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A BRIEF GUIDE
TO
The Dome of the Rock

AND
AL-HARAM AL-SHARIF

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Chapter IX

RECENT HISTORY

The mosque Al-Aqsa shared the same fate as the Dome of the Rock in the troubles of 1948, following the decision of the United Nations to partition Palestine. It was an exceedingly difficult time and the mosque did not escape damage in the fighting. According to the government records, Israeli bombs fell in the area no less than thirteen times, some of them on the mosque itself. The recent repairs, however, had strengthened it sufficiently to withstand the attacks, better than those responsible could have expected.

The largest number of bombs fell on July 16, the day before the first armistice. Of the sixty mortars which fell in the area on that day, fortunately only one fell on the mosque, and it did not cause much damage. On August 16, a bomb destroyed a part of the north-west wall, killed three people, and wounded a man and a girl while they were at prayer. On the evening of the same day, twenty six-inch mortars fell in the area and hit the so-called "Kas" and the western part of the mosque where the women pray. The roof of the mosque was hit by a bomb on August 22. An attempt was made to repair the damaged places in December 1948, since it was a period of truce, but while the engineers

and labourers were at work bombs directed from the Dormitio Church occupied by Israeli troops prevented them from working. The necessary repairs were however, completed a month later.



Bomb Damage in 1948