

In the name of Allah the most merciful, the most compassionate

May Allah's Prayers and blessings be upon Prophet Mohammed, the Arabian Messenger, His family and companions,

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz

Royal Highnesses, Excellencies, Honorable Participants,

Peace and mercy of Allah be upon you,

Memories take me back to Kuwait where I was born and where I compiled my first book on Al-Quds. In fact, I published my first book at seventeen while I was still a school student. I remember how the Arab press received this achievement by a third-year high school student who was then described as the youngest historian in the world. At around that time, the Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities celebrated and honored me by granting me its international award for the best writer on architecture.

Today, after thirty-one years of my journey with Al-Quds have lapsed, I have the honor to stand before you, with the grace of Almighty Allah, to receive a global prize bearing the name of the great late King Faisal, may Allah have mercy on his soul. This is a prize which I will indeed cherish for the rest of my life.

Al-Quds has lived in my soul and in my blood. I have devoted my entire life to this holy city in order to keep it alive in the world's conscience. For many years, I have spent whole days and nights, compiling more than forty books, hundreds of research and articles, and conducted field surveys in its sacred land, trying to find my calling in a bid to devise a sacred image of Al-Quds with its antique bricks and stones. I had to scrutinize every monument and stone in the city, just as I had to architecturally photograph and draw as much as I could until I was able to develop books that would match and reflect the value of Al-Quds and Islam based on thousands of sources and tens of thousands of documents, drawings, inscriptions, and historical maps which consumed me throughout every moment of field research or while in libraries.

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,

It is my genuine honor and hearty pleasure to receive this award under your gracious patronage. May Allah preserve you, and grant you health and wellness, and may Allah preserve the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and sustain its security and prosperity.

I wish to conclude by expressing my sincere thanks to His Royal Highness Prince Khalid Al-Faisal, and to King Faisal Foundation and its international prize, for this honor. My appreciation also goes to Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, which nominated me for the prize.

Thank you all.