians were still in power within Islamicjerusalem. Maybe among other companions, Abū Bakr was the person who most intensely followed the news from Islamicjerusalem; it was not just for a hundred young she-camels that he had bet, but also related to the Qur'an's truthfulness in predicting the future event.

Another point to be considered is the length of Abū Bakr's involvement in Islam. He was acknowledged as the first man to embrace Islam, so in terms of spiritual connection, he prayed facing Islamicjerusalem for a very long time. He faced Islamicjerusalem during his prayer for fourteen and a half years: thirteen years in Makkah; one and a half years (sixteen months) in Madinah. This fact shows the strength of Abū Bakr's relationship with Islamicjerusalem because he has unbreakable bonds with the *Qiblah*. Accordingly, immediately after the Muslims migrated to Madinah, Abū Bakr's spiritual, religious, and political connection with Islamicjerusalem was still be on the top of his mind.

4.1.2 The Promise of Victory

From the Islamic point of view, something the Qur'an and the Prophets say regarding future events that have not yet happened is called a prophecy. Although some events seem beyond the human imagination, the prophecy is part of the Muslims' faith, and they have to believe it as truth. The spiritual connection that tied Abū Bakr with Islamicjerusalem was the prophecy from Prophet Muhammad that future Muslims would take over the territory under Byzantines' control. The Prophet Muhammad mentioned this prophecy twice, in the fifth year after the migration (627 CE) within the Battle of Trench; and the ninth year after migration during the Battle of Tabuk (630 CE).

After the Battle of Badr and Uhud, Muslims in Madinah and the Quraysh in Makkah were still in high tension of competition. Even after these two battles, the Quraysh failed to prevent the development of Islam. For Quraysh, the emergence of a new Islamic state in Madinah would be politically and economically problematic. Due to the Islamic development, the Quraysh could not be a supreme leader within the Arabian Peninsula. Moreover, their trading route into al-Sham has been impacted because it was located in the north, under Muslims' domination. As for the Muslims, the presence of Quraysh in the south would make a problem to spread Islam surrounding Arabia.

As a result of the development after the two battles, both Muslims and the Quraysh put efforts into gaining support among the region's numerous Arab tribes. The Quraysh, in particular, hoped to gain support from some of Madinah's Jews, who appeared willing to drive the Prophet out (Alkhateeb, 2014). At its peak, the Jewish community successfully gained an alliance with the Quraysh and many tribes surrounding Arabia against the Prophet and his followers in Madinah. Fortunately, the Prophet and his intelligence from the companions detected the enemy's movement, so they managed to defend Madinah. Salman Al-Farisi, the prophet's companion from Persia, suggested the idea to dig trenches to protect Madinah since a vast number of enemies surrounded the city. According to Al-Mubarakpuri (2002), the number of the Quraysh's alliance army was ten thousand, while the army of Madinah was three thousand.

During several days digging the trenches, Muslims were afflicted with difficulties such as severe hunger -which bordered on starvation-, some hypocrites hung back from their work to dig, and the betrayal of the Jewish in Madinah. Nevertheless, although Muslims had a difficult situation, Allah gives His messenger glad tidings in the future about the victory of Muslims within three areas: in the land of Persia, Byzantine, and Yemen. The event occurred when companions had a rock inside the trench that was hard to strike and made them exhausted; they informed the Prophet and asked for a solution. According to Al-Ṭabarī (1997), Prophet Muhammad came to help, then every time he struck on the rock, a flash of lightning arose, and another prophecy is mentioned in this narration:

“When I struck the first blow, the cities of Kisra and their environs were shown to me, and many other cities, and I saw them with my own eyes.” Those of his companions who were present said: “O Messenger of Allah,

pray to Allah to grant us victory and to give us their land as spoils of war, and to destroy their lands at our hands.” So the Messenger of Allah prayed for that. (Then he said:) “Then I struck the second blow and the cities of Caesar and their environs were shown to me, and I saw them with my own eyes.” They said: “O Messenger of Allah, pray to Allah to grant us victory and to give us their lands as spoils of war, and to destroy their lands at our hands.” So the Messenger of Allah prayed for that. (Then he said:) “Then I struck the third blow and the cities of Ethiopia were shown to me, and the villages around them, and I saw them with my own eyes (An-Nasāī 2007, v.4:68).

Al-Mubarakpuri reported a narration something similar and mentioned the land of Byzantines is al-Sham. During the Battle of Trench, simultaneously Byzantines almost controlled all the area in al-Sham until they successfully took over IslamicJerusalem from Persia a few years later. Gil (1992) states that the Byzantine returned to rule in Palestine (IslamicJerusalem) in 628 CE; then, in 629 CE, Heraclius restored The Holy Cross to Jerusalem (Wilkinson, 1990). Therefore, according to researcher’s argument, the prophecy of victory over IslamicJerusalem in the Battle of Trench made the connection of Muslims with the Holy land even stronger. The prophecy played its role to bring optimism among Muslims amid crisis; something that seemed impossible. However, it delivers a strong belief in the Muslims’ souls regarding the promise of victory. At the same time, this event answered claims from modern scholars, which stated that, after the changing of *Qiblah* to *Ka’bah*, IslamicJerusalem was no longer necessary for Muslims. The prophecy proves that even though the *Qiblah* had changed, the Muslims’ belief that the area of IslamicJerusalem would be under the Muslims’ control became even stronger; something that made Muslims in Madinah become more interested with their first *Qiblah*. So, the claim is unacceptable because the issue of IslamicJerusalem is still substantial for Muslims; such that they had desired to liberate that land.

Moreover, in the ninth year after the migration, Muslims received another prophecy from the Prophet during the Battle of Tabuk. The battle intended to approach the border area of Byzantine in the north of the Arabian Peninsula. The Prophet openly declared his plan to the people of Madinah to encounter and fight the Byzantines (Al-Mubarakpuri, 2002). The prophecy recorded in an authentic Ḥadīth narrated by ‘Awf Ibn Mālīk stated the promise of the victory after the Battle of Tabuk:

I went to the Prophet during the Ghazwa of Tabuk [...]. He said, “Count six signs that indicate the approach of the Hour: my death, the *Fatīḥ* [liberation]

of Bayt al-Maqdis, [...]” (Al-Bukhārī 1997, v.4: 255).

The central element of the Ḥadīth is the word “the *Fatīh* of Bayt al-Maqdis”. Hence, the Prophet signals Muslims that he was eager to liberate IslamicJerusalem. Thus, the liberation plan of IslamicJerusalem became more explicit; for the first time, the Prophet Muhammad mentioned the event's timeline with his prophecy, which had not happened before.

According to Al-Ṣallābī (2005), Muslims faced numerous hardships during their expedition to Tabuk. The weather was hot, their objective was far away, they did not have enough riding animals to carry all the soldiers. Moreover, they quickly ran out of water and they did not have enough money to equip themselves properly. Although Muslims had many obstacles in the Battle of Tabuk, the Prophet gave Muslims confidence that IslamicJerusalem would be liberated. On the one hand, the promise of victory from the Prophet made Muslims joyful. However, on the other hand, it made them sad because the Ḥadīth clearly stated that the liberation of IslamicJerusalem would be fulfilled after the Prophet's death.

Above all, historians agree that Abū Bakr never missed a single expedition or war in which the prophet participated (Al-Ṣallābī, 2007). Moreover, Abū Bakr was the Prophet Muhammad's valued advisor, and he was constantly present in the presence of the Prophet, whether at the mosque or on the battlefield. The researcher proposes that Abū Bakr, who stood near the prophet on the Battles of Trench and Tabuk, became the eyewitness regarding the prophecy of IslamicJerusalem. If one claims that Abū Bakr did not participate in the event, the researcher argues that Abū Bakr would still know about this event. Especially since this event is well-recorded in most historical accounts. Consequently, the researcher argues that this is one of Abū Bakr's virtues compared to other companions; he is always present in every episode of the Prophet Muhammad's life.

4.2 Religious Connection

4.2.1 The Qur'anic Term of Holy Land

In Madinah, Abū Bakr's religious connection with IslamicJerusalem continued to connect him to the Holy Land. Because, besides the Makkan Qur'anic terminology of

Land of Barakah which was explained in the previous chapter, the Qur'an also mentioned Islamicjerusalem in the verse revealed in Madinah. In the (Qur'an 5:21), the Qur'anic term *al-Arḍ al-Muqadasah* (Holy Land) was introduced in the Madinah period. According to al-Zarkashi, this would have happened near the end of the Prophet's lifetime, as chapter *al-Ma'idah* was one of the last chapters revealed in Madinah (K. El-Awaisi, 2014). The verse was an apparent address from Prophet Moses to his people after they had left Egypt; it refers to the Israelites after the exodus when they were asked to enter the Holy Land as stated in the (Qur'an 5:21).

From the above verse, it is clear that Prophet Moses asked the Israelites to enter a region. Because he uses the Arabic phrase *al-Arḍ*, which means land, referring to a large territory that would include many cities, towns, and villages. The term *al-Arḍ al-Muqadasah* is mentioned only once in the Qur'an, and it refers to an area with great importance (K. El-Awaisi, 2017a). Most exegetes believe that the Holy Land is Bayt al-Maqdis' land. In addition, Ibn Kathīr (2000) argues concerning the Prophet Abraham and Lot's migration; they traveled to al-Sham and especially to the Holy Land area. Furthermore, in a map by Mawdudi in Nor (2017), the route of Prophet Abraham's migration towards the area of Islamicjerusalem. Also, Abū Khalil (2003) states that the destination of Prophet Abraham's migration was Jerusalem (Islamicjerusalem). In short, the Holy Land refers to the region of Islamicjerusalem.

The verse seems to complement the Qur'anic terminology of Islamicjerusalem from the Makkan period. In Makkah, the Qur'an has mentioned the Land of Barakah -as the region surrounding Islamicjerusalem- and mentioned the place of the Prophet's miraculous journey, which is the al-Aqsa Mosque. While in Madinah, the Qur'an introduces the Holy Land as another name of the area adjacent to the al-Aqsa mosque. The researcher argues that these verses are a continuation of basic knowledge about Islamicjerusalem for Muslims throughout the twenty-three years of prophethood, which informed that there were other vital areas far away from the Arabian Peninsula. Although Prophet Muhammad's life was centered around Makkah and Madinah during this period, Islamicjerusalem is still a significant part of Muslims' faith. Therefore, one could reject Matthews (1936) claims that Islamicjerusalem had no significance in Islam because it is merely a place for performing ordinary rites of worship; meanwhile, the extraordinary

one, *tawaf* (circumambulation of the *Ka'bah*), could only be done in Makkah. He added another claim that Islamicjerusalem started from the era of 'Abd Malik Ibn Marwan, who enhanced the status of *haram* in Jerusalem.

From the researcher's point of view, Matthews tried to argue that Makkah was superior to Islamicjerusalem because *tawaf* rituals could only be made in Makkah, not in other places. Therefore, he justified that one place is better than others since it has a special occasion. However, the researcher argues that both places have different dimensions of virtues. For instance, Islamicjerusalem is special because it is the first *Qiblah* and many prophets have activities there. As for Makkah, the rituals of *Hajj* and *Umrah* cannot be done in any other places. Therefore, it does not mean one would be superior to the other simply because it does not have the same attribute; both Makkah and Islamicjerusalem have their own prominence.

Another point that the researcher wants to highlight is who made the importance of a place. Matthews' claim wanted to compare Makkah and Islamicjerusalem; the first one was made sacred by Allah, while the latter was made sacred by human beings ('Abd Malik Ibn Marwan), which means the status is lower than others. According to the researcher, the claim by Matthews is incorrect; in fact, the status of Holy to Islamicjerusalem has also been given by the divine based on (Qur'an 5:21). Thus, it strengthens the view that Islamicjerusalem also had sacred status from Allah, although with a different concept of sacredness to Makkah. According to this issue, the researcher hascomprehensively explained the difference between those concepts in chapter two.

Moreover, the last part of the verse explains how Israelites disobeyed prophet Moses' command, and they were sentenced to forty years in the wilderness (Qur'an 5:26). Prophet Moses' command was part of his effort to liberate the Holy Land and bring it under monotheistic rule, which it was not at that time. Notably, for Abū Bakr, this verse may be noticed as a framework for liberating the region of Islamicjerusalem while under occupation, which was the path of previous prophets and their followers. It also highlights the importance of this land since the previous prophets have tried to liberate this land too. Therefore, within the similar situation of Islamicjerusalem at his time, it could be concluded that being Prophet Muhammad's follower is a duty to follow all of what the Prophet has knowledge of and connection about the Holy Land. Otherwise, they will

receive punishment from Allah as the Israelites had received. Finally, Abū Bakr got involved with all of the effort to liberate it. Thus, from the explanation of this verse, the religious connection with Islamic Jerusalem keeps in touch within Abū Bakr's heart during the Prophet Muhammad's lifetime in Madinah.

4.2.2 The *Aḥādīth* Relate with Islamic Jerusalem

In Madinah, Islamic Jerusalem linked the hearts of Muslims to this land religiously through *Aḥādīth* that talked about the virtue of al-Aqsa Mosque. Besides, several *Aḥādīth* discussed the Night Journey since it was a significant event that took place in Makkah; as a result, the Prophet retold his religious experience to the companions in Madinah. According to K. El-Awaisi (2007), most of the narrations about the event of Night Journey were narrated by young companions in Madinah. In other words, the Prophet tried to emphasize the issue of Islamic Jerusalem for the following generations. Hence, this is preliminary evidence that Muslim's religious ties to Islamic Jerusalem in Madinah were continuously maintained by the Prophet Muhammad.

One of the *Aḥādīth* narrated during the Madinah period is the Ḥadīth associated with Prophet Sulaimān when he finished building al-Aqsa Mosque; he asked Allah to forgive all the sins of anyone praying in the mosque. This Ḥadīth was narrated by Abdullah Ibn 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ (son of 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ). Because he became Muslim nearly at the same time as his father, according to Al-Ṣallābī (2005), 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ converted to Islam just a few months before the expedition of Dhāt As-Salāsil (8AH); thus, this Ḥadīth narrated in Madinah. The authentic Ḥadīth recorded by (An-Nasāī 2007, v.1:409), located in the section: the virtue of al-Aqsa Mosque and praying therein and the last part of the Ḥadīth connected with the forgiveness of sins, which means the Prophet tried to connect Muslims, especially the residents of Madinah, with the religious aspect of Islamic Jerusalem. As for the Makkan people who had migrated to Madinah, the Ḥadīth reinforced their religious connection, which existed from the Makkan period. Since Abū Bakr is one of the people who migrated to Madinah, this connection could also be applied.

On top of that, the Ḥadīth connected with the previous Prophets who lived and ruled in Islamic Jerusalem. After Prophet Dawud passed away, Prophet Sulaimān became his inheritor and ruled over the Israelites in Islamic Jerusalem (Qur'an 27:16). Prophet Sulaimān had made a remarkable contribution to the development of the region of

IslamicJerusalem for about 32 years (Ibn Kathīr, 2004). Also, there was a Ḥadīth linked with the previous prophets narrated by Abū Hurairah, who embraced Islam at 7AH in Madinah. Prophet Muhammad mentioned that Prophet Moses requested Allah to bring him close to the Holy Land as he was about to die (Al-Bukhārī 1997, v.4:386). Accordingly, because this area is recognized as the place where many prophets were born, died, buried, ruled, and migrated, it is clear evidence that IslamicJerusalem is indeed the Land of Prophets (Nor, 2017).

Furthermore, in Makkah, Abū Bakr knew verses of the Qur'an talked about stories of Prophets, while in Madinah, he listened to *Aḥādīth* regarding the previous prophets linked with IslamicJerusalem. So, for Abū Bakr, it could be concluded that the Holy Land was the central issue of Muslims' faith throughout the time. Moreover, Abū Bakr may also understand that the Prophet Muhammad tried to hand over the knowledge of IslamicJerusalem's importance to his followers in Madinah. Thus, Abū Bakr has adequate knowledge of the reasons to liberate IslamicJerusalem.

Another Ḥadīth, when Prophet Muhammad told the believers the virtue of visiting three mosques: the Mosque of the Prophet in Madinah, al-Haram Mosque in Makkah, and al-Aqsa Mosque in IslamicJerusalem. The authentic Ḥadīth narrated by Abū Hurairah states:

The Prophet said: "No journey should be undertaken to visit any mosque but three: This mosque of mine, al-Masjid al-Haram, and al-Masjid al-Aqsa." (Muslim 2007, v.3: 541).

The Ḥadīth was most probably narrated in Madinah because the word "this mosque of mine" means the Prophet refers to his mosque. The Prophet's Mosque was only established after the migration to Madinah. Thus, the Ḥadīth was impossible to be said by the Prophet in the Makkan period. Moreover, the important thing of the Ḥadīth, the al-Aqsa Mosque, was mentioned along with the other two significant mosques. It could be said that the Prophet signaled that the al-Aqsa Mosque is inseparable from Muslims' hearts.

However, some Jewish academics use the order of al-Aqsa Mosque mentioned at the third place after the Prophets Mosque and al-Haram Mosque, claiming that al-Aqsa Mosque is not as significant as the other two mosques. Therefore, the Jews claimed that Jerusalem is number one for them, while al-Aqsa mosque for Muslims is merely in third

position. The research argues that the claim is one of their strategies to undermine al-Aqsa Mosque's position in Islam. In addition, the argument provided to counter their claim should be based on historical understanding. The al-Aqsa Mosque has been number one for Muslims since it was the first *Qiblah* for about 14,5 years; it could also be recognized as the number two if taken into consideration as the second mosque built on earth, according to Ḥadīth narrated by Abū Dhar (Al-Bukhārī 1997, v.4:359). In short, the claim of al-Aqsa Mosque as the third position for Muslims has not enough evidence. Therefore, the researcher agrees with the suggestion of the al-Aqsa Mosque as one of three important mosques in Islam.

Moreover, a Ḥadīth is informed about Islamic Jerusalem narrated by the Prophet's freed slave, Maymunah bint Sa'd. She asked the Prophet, and he told her that Islamic Jerusalem is the land of resurrection and gathering; afterward, the Prophet talked about the virtues of worship in al-Aqsa Mosque. The narration of Ḥadīth recorded by Ibn Mājah states:

I said: "O Messenger of Allah, tell us about Bayt al-Maqdis." He said: "It is the land of Resurrection and the Gathering. Go and pray there, for one prayer there is like one thousand prayers elsewhere." I said: "What if I cannot travel and go there?" He said: "Then send a gift of oil to light its lamps, for whoever does that is like one who goes there" (Ibn Mājah 2007, v.2:346).

This Ḥadīth discussed the future of Islamic Jerusalem as the land of raising and gathering. According to Hassan (2006), the Ḥadīth gives Islamic Jerusalem a distinctive status for Muslims since they believe it is the land where people would be raised and gathered on the Last Day. Afterward, the Ḥadīth concerning the merits of prayer in al-Aqsa Mosque will be rewarded one thousand times more than a prayer in another mosque. The Prophet stressed the significance of visiting this mosque and praying there (Jabareen, 2006). Lastly, in the Ḥadīth, the Prophet encouraged to give a gift to Islamic Jerusalem if one could not go there. From the researcher's point of view, this statement is a way of the Prophet to elevate the status of Islamic Jerusalem. Although one could not go for some reason, there is another way to gain the same reward with the one who went there through giving a gift. In other words, Muslims must give anything they could provide as a gift for Islamic Jerusalem.

Furthermore, why did Prophet Muhammad suggest sending oil to light its lamps, even though there was no building in al-Aqsa Mosque at that time? One of the reasons was at that time, a Prophet's companion, Tamīm al-Dārī, came from IslamicJerusalem and lit up the Prophet's mosque with oil. The Prophet was happy with Tamīm's effort to honor the mosque. He then praised and made supplication for Tamīm. Besides, there is another interpretation by Hassan (2006); oil could be a metaphor for light. Thus, since knowledge is commonly thought of as a form of light in the philosophical sense, the Prophet pushed the Muslims to attain more knowledge for the sake of IslamicJerusalem. For Abū Bakr, the above Ḥādīth strengthened his religious connection with IslamicJerusalem since it explained the past, current, and future of the Holy Land. Accordingly, Abū Bakr has a comprehensive context of IslamicJerusalem as a land where the Prophet asked Muslims to give their best contributions.

4.3 Political Connection: Battle of Mu'tah and Tabuk

During the Madinah period, the political connection of Abū Bakr to IslamicJerusalem was his involvement in the Battle of Mu'tah and Tabuk. These battles were targeted into the area of al-Sham, and it should be considered the preparation towards IslamicJerusalem. Omar (2006) states that some practical steps to liberate IslamicJerusalem taken by the Prophet Muhammad were the Battle of Mu'tah, Tabuk, and Mission of Usāmah Ibn Zayd. Abū Bakr's spiritual and religious connection is combined with the political preparation; it makes a solid vision of him towards the Holy Land. So, the role of Abū Bakr in these battles describes his obedience to the Prophet and his understanding of IslamicJerusalem's importance.

After the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, the domination of Islam spread not only in the Arabian Peninsula but also direction northwards Madinah. In this agreement, it was stated that there would be a peace treaty between the people of Makkah and Madinah for ten years. Therefore, Muslims in Madinah could secure their southern border with the Quraysh. In that situation, the Prophet took preliminary political action by sending letters to leaders inside and outside Arabia. One of them was Byzantine Emperor, Heraclius, who received the letter from the Prophet in a good manner, even though he refused to embrace Islam. Heraclius received the letter when he arrived on foot in IslamicJerusalem from Homs, after finishing his vows thanks to his victory over the Persians (Al-Ṭabarī,

1997). The researcher argues this is an important step by the Prophet because he has sent the political message to the new ruler in Islamic Jerusalem. Thus, the event implied that Prophet Muhammad knew the responses given by the emperor, so he could develop a suitable political and military strategy to liberate Islamic Jerusalem.

In the year 8 AH, the plan to liberate Islamic Jerusalem entered a new phase when the political statement transformed into a military campaign. As a result, the Battle of Mu'tah is one of the most critical battles in Muslim history. Regarding the reason for the Battle of Mu'tah, the researcher noted that some main historical accounts did not mention a direct reason, such as Ibn Hisham and Al-Ṭabarī. Nonetheless, other sources told the reason, although there was no agreement among them. For instance, Al-Mubarakpuri (2002) argues that the reason of the Battle of Mu'tah was the killing of Hārith Ibn 'Umair Al-Azdī as the Prophet's envoy. He was on a mission to bring the letter to the ruler of Busra. At that time, the killing of an official envoy means a declaration of war. On the other hand, Al-Ṣallābī (2005) agreed with Al-Mubarakpuri and added another reason, which was the killing of another Prophet's delegation. This delegation was sent to invite people to Islam at a place called Dhāt Atlāh.

According to this issue, Omar (2006) rejects the reason for the Battle of Mu'tah was because of the killing of the Prophet's envoy. Because based on Al-Ṭabarī's (1997) record, the period of sending Prophet Muhammad's letters to the leaders surrounding Arabia occurred in the year 6 AH, while the battle of Mu'tah happened almost in the middle of the year 8 AH. Omar declines that the main reason was to take revenge on the killing of Prophet's delegation to Dhāt Atlāh, since the two events happened very far apart to each other. However, Omar also added the possibility of the indirect reason of the Prophet in sending the enormous army at the Battle of Mu'tah. Omar suggests a danger behind the Prophet's decision to bring a vast army. In addition, one could examine the Byzantine Empire was at the top level after defeating the Persians in Islamic Jerusalem. Thus, Omar concluded, connecting all the conditions and taking into account the political situation at that time, the reason behind the Battle of Mu'tah was taking the chance to begin a military expedition to liberate Islamic Jerusalem.

The researcher agrees with Omar's argument that if the mission's possible reason were revenge, it would have been done immediately after the incident. However, the

Battle of Mu'tah was sent two years after the incident. Thus, it ruled out claims that the mission is to take revenge. Moreover, Islam is not a religion of revenge because even in the most challenging time of the Prophet's life, when the Angel asked whether he would like to turn over the mountain on the people of Taif, the Prophet rejected the offer and chose to make a prayer for them instead.

Furthermore, the researcher also supports the argument of Omar that the Prophet's decision to bring the significant number of armies is due to the grand scale of the Byzantines' army on the opposite side. According to Al-Ṭabarī (1997), the Prophet sent three thousand troops to Mu'tah, while the army of Byzantine was one hundred thousand. Moreover, one should take into consideration that the Byzantine had just triumphed over the Persians a few years before. So, the battle was also the first encounter between Muslims and the superpower at that time. In addition, the Battle of Mu'tah was considered the first battle outside the Arabian Peninsula and reached on the borders of al-Sham (Al-Mubarakpuri, 2002). Even more so, according to the groundbreaking research regarding Islamic Jerusalem's boundaries, Mu'tah is located within the region of Islamic Jerusalem (K. El-Awaisi, 2007). Therefore, these arguments affirmed the Prophet's intention to direct the army into the area of Islamic Jerusalem.

Another supporting argument is that the Prophet was concerned about encountering a big enemy and appointed in order, three commanders: Zayd Ibn Hārithah, Ja'far Ibn Abū Ṭalib, and Abdullah Ibn Rawaaah (Al-Bukhārī 1997, v.5:341). Before, the Prophet had never carried out this strategy by directing three commanders. The researcher argues that this confirms the Prophet's response when facing an astonishing enemy, which requires an extraordinary strategy. So, this strengthens the argument that the Prophet was ready to fight against Byzantine in Mu'tah.

Although Abū Bakr's role in the battle of Mu'tah was not discussed much in the historical sources, the researcher discovered a matter that indicated he had an essential position in the battle. According to Al-Wāqidī, the Prophet walked with the army of Mu'tah expedition until he reached Thanniyat al-Wada (a north place of Madinah), and he said some advice: to fear Allah, do not act treacherously, do not kill an infant; a woman; an elderly, or a one who has isolated in a monastery, do not cut down a tree, do not tear down a building, and invite the one who disbelieve in Allah three options: Either

Islam, pay Jizyah, or fight (Al-Wāqidī, 2011). The researcher argues that Abū Bakr walked alongside the Prophet to release the troop's departure on that occasion. Because later on, there was evidence that his statement during the dispatch of the Usāmah's army was quite similar to the Prophet's advice in the Battle of Mu'tah. According to Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Bakr gave the Army of Usāmah ten advice:

You shall not engage in treachery; you shall not act unfaithfully; you shall not engage in deception; you shall not indulge in mutilation; you shall kill neither a young child nor an old man nor a woman; you shall not fell palm trees or burn them; you shall not cut down [any] fruit-bearing tree; you shall not slaughter a sheep or a cow or a camel except for food. You will pass people who occupy themselves in monks' cells; leave them alone, and leave alone what they busy themselves with (Al-Ṭabarī 1993, v.10:16).

The narration above described the similarity of Abū Bakr's advice with the Prophet's one. Therefore, the researcher argues that Abū Bakr and the Prophet discussed some matters related to the battle in Madinah; thus, he listened to Prophet's instructions to the army of the Battle of Mu'tah. This was evidence of Abū Bakr's role; he always stood up near the Prophet as his counsel during decision making. According to Al-Ṣallābī (2007), it is safe to say that Abū Bakr was frequently the sole companion of the Prophet whenever he was alone because of his faith, piety, sincerity, knowledge, and wisdom. The example of the statement was in the Prophet's migration to Madinah; the only companion with him was Abū Bakr. In addition, Al-Ṣallābī states that Abū Bakr was a brilliant military planner not because he was born as a military commander, but he fought together with the Prophet in every single battle. Thus, through many years of training under the coaching of the Prophet, he could put together not just a skilled soldier but also an intelligent military planner. Because of this reason, Abū Bakr is well known as the Prophet's confidant.

The result of the battle was all three commanders chosen by the Prophet were martyred. However, most Muslims' armies could retreat safely from the battlefield under the leadership of Khalid Ibn al-Walīd. Therefore, from the researcher's view, based on the comparison of the numbers of both sides' army, this case could be counted as a victory. Because in a normal situation, the number of Byzantine soldiers was thirty times more than the Muslims' army, it was difficult to fight against such a huge army. As the most reliable commander, Khalid could conclude that the battle did not make sense to be

continued. Finally, he withdrew his troops with only twelve martyrs, while from the opposing party many armies were killed (Al-Ṣallābī, 2005). In addition, Abū Bakr's involvement in this battle could be seen when he witnessed the battle through Prophet Muhammad's live commenting. The Prophet describes the battle in detail to his companions in his mosque in Madinah. In terms of referring Muslims to be victorious and the live commenting of the battle are mentioned in this Ḥādīth:

The Prophet had informed the people of the martyrdom of Zayd, Ja'far and [Abdullah] Ibn Rawāḥa before the news of their death reached. The Prophet said, "Zayd took the flag [as the commander of the army] and was martyred, then Ja'far took it and was martyred and then Ibn Rawāḥa took it and was martyred." At that time the Prophet's eyes were overflowing with tears. He added, "Then the flag was taken by a sword amongst the swords of Allah [i.e., Khalid] and Allah made them [i.e., the Muslims] victorious." (Bukhārī 1997, v.5:342)

According to El-Awaisi (2007), the Battle of Mu'tah should not be viewed as a singular event but a component of Prophet Muhammad's overarching plan for Islamic Jerusalem. *When the army arrived at Madinah, the people of Madinah greeted them with cries of "O who fled from the battlefield". Despite this, Prophet Muhammad corrected him self, saying, "No! They have not fled; they intend to return to the battlefield"* (Al-Ṭabarī 1997, v.8:159). The researcher argues that the word "fight again" could be argued to be the Battle of Tabuk. Because after Mu'tah, the only battle located near the border of Byzantine's territory was the Battle of Tabuk, which means these two battles are part of the Prophet's plan towards the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem.

In the year 9 AH, the Prophet Muhammad launched an expedition to the north, reaching Tabuk's water source, about 700 miles away to the north of Madinah. The expedition became known later as the Battle of Tabuk. However, the battle also has another Qur'anic name, the Battle of Distress, because of the difficulties faced by Muslims during their journey along the route: the hot weather while they quickly ran out of water, their objective was far away, they did not have enough riding animals to carry all of the armies, and they did not have enough wealth to equip themselves properly (Al-Ṣallābī, 2005).

Because of the importance of this battle, the Prophet Muhammad declared the aim of the battle openly was the Byzantines; usually, the Prophet kept the destination secret in

terms of military strategy (Ibn Hisham, 2019). Historians generally agree the reason for the expedition was the news received by the Prophet through the Nabateans, who sold oil from al-Sham to Madinah. The records also state that The Byzantines were mobilizing armies from the Lakhm, Judham, and other tribes, and they marched towards the south reaching the al-Balqa (the place north of Arabian Peninsula) (Al-Balādhurī 2015:80; Al-Mubarakpuri 2002:567; Al-Ṣallābī 2005, v.3:1813; Al-Būṭī 2015:280). However, Ibn Kathīr (2000) proposed another opinion, because all of Arabia was under the rule of Madinah, Muslims naturally wanted to spread Islam to the nearest land to them. Since the Byzantine territory was closest to Muslims, the Prophet wanted to fight them until they embraced Islam or paid the *Jizyah*. Omar (2006) rejects the opinion since the nearest land to the Muslims was not the Byzantines, but Iraq, Yemen, and Abyssinia. He added that, especially after the Persians were lost from the Byzantines, it would be easier for the Prophet to go to Iraq (the Persians' territory) because their condition was weaker than Byzantines.

Moreover, this battle was regarded as the last military expedition led by the Prophet; because of that, the researcher inclines the reason of the Prophet was to achieve something that he had not accomplished. The supporting argument of this opinion could examine the authentic Ḥadīth narrated by 'Awf Ibn Mālīk during the Battle of Tabuk, the Prophet said, "*count six things before the Day of Judgment: my death, then the (Fatih) of Bayt al-Maqdis (Islamic Jerusalem)*" (Al-Bukhārī 1997, v.4: 255). For the first time in his life, the Prophet mentioned his plan to liberate Islamic Jerusalem; thus, this gives a crucial impression of the possible reason behind going to Tabuk (Omar, 2006). Therefore, the researcher argues that, considering the circumstances after the liberation of Makkah, which means the most powerful force in the Arabian Peninsula whom were hostile towards Islam (Quraysh) had settled under the control of Madinah. Hence, the Prophet knew the appropriate time to mobilize all available resources to liberate the first *Qiblah* from the Byzantine. Also, because of this critical battle, the Prophet made this expedition mandatory for all Muslims except those with an acceptable reason. It could be argued that this battle towards the place has a spiritual and religious connection with the faith of Muslims. Accordingly, the Prophet was making his best effort to liberate Islamic Jerusalem, but Allah gave information through divine messages that his ultimate goal would only happen after his death.

Because the Muslims were going to confront a large number of Byzantine armies, who were well-equipped, knowledgeable, skilled, and experienced in war. Therefore, the Prophet needed as many soldiers as possible to fight with him; finally, he could gather thirty-thousand troops from Madinah. Furthermore, the Prophet tried to equip his most numerous armies ever by the command for Muslims to give charity and spend the best from their wealth for the cause of Allah; because the average donation would not be sufficient to finance the battle. Consequently, Abū Bakr, ‘Abdurrahman Ibn ‘Awf, ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, and ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān donated large sums of money to the army; as a result knowing about the enemy and the destination (Al-Ṣallābī, 2005). According to al-Wāqidī, the first Muslims to convey charity was Abū Bakr. The narration recorded:

He brought his property, all of four thousand dirhams. The Messenger of God said, “Have you kept something?” He replied, “God and his Messenger know best!” ‘Umar brought half his property. The Messenger of God said, “Did you keep something?” ‘Umar replied, “Yes. Half of what I brought.” When ‘Umar learned of what Abū Bakr brought, he said, “Whenever we compete to do good, he beats me to it.” (Al-Wāqidī 2011, v.3:486).

This narration depicts that Abū Bakr's secret factor drives him to do something beyond other companions. He, without hesitation, answered the command immediately from the Prophet to give his best to support the expedition; thus, he gave all of his wealth. The researcher argues that all Abū Bakr's connections built with Islamic Jerusalem made him give all of his wealth. He knew with the significant number of armies, the Prophet tried his best to fight against Byzantine as the rulers of Islamic Jerusalem. It is one of Abū Bakr's virtues or characteristic features; he was always striving to be the first in all matters in Allah's way. Since the beginning of the prophethood, Abū Bakr helped the Prophet with his wealth. Because of his understanding that the battle's aim was Islamic Jerusalem, his connections since the Makkan period with the Holy Land converted into practical action. Thus, the researcher argues that this is the distinction of Abū Bakr; despite the connection to Islamic Jerusalem being felt by other Muslims, he put that connection into contribution immediately.

When Muslim armies reached *Thanniyat al-Wada*, the Prophet selected his battle commanders and handed over their banners. He gave Abū Bakr the greatest banner, making it clear that Abū Bakr would be his most important commander in the battle. Thus, in the Battle of Tabuk, Abū Bakr had a significant role, which makes his spiritual and

religious connection complemented by a political connection with Islamic Jerusalem. Al-Ṣallābī (2007) states that the role of Abū Bakr in the Battle of Tabuk marked his superior qualities in his capacities as a commander, advisor, and close friend who always adhered closely to the company of the Prophet.

Even though in Tabuk, Prophet Muhammad did not fight the Byzantine army, he accomplished peace agreements in several places. According to al-Wāqidī (2011), the agreements include with the ruler of Ayla ('Aqaba), Jarba', Adhruh, Tayma', and Maqna. From the researcher's point of view, when they all agreed to pay the *Jizyah* tax, the ruler of the area near Tabuk was under the control of the Muslims. As a result, the Prophet established a substantial buffer zone between the Byzantines and the Muslims of Arabia. As El-Awaisi (2019) argues, these agreements were significant because they aimed to secure logistic supplies of the Muslims' army on their way to Islamic Jerusalem. In short, this battle was crucial on the way to securing Islamic Jerusalem, and important for Abū Bakr's campaign to continue the Prophet's plan of liberating Islamic Jerusalem.

Moreover, after the Battle of Tabuk, there was an important event that connected Abū Bakr with Islamic Jerusalem politically. The Prophet Muhammad granted the endowment of some areas in the region of Islamic Jerusalem to one of his companions, namely Tamīm al-Dārī. He was a Christian who was originally from Islamic Jerusalem, and then he converted to Islam. In addition, Tamīm died and was buried in the area north of Bayt Jibrin near Hebron in Islamic Jerusalem (El-Awaisi, 2007). The Prophet wrote to him the document known as the *waqf of Tamīm* (Endowment of Tamīm). The endowment was granted during one of Tamīm's visit to Madinah. According to Ibn Sa'd (in Omar 2008), the event occurred in Madinah after the Battle of Tabuk.

The document mentioned several villages within Islamic Jerusalem, and the names of the Prophet's companion who witnessed the endowment were also recorded. From several companions who attended the event, one of them was Abū Bakr. Ibn 'Asākir and al-'Umarī (in Omar 2008) mentioned the text of Tamīm's endowment:

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 to 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 ‘Atiq Ibn Abū Quḥāfah, ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān, and written and witnessed by ‘Ali Ibn bū Ṭālib.

Although, there are different versions of the text and some discussions regarding the authenticity. However, the researcher would not explain deeply into differentiating the versions because it would require another specific research. The above text gives the researcher evidence that ‘Atiq Ibn Abū Quḥāfah, which is another name of Abū Bakr, had a relationship with this important event because he was mentioned in the text of endowment. According to Omar (2008), this endowment could be regarded as a political step forming a kind of authority over that land. Thus, this strengthened the political connection of Abū Bakr with IslamicJerusalem and gave him the knowledge that the Prophet Muhammad was eager to liberate the land of IslamicJerusalem.

El-Awaisi (2007) argues the Endowment of Tamīm was the first Islamic charitable endowment in IslamicJerusalem. Therefore, this endowment indicated that the Prophet had a strategic plan for liberating IslamicJerusalem by making every effort to accomplish the plan. Also, Omar (2008) argues that the time when the Prophet granted the endowment was crucial, because it happened after the Battle of Tabuk, which means immediately after the Prophet had led the military campaign reached the area near to IslamicJerusalem. Accordingly, the researcher argues from the above arguments; it is clearly seen that Abū Bakr might have noticed regarding the Prophet’s plan to liberate the Holy Land, because the Prophet allowed him to be a witness of Tamīm’s endowment.

Finally, chapter four explained the continuation of Abū Bakr’s connection to IslamicJerusalem within his lifetime in Madinah. His spiritual and religious connection laid as the foundation to support political connection. Since in Madinah, political connection turned into military action such as Abū Bakr’s role in the Battle of Mu’tah and Tabuk. In the battle of Mu’tah, Abū Bakr accompanied Prophet Muhammad in Madinah as his reliable advisor to discuss political and military issues. While in Tabuk, he got the position as the army commander and involved in the military campaign within the area near IslamicJerusalem. Besides, after the battle of Tabuk, Abū Bakr witnessed Tamīm’s endowment which is the essential hint of the Prophet’s political step for liberating IslamicJerusalem. Lastly, the next chapter will investigate another dimension of Abū Bakr’s role during his Caliphate after Prophet Muhammad passed away. The fifth

chapter will also analyze the contributions that Abū Bakr made during the two-years short period of his reign.



CHAPTER FIVE

CALIPH ABŪ BAKR’S CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE LIBERATION OF ISLAMICJERUSALEM DURING HIS CALIPHATE

Abū Bakr’s connection with Islamicjerusalem was strengthened like other Muslims through Quran verses revelation to Prophet Muhammad during his life in Makkah and Madinah. It had been seen that Abū Bakr had taken these connections to an extra level beyond other companions. After discussing all of the connections that Abū Bakr had with Islamicjerusalem, it is now coming to the most important point which Abū Bakr contributed towards the liberation of Islamicjerusalem without the direct guidance of revelation. This part represents an understanding of Abū Bakr’s personal initiatives based on Prophet Muhammad’s strategic plan towards the liberation of Islamicjerusalem.

There are three main points regarding what Abū Bakr had contributed during his reign towards the liberation of Islamicjerusalem that will be scrutinized in the following sections. First, Abū Bakr had firm intentions to send the army of Usāmah because he knew it was part of the Prophet’s strategic plan to liberate Islamicjerusalem. Moreover, Abū Bakr understood that both the battle of Mu’tah and Tabuk was the foundation before the dispatched army of Usāmah. Therefore, if these missions were completed, the foundations for the liberation of Islamicjerusalem would have been laid. Thus, if the momentum is maintained, the fulfillment of mission towards the liberation of Islamicjerusalem would be inevitable. Second, Abū Bakr’s wars against the apostates were declared to establish domestic security and unite Muslims in Arabia. He fought two enemies simultaneously; some persons who claimed prophethood and those who refused to pay zakat. Third, Abū Bakr dispatched four armies to al-Sham in order to pursue the liberation of Islamicjerusalem. Lastly, Abū Bakr nominated ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to ensure the continuous process of the liberation of Islamicjerusalem.

5.1 Sending out Usāmah's Army: Completing Prophet Muhammad's Legacy

In the last year of prophethood, the Prophet Muhammad planned to send the army to fight the Byzantines in al-Sham. Among the army, there were the eminent members of the *Muhajirin* and *Anshar*. However, interestingly, the Prophet appointed a young man as the leader; Usāmah Ibn Zayd. Although the dispatch of this army was not fulfilled during the Prophet's lifetime, Omar (2006) states that this army represents one of the most critical moments in the Prophet's life and his relationship with Islamic Jerusalem. It can be considered the last preparation step of the Prophet towards the liberation of the Holy Land. According to Al-Ṣallābī (2007), Abū Bakr knew about the Prophet's intention, so the most likely reason of Abū Bakr's decision to dispatch Usāmah's army was to complete a plan that had been launched, planned, and managed by the Prophet. Prophet Muhammad, in this case, wanted this army to attack the areas under the Byzantine Empire, which is the area within al-Sham and Islamic Jerusalem.

After Prophet Muhammad passed away, the situation among Muslims changed significantly. Some of them became apostates (*murtad*) and followed the false prophets. At the same time, others refused to pay *Zakat* (obligatory charity), one of the five pillars of Islam. Ibn Ishaq in Ibn Kathīr (2004) states that after the Prophet died, many Muslims in Arabia were apostates except for the people of Makkah and Madinah. It describes the rough situation faced by Abū Bakr as the Caliph, which invites debate among the Muslims in Madinah. The Prophet's companions advised Abū Bakr to cancel Usāmah Ibn Zayd's mission for these reasons. According to Al-Ṣallābī (2007), apostasy was a widespread problem that afflicted most areas of the Arabian Peninsula. In addition, Madinah was under direct threat which needed the presence of the Muslim soldiers and army to defend it. In other words, the Prophet's companions tried to bring a logical opinion to Abū Bakr that the security of Madinah was more important than sending out an army of Usāmah.

However, although the argument seemed logical, Abū Bakr was adamant about sending Usāmah's army on the mission set out by the Prophet. He was not convinced by the coconscious opinion of the companions and seemed to be uncompromising on the matter and sharply articulated his views on this matter. As the Caliph, he stressed the significant vision towards the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem through sending the army. Even more, this mission was carried out barely twelve days after the prophet's death. It

indicates that Abū Bakr, as the Caliph took immediate action since he knew well that this was part of Prophet Muhammad's strategy to liberate Islamic Jerusalem. Although the threat of an imminent attack on Madinah was looming closer, Abū Bakr would not reverse his decision; rather, he was more resolute on the matter; al-Ṭabarī narrates Abū Bakr's response to such argument stating:

Even if the dogs and wolves were to snatch me off, I would not reverse a decision the Messenger of Allah had made (Al-Ṭabarī 1993: 15)

Less than two weeks after the death of the Prophet and his appointment as Caliph, Abū Bakr continued the mission of the Prophet to dispatch the Army of Usāmah. He was very determined to continue and implement the last will of the Prophet and was very committed to carrying out his intention to send Usāmah's army (Al-Ashqar, 2010). The researcher argues that it clarifies Abū Bakr's insistence to send the army of Usāmah despite the risks associated with the decision. His decision also illustrates the extraordinary strategy since he considered the internal security of the Muslim community and showed to the external world that Muslim leadership was still strong. Al-Suyūṭī (1995) argues if Abū Bakr had not been appointed as a Caliph, then Allah would not have been worshipped. The context of this statement is that Abū Bakr insisted on sending Usāmah's army despite, at the same time, Madinah having a threat from the people surrounding the Arabian Peninsula who rebelled after the death of the Prophet. If he did not send the army of Usāmah, those people would think Muslims were weak after the Prophet Muhammad died; then it could drive them to attack Madinah. Accordingly, Abū Bakr knew the importance of securing Madinah from the people who wanted to destroy Islam since this city was the capital of the Islamic state; the city should have never been collapsed in order to keep the power of Muslim leadership.

In this regard, according to the researcher's point of view, Abū Bakr succeeded in using his leadership as the Caliph; he kept on his belief although all companions disagreed with him. Abū Bakr could not be like this unless the Prophet informed him about the importance of sending the Usāmah's army. Thus, Abū Bakr understood that the army was a steppingstone for an important event which is the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem. Hence, the sending out of Usāmah's Army into al-Sham significantly influenced the Arabian Peninsula, especially in political aspect. Abū Bakr conveyed an important message to other parties that Muslims were still in a powerful condition; it made the Byzantine in al-

Shamand the apostates think twice about attacking Muslims.

Moreover, there was another problem that Abū Bakr had to solve regarding the reputation of Usāmah; some companions claim he relatively lacks experience on the battlefield. In addition, most of Usāmah's army were veterans of major battles with the Prophet, such as *Badr* and *Uhud*. Furthermore, several of them were in their fifties, including Abū Bakr (before being appointed as Caliph, he was one of the armies' soldiers), 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, and Khalid Ibn al-Walīd amongst others. So, the companions sent 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to try to persuade Abū Bakr on the issue, asking someone older and more experienced than Usāmah to take charge. Abū Bakr was infuriated by the suggestion and said:

May your mother be bereft of you and destitute of you, Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb! The Messenger of Allah appointed him, and you order me to dismiss him? (Al-Ṭabarī 1993: 15)

From the researcher's perspective, Abū Bakr, who always accompanies the Prophet, remembered when the Prophet chose Usāmah as a commander and received criticism from the companions. According to an authentic Ḥadīth narrated by Abdullah Ibn 'Umar, the Prophet said about Usāmah:

He was worthy of leadership and was one of the dearest persons to me [...] (Al-Bukhārī 1997, v.5: 60)

Afterward, Abū Bakr had done practical actions to convince many companions who criticized the young Usāmah. These actions were not just an example for companions but also depicted high-level respect for the Prophet's decision to appoint Usāmah. For example, when Abū Bakr released the army, he walked with Usāmah, who was on his riding animal; afterward, Usāmah offered to mount his riding animal, but he refused and did not allow Usāmah to come down walk (Al-Ṭabarī 1993:15). Abū Bakr demonstrated that Usāmah was the Prophet's choice to head the army and that he deserved respect and loyalty of every army under his command. Also, when Abū Bakr needed 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to stay behind him because of a critical situation, he asked Usāmah politely in front of others to allow 'Umar to stay in Madinah. Although, as the Caliph, he could order Usāmah to discharge 'Umar from his army. In short, Abū Bakr has sent a message to all members of the army that Usāmah was their leader and deserved their full of respect and obedience.

Additionally, regarding the destination of Usāmah's army, Abū Bakr commanded a specific aim telling Usāmah to follow the exact orders that the Prophet had ordered (Al-Ṭabarī, 1993a). According to the Ḥadīth narrated by Urwah, the Prophet ordered Usāmah in a specific area:

Usāmah told me that the Messenger of Allah enjoined upon him to attack Ubna in the morning and to burn sites in it (Abū Dawud 2008, v.3: 265).

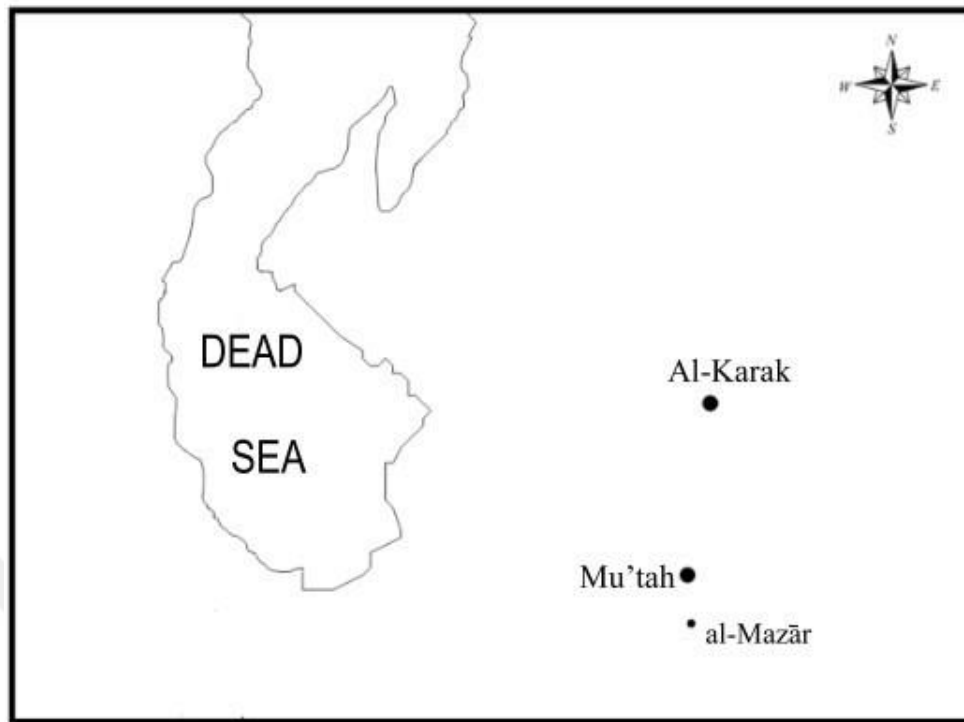
Moreover, in the book of Ḥadīth by Abū Dawud, he stated another opinion narrated by Abdullah Ibn Amir al-Ghazzi:

I heard Abū Mushir being told about Ubna. He said, "We know it better, it is Yubna in Palestine (Abū Dawud 2008, v.3: 266).

This Ḥadīth is complemented by the explanation from al-Wāqidī who mentioned the event and added with specific details:

O Usāmah, go in the name of God, and with His blessings until you reach the place where your father was killed, and attack them with the horses, for I have appointed you over this army. Attack the people of Ubna in the morning and be aggressive (Al-Wāqidī 2011, v3: 546).

Al-Wāqidī mentioned that the Prophet ordered Usāmah to go to the place where his father martyred and then went to the place called Ubna. According to Omar (2008), Ubna was most likely very close to the location where Usāmah's father was killed. Nowadays, the three leaders of the Battle of Mu'tah are not buried in the town of Mu'tah, yet nearby it in the village called *al-Mazār*, which can be seen on the following map:

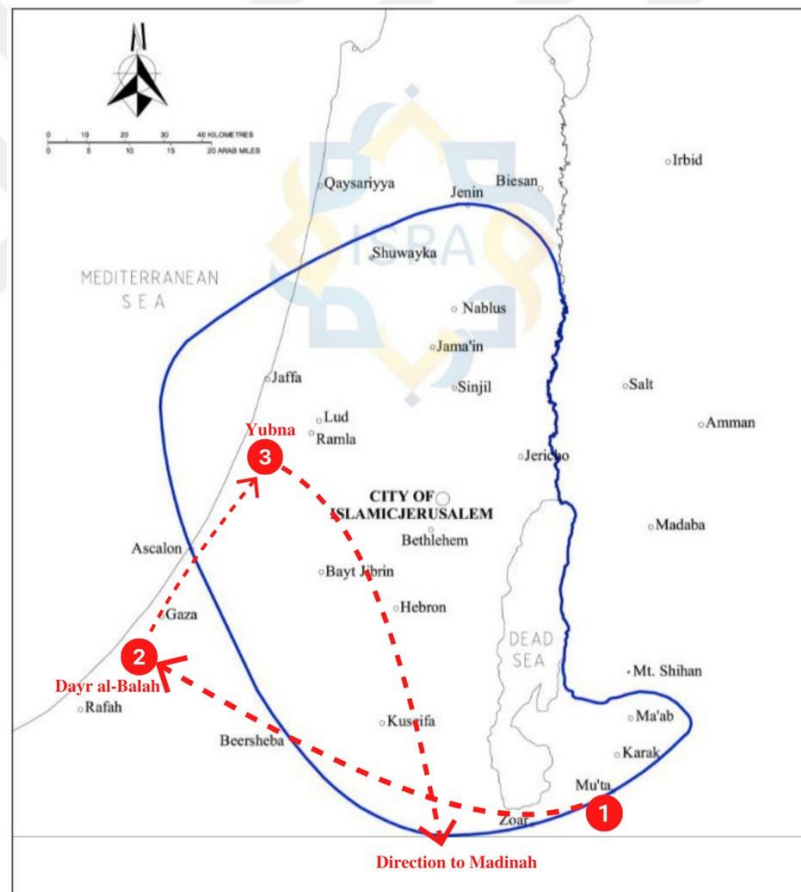


Map 6. The Location of The Village al-Mazār (Omar, 2008)

The terminology *al-Mazār* in Arabic means “the place to be visited” and this town has no significance today except for the graves of the three leaders. This place was known later by the Muslims since there are no records of this name earlier. Therefore, Omar argues that *al-Mazār* today is most likely Ubna itself. However, since the researcher could not find supporting evidence in other historical records regarding Omar’s argument, this statement seems rather weak. Hence, the researcher tends to incline with Abū Mushir’s argument in Abū Dawud’s book of Ḥadīth which is more conclusive, that Ubna was located in the place called Yubna in Palestine. Yubna is still known today in Palestine as Yibna, located 15 kilometers southwest of Ramlah.

However, another historical account mentioned different places about the destination of Usāmah’s army to al-Balqa and al-Darum (al-Ṭabarī 1990, v.9:163; Ibn Hisham 2019:753). Also, there is another information that both places are located in the land of Palestine/Bayt al-Maqdis. In this issue, al-Hamawi states that Yubna is located near the city of Ramlah in Palestine, while al-Darum could refer to the place near Gaza (Dayr al-Balah) (Al-Hamawi, 1995). He also mentioned al-Balqa is located between al-Sham and Wādī al-Qurā (in the north of Arabian Peninsula). The researcher combines all

sources above and concludes that the route taken by Usāmah's army was started from Madinah to the north, which is al-Balqa (area near Mu'tah, where his father martyred). Afterward, the army moved to the northwest which is al-Darum near Gaza, and finally moved to the northeast until it reached Yubna near Ramlah in the morning. In that location, Usāmah burned sites in order to give notice to the Byzantine army and then went back aggressively to Madinah. Therefore, it could also mean most of the named sites and destination of Usāmah's army movement was within the region of Islamic Jerusalem. In addition, based on the research by K. El-Awaisi (2007), the areas of Mu'ta and Yubna are located in the region of Islamic Jerusalem. The map below shows the movement of Usāmah's army.



Map 7. The Movement of Usāmah's army (modified from K. El-Awaisi, 2007)

According to al-Wāqidī, the news came in one occurrence to Heraclius, who was in Homs (Emesa), about the prophet's death and the army of Usāmah. Heraclius called his commanders and said, "This is what I warned you of, and you refused to accept my

warning. The Bedouin (Arabs) come raiding in a month march to you; then they leave in a while without being hurt” (Al-Wāqidī 2011, v.3:549). In addition, Ibn Athīr in Al-Şallābī (2007) stated that the Arab Christians and Byzantines were made to believe that the Muslims were extremely powerful, so the Byzantines held back on fighting the Muslims. However, they had intended to fight Muslims before the arrival of the Usāmah’s army. Indeed, this explains that the stronger argument regarding the position of Yubna would be closer to the center of IslamicJerusalem as mentioned by Abū Mushir. Because it also clarifies the relations between the fear that the Byzantine army had towards the Muslim army. If using Omar’s argument that the location of Usāmah’s army was in *al-Mazar* (south of the Dead Sea), there might not be any record regarding the fear from the Byzantine army.

Furthermore, the researcher believes that the Battle of Mu’tah and Usāmah’s army are connected with the Battle of Tabuk because these military campaigns occurred in the same region, at the southern part of al-Sham or northern part of the Arabian Peninsula. Thus, from the researcher’s point of view, the Prophet Muhammad had a strategic plan towards this area, which is IslamicJerusalem. The following Ḥadīth supported this argument during the Battle of Tabuk, ‘Awf Ibn Mālik came to the Prophet's tent. The Prophet told him to count six incidents between then and the Day of Judgment. The first was the death of the Prophet, and the second was the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis (IslamicJerusalem) (Al-Bukhārī, 1997). Hence, it clearly shows that the army of Usāmah was part of the Prophet’s plan towards the liberation of IslamicJerusalem. The Prophet had prepared this army before his death, and the campaign was conducted after the Battle of Tabuk.

Accordingly, these three battles were considered part of Prophet Muhammad’s practical steps towards the liberation of IslamicJerusalem. First, Mu’tah served as the initial special operations base for analyzing the enemy and conflict zone. Second, Tabuk served as the primary staging area for making all the necessary preparations. Finally, the dispatch of Usāmah’s army served as the final test run before launching the military operation to liberate IslamicJerusalem (Omar, 2006). In addition, as Omar also highlighted, Usāmah’s army route choice was also being considered by Abū Bakr since he was aware of the benefit of the agreement that Prophet Muhammad made with the

people of Ayla during the Battle of Tabuk. In short, in the period of Abū Bakr's reign, the army of Usāmah conveyed a clear message to the people around Arabia that Muslims were still strong, although the Prophet Muhammad had passed away. Also, it confirmed the wisdom of Abū Bakr to deal with the political situation and strengthened his intention to continue the Prophet's plan to liberate Islamic Jerusalem.

5.2 Apostates War: Securing Domestic Threat and Uniting Muslims

Apostasy (Arabic: *al-Riddah*) is the act of leaving Islam after having been a Muslim for a period of time. At the time of Abū Bakr's reign as a Caliph, the problem emerged regarding the apostasy in two forms: some individuals claimed prophethood and became the false prophet, and those who refused to do one of the pillars of Islam, *Zakat* (compulsory charity). The apostasy spread in the Arabian Peninsula, but the main problem was the false prophets within the south of Madinah (Yemen) and the east of Madinah (Yamamah). In Yemen, the false prophet's name was Al-Aswad Al-'Ansī, while in Yamamah, it was Musailamah. Ibn Ishaq states that except for the inhabitants of Makkah and Madinah, Arabs became apostates after the Prophet Muhammad died (Ibn Kathīr, 2004). It describes the critical situation faced by Abū Bakr as the Caliph, which made dispute among the Muslims.

For the first part of the apostasy, the Prophet's companions admitted that confronting Musailamah, Al-Aswad, and their followers was necessary. However, some of them felt that it was not necessary to fight those who refused to pay *Zakat*. 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was one of the companions who believed in this opinion because he assumed that their faith would escalate along with time, and then they would pay *Zakat*. He also believed that fighting them while Usāmah's army was still gone was not a good idea because the number of the army in Madinah was limited. Abū Bakr could not accept the arguments of 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. According to Ḥadīth narrated by Abū Hurairah, he said:

By Allah! I will fight whoever differentiates between *Salat* (prayer) and *Zakat*; as *Zakat* is the right to be taken from property (according to Allah's order) (Al-Bukhārī 1997, v.9: 47).

Based on this Ḥadīth, it is clear that for Abū Bakr, there was not an option to bargain with the apostates. So, when 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb observed Abū Bakr's unwavering belief, he

quickly changed his mind and decided to support him. Furthermore, Al-Ṣallābī (2007) argues, for Abū Bakr, there was no purpose in discriminating between different types of apostates because all apostates committed the same heinous crime: they all left Islam after being Muslims.

The researcher argues that this is evidence that Abū Bakr was more knowledgeable than any of the Prophet's companions; he had a comprehensive understanding that the religion was complete, and all the guidance had been revealed to the Prophet. Moreover, throughout his life, Abū Bakr several times made an important decision that other Muslims initially disagreed with. Still, finally, they changed their mind to agree with Abū Bakr's decision. Especially since Abū Bakr had the authority and knowledge as the leader of the nation. For example, Abū Bakr's decision to send out Usāmah's army amidst the other companions' hesitancy, and during the Night Journey, he admitted what the Prophet said about the miraculous journey. Thus, for Abū Bakr, he had a firm decision that *Zakat* could not be separated from the five pillars of Islam.

After Abū Bakr rejected a negotiation from the tribes, who came to Madinah to have legitimation to refuse pay *Zakat*, he prepared to secure Madinah from invasion by calling out to the people of Madinah:

The land has sunk into disbelief, and their delegation has seen that you are few and that you would be unaware whether you were approached by day or by night. [...] So get ready (for war) (Al-Ṭabarī 1993, v.10: 46).

Abū Bakr took several steps to fight against the apostates: ordered the people of Madinah to spend their night in the Prophet's Mosque, placed some peoples at the various points of Madinah to defend the city from the enemy, requested the help of tribes near Madinah, sent letters to Muslim governors in distant provinces, ordering them to fight against the apostates, and gathered the women and children into the safety of the citadels (Al-Ṣallābī, 2007).

Under Abū Bakr's leadership, Muslims in Madinah succeeded in defending the strikes that were coming from the apostates. The apostates, in general, made a mistake by undermining the strength of Muslims since they thought Muslims were weak after the death of the Prophet and leaving of Usāmah's army. The apostates' armies did not expect such resistance from the people of Madinah. Finally, the apostates acknowledged Abū

Bakr's firmness in his decision to make peace by distributing *Zakat* to Madinah. Only in one night, *Zakat* came to Madinah brought by some Zakat collector appointed by the Prophet such as Safwan, al-Zibriqan, and Adi (Al-Ṭabarī 1993, v.10:50). Later, after Usāmah's army returned to Madinah, Abū Bakr began dispatching troops to attack various apostate tribes.

According to the researcher, Abū Bakr understood the suitable military tactic and initially applied a defensive strategy until the arrival of Usāmah's army. Then, when Usāmah's troops arrived, Abū Bakr changed his strategy to attack the enemy because Madinah already had troops on guard. Abū Bakr had planned this strategy since the beginning, when he decided to send the army of Usāmah. However, because there was also a threat coming from the apostates, he needed a suitable strategy that fit the situation. Thus, he well-calculated the number of the remaining people in Madinah to analyze which was the best strategy to use in those circumstances; thus, he managed to apply a defensive strategy first while waiting for Usāmah to arrive.

In addition, the researcher suggests that Abū Bakr took inspiration during the Battle of Trench when the Prophet applied defensive strategy by using the credit of the geographical condition of Madinah, which was surrounded by the mountains and datepalm trees. As a result, Abū Bakr was able to buy time until Usāmah's army arrived by delivering letters encouraging Arabs to return to Islam and adopt all of its principles. He also cautioned the apostates who continued their scheme that they would be punished in this world and in the hereafter (Al-Ṣallābī, 2007). In short, Abū Bakr was gearing up for a full-scale offensive, one that would hopefully be postponed until Usāmah arrived with his army.

While Usāmah and his army arrived, Abū Bakr left him in charge of Madinah. Abū Bakr led an army heading towards the valley of Dhil-Qissah and encamped with them. Then, he organized the armies from there under eleven banners and appointed a leader for each army. He considered that he needed to encounter the enemy on many fronts simultaneously because the apostates scattered throughout the Arabian Peninsula. Amongst the eleven commanders ordered by Abū Bakr, the names of the Prophet's companions well-known had military experiences such as Khalid Ibn al-Walīd, Ikrimah Ibn Abū Jahl, Shurahbīl Ibn Hasanah, Khalid Ibn Said, and 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ (Al-Ṭabarī,

1993a). The researcher notes that these names, later on, would be sent by Abū Bakr to lead the armies heading to al-Sham in the expedition to liberate IslamicJerusalem. The researcher's point of view indicated that Abū Bakr intended to prepare these commanders for a further mission and give them practical experience. At the same time, Abū Bakr hoped that after the apostasy within Arabia was overcome, Muslims could be united, making it easier for him to consolidate the power to the more significant military expedition towards IslamicJerusalem.

Accordingly, the apostate war was evidence of Abū Bakr's accomplishment by displaying two prominent characteristics: his gentleness, which he showed to the Muslims who sinned but wanted to repent, and his ability to uphold the government of Madinah, which was at high risk from the rebellion. Furthermore, he also managed to Islamize the tribes that were previously hostile to Islam and finally reunited them under one umbrella. As Madihah (2020) argues, due to the role of Abū Bakr, in the future, ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb as his successor, did not have to face the domestic problems that Abū Bakr had already solved. Thus, ‘Umar could focus on expanding the message of Islam and achieve the *Fatīḥ* [liberation] of IslamicJerusalem is perceived as the most remarkable event in Arab Muslim history, even among the *Fatīḥs* that ‘Umar achieved.

5.3 Prioritizing and Directing Armies to Al-Sham

After the Apostate war was over, Abū Bakr made another remarkable contribution towards the liberation of IslamicJerusalem when he sent the army to al-Sham. Indeed, when one thinks about the liberation of IslamicJerusalem, the most common assumption is that ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb’s military campaign towards the Byzantine Empire was the first battle outside the Arabian Peninsula. On the contrary, however, the armies that Abū Bakr sent were the first military campaign of the Rashidun Caliphate in which Muslims expanded their boundaries. Furthermore, in the last year of Abū Bakr’s reign, when the Muslims were united under one flag, well-supplied with all of the weapons and logistics along the way, heading to al-Sham to pursue the Prophet’s promise of victory. Abū Bakr with his solid connection with the Holy Land, prepared the military expedition to liberate IslamicJerusalem. Indeed, the most notable expansion of Muslim territory happened during ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb’s era. However, the starting point for reaching outside the Arabian Peninsula happened in Abū Bakr’s period.

In Madinah, Abū Bakr, as the Caliph, prepared Muslims towards the al-Sham area. He gathered the companions in the Prophet's mosque and gave the public sermon which he said:

“You should know that Prophet Muhammad intended to wage Jihad in al-Sham and desired that effort should be made in that direction but then Allah recalled him to Himself. So be clear on this point, that I intend sending a Muslim army together with their families and dependents to al-Sham. Rasulullah told me before his demise” (Al-Wāqidī 2005, p.7-8).

According to Al-Qazqi (2003), whenever the Prophet used the term of al-Sham it actually referred to region of IslamicJerusalem. From the above narration, the researcher argues that Prophet Muhammad had a clear plan to liberate IslamicJerusalem and indicates the plan had only been informed to Abū Bakr. So, it makes sense that Abū Bakr knows the Prophet's plan towards IslamicJerusalem better than other companions. Also, the statement of Abū Bakr, as the leader of the Muslim nation, that he would send the Muslims with their families and dependents is an expression of an intention to liberate that land and settle in it. After delivering his sermon, Abū Bakr asked the companions about their opinion and they answered would be followed whatever Abū Bakr's command while citing (Qur'an 4: 59), which command to obey Allah, the messenger of Allah, and those in authority over you. Abū Bakr was very happy to receive the responses from the companions, since it means Muslims in Madinah were united to continue Prophet Muhammad's plan to liberate IslamicJerusalem. The event also described how the Muslims recognized the position of Abū Bakr as their leader.

Therefore, Abū Bakr's first step was calling upon the people surrounding Arabia to join the army, such as from Makkah, Taif, Yemen, Najd, and Hijaz. He gave these letters to Anas Ibn Mālik and awaited their reply. Significantly, the people of Yemen answered Abū Bakr's call enthusiastically, and they came to Madinah with vast numbers of people to join the army into al-Sham. Moreover, they also brought their women and children; notably, they gave their wealth into the Muslim treasury. One of the first delegations from Yemen to come was Ḥimyar. Their chief greeted Abū Bakr and then recited a poem which made Abū Bakr smile and he said to 'Alī Ibn Abū Ṭālib, “Have you not heard Rasulullah saying, When the Ḥimyar come with their women carrying their children then rejoice at Allah's help for the Muslims against all Polytheists”. 'Alī replied, “You have spoken the truth, I have indeed heard Rasulullah saying this.” (Al-Wāqidī

2005, p.10). Furthermore, many tribes continuously came to Madinah and they greeted Abū Bakr enthusiastically and expressed their commitment to obey his command. Abū Bakr was extremely pleased to see this and thanked Allah, even more he went out of Madinah in order to welcome the arrival of Muslims who came from the surrounding Arabian Peninsula (Al-Wāqidī 2005, p.9).

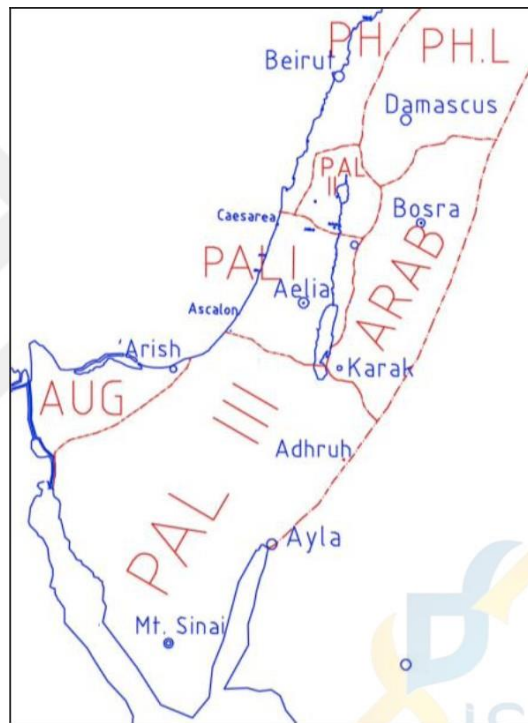
Although the idea of calling the people of Yemen was one of the ideas from the council meeting, conveyed by ‘Abdurrahman Ibn ‘Awf (Al-Ṣallābī, 2007), the researcher argues that it was also part of Abū Bakr’s political and military consideration. In the Apostates War, the people of Yemen brought the first news of victory during his Caliphate, and they successfully fought against the false prophet, Al-Aswad Al-‘Ansī (Al-Balādhurī, 2015). Hence, for Abū Bakr, the event described their bravery and passion for raising the Word of Allah as well as for defending Islam; so, he needed such people to succeed in the expedition into al-Sham. As Al-Ṭabarī (1993b) mentioned, Abū Bakr instructed Khalid Ibn al-Walīd not to allow the apostates who just returned back to Islam to join his army. Instead, Abu Bakr asked the ones that should join the army were Muslims who fought against the apostates and steadfast upon Islam after the death of the Prophet.

Abū Bakr prepared the army very well into al-Sham. From Madinah, he dispatched four armies: ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ and Abū ‘Ubaydah took the coastal road (through Ayla), Yazid Ibn Abū Sufyan and Shurahbīl Ibn Hasanah took the Tabuk road (Al-Ṭabarī, 1993b). The instruction from Abū Bakr proves the significant result of the Battle of Tabuk, where the Prophet conducted the peace agreements to the people around Tabuk. El-Awaisi (2007) argues that the peace agreements in Tabuk were crucial for logistic preparation for Abū Bakr’s campaign to liberate Islamic Jerusalem. Abū Bakr continued what the Prophet had planned paved the way towards Islamic Jerusalem. Each one of the commanders was assigned a place to be liberated by Abū Bakr: Abū ‘Ubaydah to Hims, Yazid to Damascus, Shurahbīl to Jordan, and ‘Amr to Palestine. The latter, according to Al-Wāqidī, Abū Bakr guided with the specific command:

You are assigned for Palestine and Aelia (*‘Alayka bi-Filistīn wa-Iliyā’*) (Al-Wāqidī 2005, p.31).

Additionally, one of the soldiers stated, *“I was with the army which Abū Bakr sent to Aelia and Palestine under the leadership of ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ”* (Al-Wāqidī 2005, p.30). Furthermore, the researcher argues that Abū Bakr gave a particular instruction as part of

his stressing regarding Islamic Jerusalem. He knew there was a different place between Palestina Tertia and Aelia because the Byzantine divided the area into three parts: Palestina Prima (PAL I), Palestina Secunda (PAL II), and Palestina Tertia (PAL III). Aelia is located in the Palestina Prima, and at the center of Aelia is Aelia Capitolina, the walled city where al-Aqsa Mosque is located. Thus, the word Palestine which Abū Bakr mentioned to ‘Amr, refers to the Palestina Tertia since located in the south of Aelia, the place where ‘Amr and his army came from the south (Madinah). The map below illustrates the division of Byzantine provinces in al-Sham.



Map 8. Byzantine Provinces of al-Sham (K. El-Awaisi, 2007)

After one of the first encounters with the Byzantine army in Palestine, ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ asked some of the Arab prisoners and they told to ‘Amr, “*O Arabs, Heraclius has sent Rubīs against you with an army of 100.000 men and has instructed him to prevent anyone from entering Aelia*” (Al-Wāqidī 2005, p.36). From this narration, Aelia most probably referred to the region rather than the city, as ‘Amr had entered Palestina Tertia, and Rubīs came down to them in Palestina Tertia before they entered Palestina Prima. Afterward, a battle between ‘Amr and Rubīs which took place in *Dathin* (Gaza) (Al-

Balādhurī 2015: 141). After the battle, ‘Amr sent a letter to Abū ‘Ubaydah informing him that he had conquered Palestine, “... *I had arrived in Palestine and fought against a Roman army of 100.000 men under the command of Rubīs. Allah granted us such a victory...*” (Al-Wāqidī 2005, p.39). From this narration clearly seen that ‘Amr had conquered the whole of Palestine, which means Palestina Tertia, but in fact, he had not arrived yet in Aelia. So, this stressed the argument that Aelia was a different place from Palestine (K. El-Awaisi, 2007).

Interestingly, Al-Wāqidī mentioned that during the night, Abū Bakr was anxious in Madinah and he prayed to Allah for the victory of the armies in al-Sham. Then he dreamt that ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ and his men were passing through a dark narrow mountain-pass and were greatly worried. They wanted to leave the pass. ‘Amr spurred his horse and the others followed him. Suddenly he found himself in a lush green, wide place. He encamped and found great comfort. This dream greatly pleased Abū Bakr; ‘Uthmān interpreted it as a victory for ‘Amr and his army but it appeared that they would first have to undergo great difficulty (Al-Wāqidī 2005, p.31).

The reason which might influence Abū Bakr to appoint ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ is still needed to be investigated to have a clear picture of his eagerness to liberate IslamicJerusalem. Because Abū Bakr must have an opinion to choose the one to achieve the goal as a military expert. Therefore, he wanted a commander who had sufficient knowledge about Aelia's area and was skilled in the war. Regarding ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ, he knew his credibility during the war; as al-Azdī in Al-Ṣallābī (2007) mentioned that Abū Bakr described the character of ‘Amr in terms of the art of war; he has foresight, experience, and worthy decision. In addition, it is worth to be counted that ‘Amr was the one whom the Prophet appointed to lead the expedition in Dhat al-Salasil (the area near the al-Sham border), although, at that time, ‘Amr had just converted into Islam. The Prophet's reason was that ‘Amr's mother belonged to the tribe of Bali, which dwelled in that area (Al-Mubarakpuri, 2002). Because all the requirements seem fit to ‘Amr, Abū Bakr chose him as the commander towards the region of Aelia.

Moreover, another discussion from Athamina's (1994) shows how Abū Bakr's priority was to liberate IslamicJerusalem. When Khalid Ibn al-Walīd traveled to Hira, Iraq to act on the ground in the manner of al-Muthanna al-Shaybani, a leader of the Bakr Ibn

Wa'il tribe who led raids into Persian-controlled Iraqi territory without consulting first with the Caliph in Madinah. The Caliph Abū Bakr had earlier expressed a lack of interest in seizing Iraq at a time when Madinah's attention and resources were focused on conquering al-Sham, prompting some historians to wonder if Khalid's actions were planned with him. However, according to Al-Ṭabarī, Khalid's actions in Iraq were coordinated with Madinah and carried out under Abū Bakr's explicit instructions. Khalid went to Iraq from Yamamah, and Abū Bakr commanded him to head the area where al-Muthanna was located (Al-Ṭabarī 1993b, v.11:2). However, al-Wāqidī stated that there is a difference of opinion about the matter of Khalid. One opinion holds that he went straight from Yamamah to Iraq, whereas other states that he returned from Yamamah to Madinah and then went to Iraq from Madinah (Al-Wāqidī, 2011), but the main point is Abū Bakr directed Khalid movement from Madinah.

The researcher inclines with Athamina's argument that Abū Bakr prioritized Islamicjerusalem over Iraq. However, at the edge of the Apostates War, al-Muthanna came to Madinah asked permission from Abū Bakr that his tribe wanted to fight against Persians since they dwelled in the borders between Arabia and Iraq. Abū Bakr accepted his request, then al-Muthanna came back to Iraq. At the same time, Abū Bakr sent a letter to Khalid in Yamamah ordering him to be a leader of al-Muthanna in Iraq because Khalid's position was quite near going to Iraq. Furthermore, the exciting thing is that the content of the letter from Abū Bakr to Khalid described his initial intention to send Khalid into al-Sham. Thus, the researcher argues that the initial plan of Abū Bakr wanted to drive all the available resources into al-Sham. Still, coincidently, a leader of a tribe from Iraq came to ask legitimation to encounter Persians on behalf of Madinah. To deal with the situation, Abū Bakr commanded Khalid went to Iraq first to affirm the authority of Madinah to al-Muthanna, afterward heading to al-Sham. Al-Ṭabarī recorded the letter that described Abū Bakr's plan to send Khalid to al-Sham:

When Abū Bakr wrote to Khalid Ibn al-Walīd while the letter was in al-Yamamah, that he [should] set out for Syria, he also commanded him to begin with Iraq, so that he might pass through it. Khalid then began his journey from al-Yamamah, going along until he reached al-Nibaj (Al-Ṭabarī 1993b, v.11:4)

Moreover, when a crisis developed in al-Sham, Abū Bakr received the reinforcement request from the Muslim army. According to Al-Ṭabarī (1993b), Abū Bakr wrote to Khalid Ibn al-Walīd to join them and commanded him to leave al-Muthanna in charge of Iraq. One could probably claim that this statement contradicts the previous argument that Abū Bakr's first plan indeed to send Khalid into al-Sham since Abū Bakr seems commanded Khalid just because there was a request for reinforcement to al-Sham. However, the researcher perceived that the letter was not necessarily separate order; it was only to speed up the initial plan of Abū Bakr. The supporting argument on this issue recorded by Ibn Murajjā, in the letter sent by Abū Bakr to Khalid, he said:

Hurry to your brothers in al-Sham, by Allah, a *qaryah* (town) amongst the Qurā (towns) from Arḍ al-Maqdis [Islamicjerusalem], Allah helps us conquer, is better to me than the conquest of a great province from the provinces of Iraq (Ibn al-Murajjā 1995:55).

In this letter, Abū Bakr as the leader highlights the importance of Islamicjerusalem that is mentioned as al-Sham, which represents almost the same areas. The letter conveys that Abū Bakr was more concerned with Islamicjerusalem than Iraq and then decided his instruction. Also, Abū Bakr felt safe when only al-Muthanna and his tribes guarded the border of Iraq. The researcher argues this was another evidence of Abū Bakr's priority over Islamicjerusalem, and it could be compared the number of armies which he sent between to al-Sham and Iraq. Even though Persians were weaker than Byzantines because they suffered the great defeat the previous year, it could be assumed that Abū Bakr would fight against the weak one. Nevertheless, he insisted on fighting against the strong one in al-Sham. In short, from the researcher's point of view, Abū Bakr was indeed executing the Prophet Muhammad's strategic plan to liberate Islamicjerusalem and adjust the implementation based on the situation during his leadership.

These efforts and resources that Abū Bakr presented towards the liberation of al-Sham are the contributions that will lead to the ultimate liberation of Islamicjerusalem. As described by Genequand (2014), the conquest of al-Sham may be separated into three periods. The first phase, which took place between 12 AH/633 CE and 13 AH/634 CE, witnessed conquest into al-Sham's districts, intending to unite Arab tribes. The second phase, which lasted from 13 AH/634 CE to 15 AH/636 CE, was the main military conquest, during which most of al-Sham were conquered. Even with the arrival of

additional Byzantine forces, the Islamic army won many significant battles, including Fahl (Pella) (13 AH/635 CE) and Yarmuk (15 or 16 AH/636 or 637 CE), which effectively ended the Byzantine Empire's eastern territories. Finally, between 16 AH/637CE and 27 AH/647-648 CE, the third phase was the conquest of Northern Syria, the Mediterranean coast, and several significant towns like Jerusalem [IslamicJerusalem]. Thus, it can be comprehended that Abū Bakr's efforts, leading the Muslim armies to IslamicJerusalem, were significantly contributed to the later phases.

As part of the second phase mentioned above, according to historical sources, just before Abū Bakr passed away, he received a letter from Khalid Ibn al-Walīd's messenger, 'Abdurrahman Ibn Ḥumayd, which informed him of the victory in the Battle of Ajnādayn. Al- Wāqidī recorded the details of the event:

Abū Bakr would leave Madinah daily after Salātul Fajr for news on al-Sham. One day as he was leaving Madinah as was his habit, Ibn Ḥumayd was seen coming. The companions hurriedly asked, "From where are you coming?" Ibn Ḥumayd: From al-Sham - Allah has granted the Muslims victory. Abū Bakr immediately fell into prostration out of thanks. ...He lifted his head and softly went through the letter and then after absorbing it, read it out to the others (Al-Wāqidī 2005, p.114).

Afterward, the Muslim army headed towards the area of Yarmuk to unite all the armies to fight against Byzantines. However, when Abū Bakr was waiting for good news from the al-Sham, he passed away at sixty-three. Nevertheless, until the last breath, Abū Bakr insisted on monitoring the development of the battle towards the liberation of IslamicJerusalem. Indeed, throughout Abū Bakr's life, all his contributions were devoted to IslamicJerusalem.

5.4 Nominating the Successor to Ensure the Liberation of IslamicJerusalem

After all of Abū Bakr's contributions towards the liberation of IslamicJerusalem, Abū Bakr realized that the final moment of the first Muslim liberation of the Holy Land might not happen during his Caliphate. Thus, another significant contribution of Abū Bakr towards the liberation of IslamicJerusalem is to ensure that his successor will carry out the same vision. Thus, even before his death, Abū Bakr still thought about the sustainability of his struggle towards the liberation of IslamicJerusalem. Especially since he understood this as a legacy inherited from Prophet Muhammad.

Furthermore, when Abū Bakr was contemplating the nomination of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to succeed him, he asked several companions such as ‘Abdurrahman Ibn ‘Awf, Utsman Ibn Affan, and Asma bt ‘Umays in private and separate occasions regarding ‘Umar. Most of them gave positive responses regarding ‘Umar (Al-Ṭabarī, 1993b). Hence, he nominated ‘Umar as his successor to the general meeting. Abū Bakr said to the general meeting of the Muslims, “If you so desire (and I shall have no objection), you may sit together to elect a man of your own choice” (KakaKhel, 1985). As Diyaa Ar-Rees in Al-Ṣallābī (2007) mentioned that ‘Umar’s appointment to be the next Caliph after Abū Bakr followed the principle of Islam as in *shura* or mutual consultation. In short, *shura* values are still implemented in this process of succession.

Moreover, Abū Bakr’s endeavor to nominate and justify his reasoning about ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb as the best candidate played a vital role in the process. ‘Umar was from the tribe of ‘Ady Ibn K‘ab, which was one of the ten noble tribes of Quraysh. ‘Umar’s tribe was distinguished by its knowledge, wisdom, and intellect, which allowed its members to hold the position of ambassador to other towns and arbitrators in disputes (Haikal, 2015). However, some companions found ‘Umar as a tough person, so they were cast doubt if he became the Caliph. Jabnoun (2012) argues the toughness of ‘Umar stemmed from his commitment to discipline, law, and order. ‘Umar was a man of strong will and faith. Although he was a former heavy drinker, but he also was the first to advocate the prohibition of alcohol. More importantly, one of the main reasons that might lead Abū Bakr to trust ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb as his successor is ‘Umar’s track record as the confidant of Abu Bakr during his decision making or strategic planning. For instance, when Abū Bakr appointed Sa‘id Ibn Khalid as one of the commanders into al-Sham, ‘Umar heard and then became angry. He told Abū Bakr that there are better candidates than Sa‘id. After considering ‘Umar’s suggestion and consulting this issue, Abū Bakr followed ‘Umar’s opinion. Because for Abū Bakr, ‘Umar had firm faith in his heart, he always gave good advice, and the Prophet held him in high esteem (Al-Wāqidī, 2005)

Ibn Athīr in Al-Ṣallābī (2007) stated that Abū Bakr justified his decision to nominate ‘Umar despite his toughness, because ‘Umar saw Abū Bakr as a soft person. But, then when the responsibilities of leadership fall upon him, he will act less toughly

than he does now. According to Haikal (2015), during ‘Umar’s inauguration speech, he said that his toughness would still be maintained in dealing with the people who are unjust and hostile to Muslims. ‘Umar was not tough in every matter; his toughness was not an end in itself; it was a means to serve the interest of Islam. Jabnoun (2012) argues it can better be called strength or resolve. Anauthentic Ḥadīth recorded regarding ‘Umar’s characteristic:

The most graceful person for my nation is Abū Bakr, and the toughest person for the sake of the religion of Allah, is ‘Umar (Ibn Mājah 2007, v.1:178).

‘Umar was also an intellectual and possessed a great intuition based on his background from the notable family which was remarkable as wise and well-educated family. His intuition and cleverness were manifested in many situations, for instance, many revelations had supported his opinion many times: the treatment of the prisoners of war from the battle of Badr, the wives of the Prophet covering themselves, the prohibition of alcohol consumption the prohibition of praying for the deceased hypocrites and joining their funerals, and the necessity of taking permission before entering private rooms. Furthermore, during Abū Bakr’s reign, he appointed ‘Umar as the judge of Muslims and the result was ‘Umar had successfully accomplished his legal responsibility to maintain justice within the Muslim community. Finally, ‘Umar had accumulated comprehensive and strategic knowledge by being a close adviser to the Prophet Muhammad. Accordingly, ‘Umar’s physique, resolve, courage, knowledge, conscience, and justice earned him a lot of respect and reverence, adding even more reasons for Abū Bakr to nominate him.

The researcher argues that among Abū Bakr’s reasons was ‘Umar had a lot of potential to become the vital factor in maintaining the unity and order of the growing Muslim state. ‘Umar was Abū Bakr’s solution for this nation because he saw that the world was coming to the Muslims with its riches and temptations, and he feared that if they embraced those temptations with open arms, then they would be heading down the path of destruction. The researcher assumes that since Abū Bakr’s priority is to maintain the unity of Muslims, he would like to make sure the process of electing the next leader went smoothly and without any disputes that might harm the solidarity of Muslims.

Abū Bakr's expectations and hope for 'Umar were fulfilled later. 'Umar prioritized the liberation of IslamicJerusalem and continued the effort of Prophet Muhammad and Abū Bakr. One of the evidences is that during his Caliphate, 'Umar had never left Madinah for any *Fatih*, and the only time he left Madinah was during the historical event of the first Muslim liberation of IslamicJerusalem. 'Umar also knew that the liberation of IslamicJerusalem was a legacy of Prophet Muhammad and Abū Bakr, as highlighted in his Assurance of *Aman* after the first Muslim liberation of IslamicJerusalem. In one part of Al-Ṭabarī version of 'Umar's assurance of Aman, which was translated by El-Awaisi (2018b), *"The contents of this assurance are under the covenant of God, are the responsibilities of His Prophet, of the Caliphs, and of the Faithful if (the people of Aelia) pay the tax according to their obligations."* Indeed, 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb did not attribute the first Muslim liberation of IslamicJerusalem as his sole achievement, he always mentioned Prophet Muhammad and the previous Caliph as well which is Abū Bakr.

In conclusion, Abū Bakr's contributions have successfully set the foundation for the first Muslim liberation of IslamicJerusalem. 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb can focus on the external military campaign outside the Arabian Peninsula because Abū Bakr settled all the internal problems in Madinah. More importantly, the number of Muslim army available during the preparation to liberate IslamicJerusalem prove the fruit of Prophet Muhammad's effort. Prophet Muhammad established a solid foundation for Muslims to follow his step in the spiritual, religious, political, and military efforts. It also shows that the effort to liberate IslamicJerusalem requires a clear vision, strategic planning, and continuous action that could probably take more than one generation, as presented by Prophet Muhammad, Abū Bakr, and 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

CONCLUSION

History repeats itself; although the events appear different, the insights remain. Thus, the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem could not be discussed without scrutinizing the involved elements, figures, and strategies that succeeded in the past. This thesis is intended to investigate the early Muslims' link with Islamic Jerusalem, particularly Abū Bakr's connection and contribution to the first Muslim liberation of the area in the seventh century. The research's main contribution is related to the role of Abū Bakr regarding the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem, which is missing in the current literature. Primarily, there is a gap discussion between Prophet Muhammad's preparation to liberate the Holy Land and the success of its liberation by 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Therefore, this research focused on spiritual, religious, political, and military aspects of Abū Bakr's life associated with Islamic Jerusalem during the Makkah and Madinah periods. According to the researcher's findings, Abū Bakr made valuable contributions to achieving the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem.

The researcher examined the position of Islamic Jerusalem in comparison to the other two holy cities in order to provide context for its significance. Lack of understanding about the status of Makkah, Madinah, and Islamic Jerusalem results in an imbalanced perspective among Muslims of the places. For instance, the common statements mentioned Islamic Jerusalem as the third holy place in Islam. Although, Islamic Jerusalem was the first *Qiblah* in the early prophethood of Prophet Muhammad for more than thirteen years. Instead, Islamic Jerusalem regarded as one of the three holy places for Muslims. Indeed, Makkah, Madinah, and Islamic Jerusalem are the most sacred spaces in Islam. However, each of them has its own characteristics, which stresses the uniqueness of every place.

The concept of sacred space in Islam is linked to the revelation of Qur'anic verses from Allah or the decision of a human who received authority from Allah. Therefore, Makkah and Islamic Jerusalem are examples of sacred spaces created based on divine decree, as is clear in the Qur'anic verses. While Madinah, which Prophet Muhammad delineated as *Haram*, is an example of a sacred space created by a human through revelation. Muslims all over the world recognize the three cities as sacred spaces, but there

are some misconceptions among Muslims regarding the status of their sacredness.

There is a differentiation between the sacredness of Makkah and Islamicjerusalem. *Haram* is a restricted area in Makkah which has specific boundaries. The boundaries required to enforce the rules within the *haram*, such as restrictions on violence, clashes, hunting animals, cutting trees, and the exclusion of disbelievers. However, in Islamicjerusalem, the sacredness transforms into a holy area that means purified and blessed (*barakah*). There are no specific rules within a holy area as in Makkah's *Haram* because there is no restriction; it, on the other hand, has *barakah* to all humankind. Hence, Islamicjerusalem does not have the exact delineation of its boundaries like in Makkah. Therefore, from the perspective of Islam, the characteristics between Makkah and Islamicjerusalem could not be regarded as the same. Makkah is exclusive to Muslims, while Islamicjerusalem is inclusive and open to all Muslims, Christians, Jews, and others. In short, based on its importance and sacredness in Islam, the early Muslims planned to liberate Islamicjerusalem from the occupation of the Byzantines at that time.

Because of the importance of Islamicjerusalem, the early Muslims were eager to reach that land. The effort was reflected in Abū Bakr's life throughout the Makkah and Madinah periods. During the Makkan period, Abū Bakr had been connected with Islamicjerusalem; even before Islam, he had visited the area as a merchant. After he embraced Islam, the connection became stronger; Abū Bakr emerged as a central figure among Muslims in three aspects: spiritual, religious, and political. Spiritually, he was the first man who believed in Muhammad's Prophethood, so from the very beginning of Islam, he has been facing Islamicjerusalem as the *Qiblah* during his daily prayers. Moreover, Abū Bakr's spiritual connection keeps growing; his solid faith is converted into practical action by building a mosque in his courtyard. According to historical sources, this mosque is regarded as the first mosque built during the time of Prophet Muhammad because it was established earlier than the Quba Mosque in Madinah.

Religiously, Abū Bakr's relationship with Islamicjerusalem through the Qur'anic verses revealed in Makkah. These verses mention Prophets who had direct or indirect ties to Islamicjerusalem. Also, in the event of the Night Journey and Ascension, Abū Bakr's position is crucial because he accepted this event without a single doubt. Therefore, the

event strengthened the faith of Muslims, although the majority of the Makkans rejected it. Thus, due to his connection with IslamicJerusalem, he was granted the everlasting title of *al-Siddīq*. In the political aspect, Abū Bakr's role is vital in responding to the revelation of chapter al-Rum. Abū Bakr endorses what the Qur'an says that the Byzantines will be victorious over Persians after their defeat, despite the fact that the Byzantines were about to collapse in almost every aspect, such as political, military, and financial. At this event, many people accepted Islam as a result of Abū Bakr winning the wager and the fulfillment of Allah's promise about the victory of Byzantine several years later. In addition, during the life of the Prophet, Abū Bakr had a military role since he was the close advisor of the Prophet. Accordingly, in the Makkan period, Abū Bakr's spiritual, religious, and political aspects built the foundation of his connection with IslamicJerusalem.

In the Madinah period, Abū Bakr's spiritual connection with IslamicJerusalem related to the first *Qiblah* because, sixteen months after the migration, the *Qiblah* was still facing there. Also, the promise of victory in the Holy Land from the Prophet Muhammad in the Battles of Trench and Tabuk strengthened his connection spiritually. In Tabuk, the Prophet gave a specific timeline of IslamicJerusalem's liberation after his death. Thus, for Abū Bakr, it was a clear sign of Prophet Muhammad's plan to liberate the region. As for the religious connection, the Qur'an introduced the term *al-Arḍ al-Muqadasah* (Holy Land) refer to IslamicJerusalem in the (Qur'an 5:21). Furthermore, the next part of the verse explains the Israelites' disobedience of the Prophet Moses' command, and finally, they were sentenced to forty years in the wilderness. The verse gave Abū Bakr a framework to liberate IslamicJerusalem from the occupation. Also, the Prophet talked about the *Aḥādīth* associated with IslamicJerusalem, which was part of the Prophet's step to hand over the knowledge of IslamicJerusalem's importance to Muslims in Madinah, notably Abū Bakr.

Politically, Abū Bakr involved in the battles that were targeted in al-Sham's area, Battle of Mu'tah and Tabuk. Especially for Mu'tah, the Prophet planned to direct the army towards the Holy Land. Based on the latest research regarding the map of IslamicJerusalem by Khalid El-Awaisi, Mu'tah was located within the region of IslamicJerusalem. Even though Abū Bakr did not join the army, he was in Madinah as the

Prophet's advisor discussed the military strategy regarding the battle. While in the Battle of Tabuk, Abū Bakr's role was significant. The Prophet selected Abū Bakr as the commander of the battle by giving him the army's greatest banner. This battle was vital to securing logistic supplies for the Muslims' army on their way to Islamic Jerusalem, and it would be helpful for Abū Bakr's military campaign to continue the Prophet's plan. Indeed, Abū Bakr's connection to Islamic Jerusalem compared to other companions, is portrayed as stronger since he did several activities, such as building a mosque, putting a wager related to chapter *al-Rum*, and receiving the al-Siddīq title. This deep connection and his eagerness to go the extra mile led to his significant contributions during his caliphate.

After the Prophet Muhammad passed away, Abū Bakr, as the First Caliph, continued what the Prophet had planned towards Islamic Jerusalem. However, Muslims in Madinah were facing problems, such as many Muslims becoming apostates and refusing to pay *Zakat*. During this time, Abū Bakr realized that a military operation was needed to stabilize the Arabian Peninsula which became one of his most significant contributions as the leader of Muslims. Therefore, in the middle of debates among the companions, Abū Bakr decided to send the army of Usāmah towards the region of Islamic Jerusalem. The decision reflects two main points: the Usāmah Army will pave the way to liberate Islamic Jerusalem in the future; simultaneously, the army could send a message to the parties surrounding Arabia that Madinah was in a strong condition after the death of Prophet Muhammad. Furthermore, after the apostate war was settled, Abū Bakr sent four armies to the al-Sham area in an effort to liberate Islamic Jerusalem. As a result, Abū Bakr secured most of the possible threats that might hinder the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem. On his deathbed, Abū Bakr was awaiting news from the armies in the area of Islamic Jerusalem. Not only that, Abū Bakr wanted to ensure that his successor shared the same vision for Islamic Jerusalem, so he consulted his council to nominate and justify his reasoning about 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb as the best candidate of the second Caliph.

Indeed, only with the in-depth connection and vital contribution of Abū Bakr, the first Muslim liberation of Islamic Jerusalem could be achieved in a short period after his Caliphate. In only two years, Abū Bakr succeeded in giving way to his successor, 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the path to Islamic Jerusalem. Furthermore, it proved the hypothesis that

no one knows the Prophet Muhammad's plan towards the liberation of Islamic Jerusalem better than Abū Bakr. Therefore, the contributions of Abū Bakr to the first Muslim liberation of Islamic Jerusalem is undeniably significant; he created the foundation to liberate the land. Finally, it showed that the vision towards Islamic Jerusalem is the cooperation and continuous process of the Muslim generation, as Prophet Muhammad, Abū Bakr, and 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb showed. How Muslims could benefit from their strategic plan in a contemporary context, such as spiritual, religious, political, and military elements, would require specific research in the future. However, the spirit and strategies that Abū Bakr has shown us throughout his entire life are more than enough to inspire Muslims to contribute to the liberation of the blessed land. Indeed, if history repeats, let it repeat the legacy of the best exemplary figures such as Prophet Muhammad, Abū Bakr, and 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

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