

# The Ottomans | Guardians of the Holy Sites

'Ottoman commitment to holy sites signified their assertion of sovereignty over these cities.'

The sultans' patronage of holy sites, the remit of which included places such as Jerusalem, showed itself in renovations, maintenance, restorations and donations. However, since in Arabia decisions over the holy sites rested with the local rulers, permission to build or to carry out works privileged the donor. In this respect, Ottoman commitment to the holy sites also signified their assertion of sovereignty over these cities.



**Name:**

Tile from ceramic inscription panel of the Dome of the Rock

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 976 / AD 1560 Ottoman

**Details:**

Islamic Museum, al-Aqsa Mosque / al-Haram al-Sharif  
Jerusalem

**Justification:**

The Ottomans redecorated important sacred buildings with tile-work.

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**Name:**

Hanging lamp

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 956 / AD 1549 Ottoman

**Details:**

The British Museum  
London, England, United Kingdom

**Justification:**

Court ateliers were involved in furnishing holy places.

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**Name:**

Qur'anic manuscript of Sultan Bayazid

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 964 / AD 1556 Ottoman

**Details:**

Islamic Museum, al-Aqsa Mosque / al-Haram al-Sharif  
Jerusalem

**Justification:**

Members of the sultan's family were also important founders and donors. Prince Bayezid, son of Süleyman the Magnificent, donated this Qur'an to the Dome of the Rock.

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**Name:**

Rab'a of Sultan Murad

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 1001 / AD 1593 Ottoman

**Details:**

Islamic Museum, al-Aqsa Mosque / al-Haram al-Sharif

Jerusalem

**Justification:**

To local rulers and the general public, costly donations made by the sultans symbolically represented the absent ruler. Sultan Murad III donated this Qur'an to the Aqsa Mosque.

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**Name:**

Silver service

**Dynasty:**

Hegira 1305 / AD 1887 Ottoman

**Details:**

Islamic Museum, al-Aqsa Mosque / al-Haram al-Sharif  
Jerusalem

**Justification:**

The importance of a holy place was emphasised by the splendid gifts bestowed on it by the sultans and their immediate family. Princess Adila, daughter of Mahmud II, donated this service to the Aqsa Mosque

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