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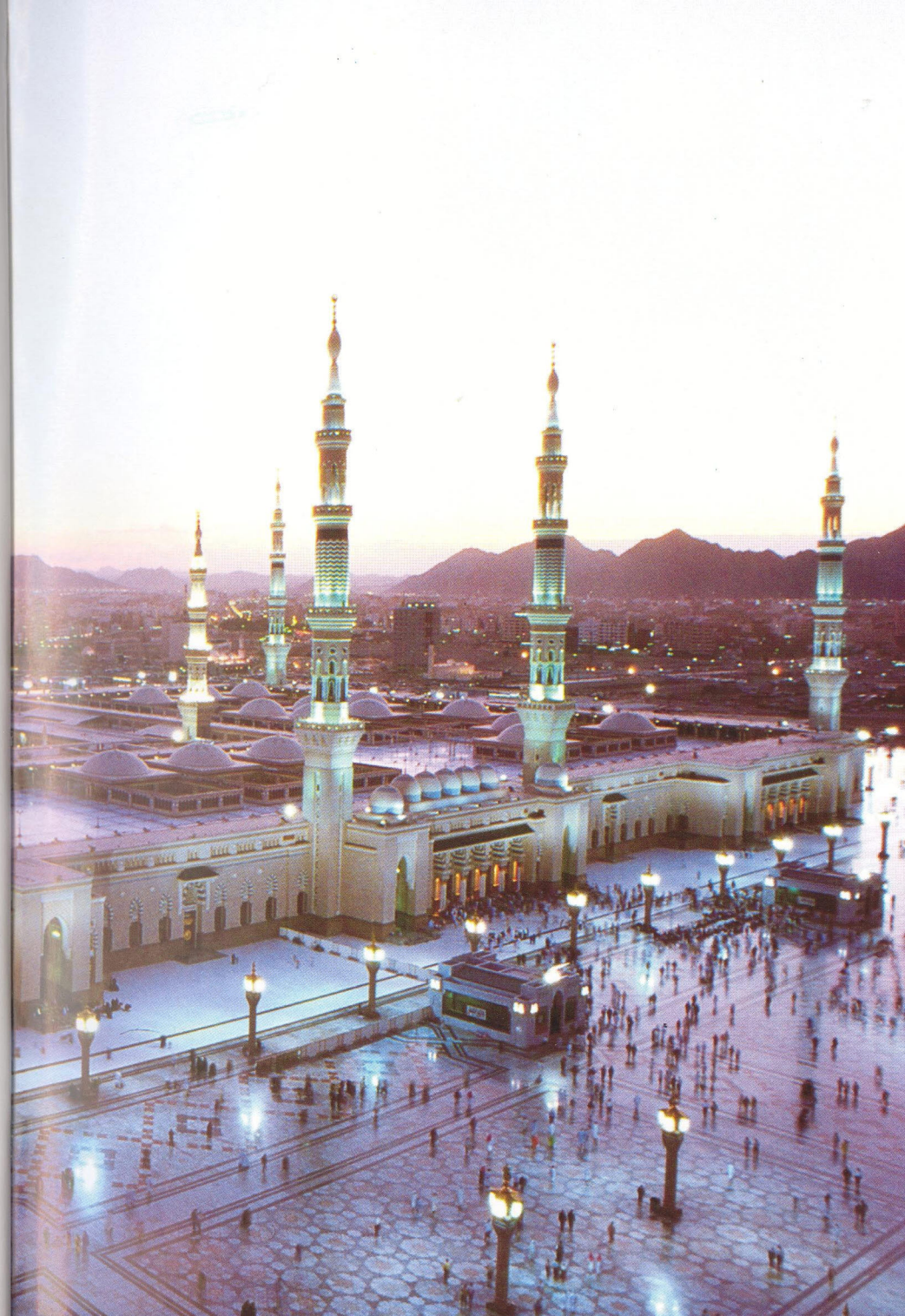
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Contents

Publisher's Foreword.....	11
Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah and its Names and Ancient History.....	14
The Foundation of Yathrib	14
The First Inhabitants of Yathrib	15
The Names of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah	16
Virtues of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah	18
The Love of the Messenger ﷺ for Al-Madinah and His Declaration of its Inviolability.....	29
The Inviolability of Al-Madinah.....	30
Mount 'Ayr	33
Mount Thawr	34
Events that took place prior to the Migration of the Prophet ﷺ	35
The First Pledge of Allegiance at Al-'Aqabah.....	37
<i>Al-Mu'allim</i> (the Teacher)	38
The Second Pledge of Allegiance at Al-'Aqabah	39
The Story of the Prophet's Migration to Al-Madinah....	42
The Departure	45
The Arrival in the Center of Al-Madinah	50
Settling into Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah and the Brotherhood between the <i>Muhajirun</i> and the <i>Ansar</i> ...	52
The First Birth following the <i>Hijrah</i>	55

The <i>Adhan</i> (Call to Prayer)	56
The Appearance of the <i>Munafiqun</i> (the Hypocrites) and the Jews and the Position of the Muslims in relation to Them	60
The Appearance of Hypocrisy	60
The Expulsion of the Jews from Al-Madinah	62
Getting rid of Banu Qainuqa'	63
Banu An-Nadir	64
Banu Quraizah	65
The Building of the Prophet's Mosque and its History throughout the Ages	66
The Prophetic Age	66
The First Expansion	67
During the Time of Abu Bakr ؓ	68
During the Time of 'Umar ؓ	68
During the Time of 'Uthman ؓ	69
During the Time of Al-Walid bin 'Abdul-Malik ..	71
During the Time of Al-Mahdi, the Abbasid 161-165 AH.	72
During the Time of Quaitbay 886-888 AH.	73
During the Time of Sultan 'Abdul-Majeed 1260-1277 AH.	74
The Prophet's Mosque during the Saudi Era	78
The First Saudi Expansion and Rebuilding	78
A Description of the Building	80
The Shelters built by King Faisal	81
The Second Saudi Expansion 1405-1414 AH (1984-1994)	82

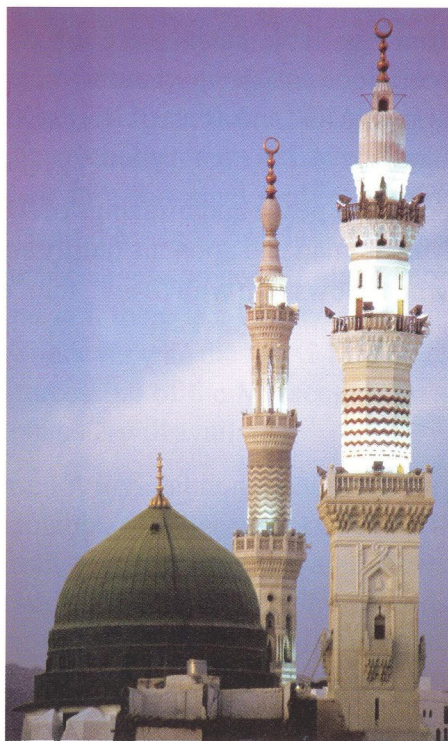
A Description of the Building	83
The Open Areas of the Mosque	85
They have no Equal in History	86
The Pulpit and the <i>Mihrab</i> inside the Mosque	86
The History of the Pulpit	87
What the Prophet ﷺ said about the Pulpit	88
The Prophet's <i>Mihrab</i>	90
The Virtue of the Prophet's Mosque and offering Prayer in it and the Manners required when visiting it	92
Prayer in the Additions which have been made to the Mosque	94
The Ruling on Prayer in the Open Spaces	95
The required Manner of visiting the Prophet's Mosque	96
A Journey may be undertaken to it	97
The Prophet's Grave and the Lawful Manner of Visiting it	100
Visiting the Grave of the Prophet ﷺ	101
Quba' Mosque	108
The Virtue of Quba' Mosque	110
Other Historic Mosques in Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah	112
Al-Ijabah Mosque	112
Al-Jumu'ah Mosque	113
Al-Qiblatain Mosque	115
The Mosque of Banu Harithah (Masjid Al-Mustarah)	117

Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah, its Names and its Ancient History

The Foundation of Yathrib

There is a consensus in the Arabic sources that “Yathrib” was the name of a man from among the descendents of Noah عليه السلام and that this man founded this city and so it was named after him.

As for the reason for its foundation, one of the narrations states that the area to which some of the sons of Noah عليه السلام came after the flood became difficult for them to live in and so a group of them took off to the west, in search of a new place to live where they would find good sustenance. And it was the lot of a group known as 'Ubail that came to the area in which was Yathrib, and its water, its trees and its rocky area appealed to them as these formed a natural protection for it.



The First Inhabitants of Yathrib

The first inhabitants of Yathrib were from three large tribes and they were:

(a) **The Amalekites:** And it was they who founded Yathrib, according to the most authoritative narrations; and the tribe of 'Ubail – from which came Yathrib, after whom the city was named – belonged to the Amalekites. And it is obvious from their name that they were distinguished by their great height.^[3] And they were from the descendents of 'Amliq bin Laud bin Shem bin Noah. They were in the area of Babylon and then they spread to different areas throughout the Arabian Gulf and some of them took up residence in the place known as Yathrib. And there is no doubt that they were Arabs. Imam At-Tabari considered their ancestor 'Amliq to be the first person to speak Arabic.

(b) **The Jews:** When the Muslims migrated to Yathrib, they found there a number of Jewish tribes; and there is agreement that most of the Jews of Yathrib were the descendents of emigrants who came from Palestine. Some of them came as migrants after Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Kingdom of Judea and killed many of the Jews and enslaved many of them; this took place 586 years before the start of the Christian Era (CE) (known by the Christians as BC). Likewise, other migrations took place when the Romans made an example of them in the year 70 CE, and again in the year 132 CE. And some of these migrants made their home in the area of Yathrib. And the first of the tribes which reached

^[3] The word Amalekite is derived from the Arabic word 'Amaliqah, which means giants.

the area of Yathrib were Banu Quraizah and Banu An-Nadir, then other tribes followed them.

(c) **Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj:** They are two Qahtani tribes which migrated to Yathrib from Yemen after the destruction of Sudd Ma'arib. And the settling of these two tribes in Yathrib had a great effect upon its history. According to the most reliable reports, the two tribes arrived in Al-Madinah in the third century of the Christian Era.

The Names of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah

The City of Allâh's Messenger ﷺ is known by many names and the large number of names are evidence of its greatness; and its names include:

Al-Madinah: This is the name given to the famous city to which the Prophet ﷺ migrated and in which he was buried.

Tabah: Al-Madinah is known as Tabah, for the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Verily, Allâh the Almighty, the All-Powerful named it Tabah.”^[4]

And Tabah and Taibah are derived from *At-Tayyib*^[5] - and that is because it is purified from *Shirk*^[6], and every pure thing is *Tayyib*.

Yathrib: This was its first name and we have said that it was so named after the name of the man who founded it. And Allâh's Messenger ﷺ changed the old name to Al-Madinah. And it is possible that the Messenger ﷺ changed the name of

^[4] Al-Bukhari (1872) and Muslim (1396).

^[5] *At-Tayyib*: That which is good and pure.

^[6] *Shirk*: Polytheism, associating partners with Allâh.

Yathrib because the word *Tathrib* in Arabic language means blame, and it also means to corrupt and to adulterate. And it is reported in the *Sahihain*^[7] from the *Hadith* of Abu Musa ؓ, from the Prophet ﷺ, who said:

“I saw in a dream that I was migrating from Makkah to a land of palm trees and I guessed that it would be Yamamah or Hajar, but it was the city of Yathrib.”^[8]

And Abu 'Ubaidah said: “Yathrib is the name of a land and the City of the Messenger ﷺ is in one corner of it.”

And it is mentioned in *Mu'jamul-Buldan* by Yaquut Al-Hamawi: “This city has twenty-nine names and they are: Al-Madinah, Taibah, Tabah, Al-Miskinah, Al-'Adhra', Al-Jabirah, Al-Mahabbah, Al-Muhabbabah, Al-Mahburah, Yathrib, An-Najiyah, Al-Mufiyah, Akkalatul-Buldan, Al-Mubarakah, Al-Mahfufah, Al-Musallamah, Al-Mijannah, Al-Qudsiyah, Al-'Asimah, Al-Marzuqah, Ash-Shafiyah, Al-Hirah, Al-Mahbubah, Al-Marhumah, Jabirah, Al-Mukhtarah, Al-Muharramah, Al-Qasimah, Tababa.”

And it was reported in the words of the Prophet ﷺ (quoting the Words of Allâh the Most High):

﴿رَبِّ ادْخِلْنِيْ مَدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ وَّاَخْرِجْنِيْ مَخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ﴾

“My Lord! Let my entry (to the city) be good, and (likewise) my exit (from the city) be good.” [*Al-Isra'* 17:80]

They said: “(The cities of) Al-Madinah and Makkah.”^[9]

^[7] *Sahihain*: The authentic collections of *Ahadiith* compiled by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

^[8] Al-Bukhari (3622) and Muslim (2272).

^[9] At-Tirmidhi (3139) and Ahmad (223/1).