

## *What's in a name? Monuments and sacred spaces in Jerusalem*

Jerusalem contains many religious and historic sites which are sacred to Christians, Muslims and Jews. The Arabic terminology for these places are often quite different from their English equivalents.

Here are some interesting examples.

1. The four *quarters* of the Old City البلدة القديمة are referred to in Arabic as follows:

حي الإسلامي	حارة النصارى	حارة اليهود	حارة الأرمن
The Muslim Quarter	The Christian Quarter	The Jewish Quarter	The Armenian Quarter

*Note that the Islamic Quarter uses the word حيّ which means 'district' whereas حارة tends to mean 'quarter' or a smaller section of a city.*

2. Some of the gates of the Old City have different names in Arabic and English. The *Jaffa Gate* and *Damascus Gate* are known as باب الخليل and باب العمود respectively.
3. The *Wailing Wall* is often referred to also in English as the *Western Wall* (taken from the Hebrew). Although nowadays in Arabic you will often see it referred to as حائط المبكى it is historically known by Muslims as حائط اليراق This refers to the *Buraq* on which the Prophet Mohammed is believed to have rode on during his nocturnal journey to Jerusalem which is referred to in this instance as بيت المقدس
4. Probably the most contentious issue is *Temple Mount*. In Arabic the term is الحرم الشريف (*The Noble Sanctuary*) and it is here where both the *Dome of the Rock* قبة الضخرة and the *al-Aqsa Mosque* مسجد الأقصى are situated. Jews however claim that this is the site of the *Second Temple* which was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. This temple is referred to in Arabic as هيكل سليمان (*Solomon's Temple*) and thus Temple Mount is referred to as جبل الهيكل. However in Hebrew it is known today as 'har habayit' جبل البيت