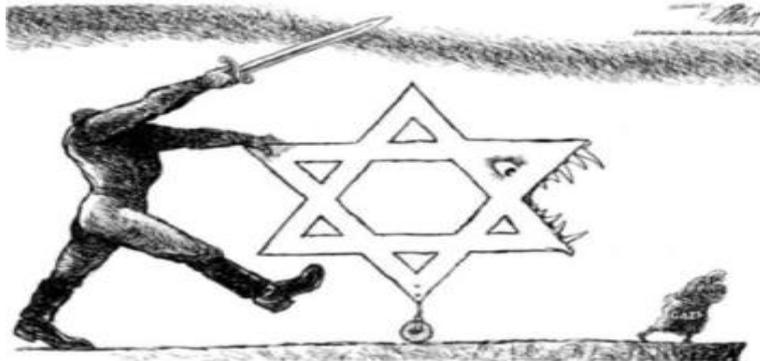


## Al-Quds interview: Israel`s plans for Al-Aqsa

Written by Эрик Вальберг/ Уолберг □□□□□ □□□□

Sunday, 27 September 2015 12:09

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1/ Considering the recent Israeli attacks on the Al-Aqsa mosque and its implementation of strict security measures in the occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem), what do you see as the purpose of Israel?

This week, Israeli snipers on the roof of the holy site provoked demonstrations by Palestinians. At least 36 Palestinians were injured in clashes on Tuesday. Yousef Mukhaimar, the head of the Al-Aqsa worshipper movement Mourabitoun said that Muslim Palestinians were "prohibited from entering the mosque to pray, while Israeli settlers are allowed to enter the mosque and roam around freely under police protection. The Israelis are trying to establish a precedent by dividing Al-Aqsa Mosque compound into sections and time segments, so they can give Israeli settlers access to our mosque," Mourabitoun activist Abasi said. "We will never agree to such plan because it is obvious that the Israelis are trying to take it over piecemeal."

The aggressive incursions into Al-Aqsa, are carried out under the guise of seeking more access for Jews. But the outcome they seek is the destruction of Al-Aqsa in order to build their temple. There are detailed blueprints for it. The Israel Minister of Housing and Construction Uri Ariel expressed his wish to see the construction of a "Third Temple" in place of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. "The first Temple was destroyed in 586 BCE, the second Temple in 70 CE, and ever since the Jewish People have been mourning its loss." The Israelis aims to destroy about half of the Al-Aqsa Mosque to build the alleged Temple.

After the Israeli destruction of the 800-year-old Moroccan Quarter in June 1967, Jews coveted the Noble Sanctuary (al-Haram al-Sharif). The burning of Saladin's minbar in August 1969, the slaughter of worshippers on many occasions, and now, the brazen attempts to attack Al-Aqsa Mosque, highlight Israel's unchecked behaviour. This is abetted by the absence of a trustworthy Palestinian leadership, of its acquiescence in the Oslo Accords to serve the Israeli occupation, of the failure of Arab governments to defend Arab rights, and of the inability of 1.5 billion Muslims to defend the first Qibla and the third holiest mosque after Mecca and Medina. Israel realises that neither Palestinians nor Arabs have a determined leadership to defend their rights,

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and are using the moment to their advantage. Israeli extremism is at its height and the Arab defence at its lowest ebb.

The escalating Israeli attempts to take over Al-Aqsa Mosque and the rest of the Noble Sanctuary is a sign of Israeli boldness to complete the occupation of all Palestine. Israel has crafted several laws that favour incremental Israeli control of Jerusalem and systematic expelling of its Palestinian residents. Israeli plans for Jerusalem are to reduce the Arab population in the city to 12 percent, while the remaining 88 percent would be Jewish, with full Israeli sovereignty over all of Jerusalem, excluding only the villages of Beit Hanina and other outlying areas. Israel plans to build a preliminary synagogue inside Al-Aqsa courtyard to further enhance its religious narrative, preparing the way for the Third Temple, inflaming Muslims' religious passion and solidifying the religious framing of the conflict. The intent is dragging Palestinians and Arabs into a religious war between Muslims and Jews under the guise of the "war against terrorism", altering the nature of the conflict from a conflict over the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories to a religious war.

2/ The Palestinians protests have spread across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Do you predict the occurrence of a new Palestinian Intifada?

By framing the conflict as a religious one, Israel argues on the world stage that Jews are once again being threatened with a holocaust, but this time around, at the hands of Muslims and in the Middle East, rather than in Europe. Israel incorporates politics, geography, law and slick PR tactics into its scheme in order to convince the world.

The violent provocations against Palestinians, who have only stones to defend themselves, is actually intended to escalate Palestinian resistance, to provoke another intifada, in order to bring about the conditions necessary to push their expansionist agenda to new heights. This is a 'no win' situation for the Palestinians: doing nothing encourages the Israelis, and resisting also encourages them, plus giving them the pretext to kill hundreds if not thousands of Palestinians. Salman Abu Sitta, founder of the Palestine Land Society predicts "resistance will undoubtedly rise, possibly from unexpected quarters. Resistance can take many forms: legal, public, boycott, and international sanctions, to name a few. The burden will fall upon people, not governments."

The Head of the Supreme Muslim Council in Jerusalem said, "The occupation continues its efforts to Judaize Al-Aqsa Mosque, and demands a popular uprising in support of the Mosque. The Israelis consider the Al-Aqsa Ribat fighters (those carrying out Ribat, religious defense of

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one's land ) an 'illegal organization' and are braced to escalate the conflict." Sheikh Muhammad Hussein, mufti of Jerusalem and the Palestinian territories and imam at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, condemned the occupation authorities' intention to consider the Al-Aqsa Ribat fighters an illegal organization, and to allow th Jewish extremists to invade it the Mosque and defile it. Likewise, he praised those who carry out Ribat, investing their efforts in fulfilling their obligation to protect the destination of the Prophet's Night Journey. Hussein called to increase the presence of Muslims at the mosque, to pursue Ribat, and to pray there," in order that it overflow with people and those who love it."

In short, the intifada resumes thanks to Israeli provocations.

3/ How do you see the function of this year's Hajj statement by Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah Khamenei in refocusing Muslims and other free men's attention to the malicious US and Israeli projects in the region?

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei denounced Israel on Wednesday for what he called its "insult" to Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque. Khamenei described Israeli behavior towards Palestinians as the "ultimate degree of ruthlessness and evil".

In another passage in the statement, Khamenei blamed Saudi authorities for a September 11 crane collapse onto Mecca's Grand Mosque that killed 107 Hajj pilgrims. In a supreme irony, the Saudi government's investigation into the Saudi '9/11' found that the contractor, Saudi Binladin Group, headed by Osama Bin Laden's brother Bakr, had not secured it in accordance with its instruction manual. Referring to the 107 deaths from the Binladin construction, "It's true those who passed away in this incident found salvation and rejoined God, but this will not take the responsibility off the shoulders of those who should provide security for pilgrims," the Ayatollah said.

As if the Saudi 9/11 wasn't enough to highlight Saudi incompetence as custodian of Islam's holy places, a stampede during one of the last rituals of the Hajj season killed more than 700 people and injured 800 others.

4/ You know al-Quds is home to many sites that are sacred both to Muslims and Christians. How do you see the human duty of western free men in defending these sites?

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Israel has systematically undermined the Palestinian Muslim and Christian historic presence in the city and worked tirelessly to eradicate the Palestinian character of the city. Israeli plans to remove virtually all Muslims and Christians from Jerusalem is condemned by Christian leaders as well as Muslims. Hosam Naom, Dean of St George the Martyr Cathedral in Jerusalem, told *A* *I-Jazeera*

, "We as Palestinian Christians have always stood with our Muslim brothers and sisters in defence of our city and our holy places. We condemn any act of vandalism against holy sites of all Abrahamic faiths. We value the role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as [the legitimate] custodian of these holy sites.

"The Palestinian-Israeli conflict -- and particularly in Jerusalem -- is not about religion; that is, it is not between Muslims and Jews or Christians and Jews. The issue is much bigger than that. From a Palestinian Christian perspective, the issue for us is the same as for the rest of Palestinians who are not Christians. Palestinians have the right to have their own state in their own territories as per the agreements signed between Palestinian leaders and Israel. Palestinians aspire to be free in their own country, regardless of the religious affiliation of anyone who is party to this conflict."

The ongoing destruction of Jerusalem to pursue a will-o'-the wisp, a biblical story, is both wrong and a guarantee of bloodshed as long as Muslims and Christians value their beliefs and traditions. It is the sacred duty of all Muslims, Christians and Jews to fight the Zionist poison, which can only end in its defeat, or world war.

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