The Israeli Antiquities Authority has submitted a petition to the High Court of Justice calling on Muslim burial to be halted at a new plot outside the Temple Mount, in an attempt to preserve ancient artefacts dating back to the First and Second Temple eras. The Muslims had annexed a part of a national park running adjacent to the Temple Mount to be used for their burial site, and the Antiquities Authority fear if a new cemetery is created, it could prevent the excavation of such artefacts. The Israeli Police initially opposed restricting burial at the site on fear of riots from Muslims who are opposed to any excavations at the Temple Mount. Most recently Palestinians had called for a full-scale war in order to defend Al-Aqsa from the Israeli excavations at the Mugrabi Gate. But the Police later changed their mind after the Antiquities Authority brought the matter up with Public Security Minister Avi Dichter.

Quote: *""Muslim burial on the site, which was never a cemetery in the past, could end any possibility of excavating the area in the future, as has been done at the foot of the southern wall and the bottom of part of the Western Wall," Barkai noted in the petition. The court heard that the area had well-preserved 2000 year old construction from Herod's time and a clear seamline between the northern construction, Hasmonean, and the southern construction, Herod's. British archaeologist Charles Warren, who excavated there 140 years ago, found cornerstones for the five lowest layers of construction built into a layer of terra rosa, which includes remains from the First Temple. The first sealing rings stamped "for the King," found in Israel, dated to late 8th Century B.C.E., were found in the red soil.*

The prophet Ezekiel predicted the closure of the Eastern Gate subsequent to the Messiah entering through it. The prophecy was fulfilled when the Eastern Gate of the Temple was sealed by the Ottoman Turks, and it remains closed until this day. The Lord Jesus Christ entered through the Eastern Gate on a donkey during His presentation and later rejection by Israel as the Messiah (Zechariah 9:9). Christians and Jews believe that when the Messiah returns, according to Scripture, He will enter the city through the Eastern Gate. Because of this teaching, Muslims started to bury their dead in front of the gate, in the belief that a Jewish Messiah could not enter through the gate without defiling himself. The Lord Jesus Christ will enter it again, when He returns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Ezekiel 44:1-2

Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the east; and it [was] shut. Then said the LORD unto me; This

gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it;
because the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it
shall be shut.

Source [Haaretz]