

American Friends of Ateret Cohanim/Jerusalem Chai

....Making the Old City young Again

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Parashat Shemot / פרשת שמות Candle Lighting in Jerusalem 4:22 PM, January 20, 2017, 22 Tevet 5777



Jerusalem's Mayor Barkat calls on Israelis to sign letter thanking Trump

By: Jonathan Benedek, World Israel News, January 19

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat called for Israelis to sign onto a letter expressing gratitude to Donald Trump for planning to move the US embassy to Jerusalem and to "make the US-Israel relationship great again."

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat urged his fellow Israeli citizens to sign a letter welcoming and thanking US President-elect Donald Trump for supporting Israel and for making plans to move the US embassy to Jerusalem.



"This week, President Donald Trump enters the White House," Barkat said while speaking in Hebrew.

"Let's all welcome him together as our friend and thank him for his intentions to move the US embassy to Jerusalem, thereby conveying a clear message to the world: Jerusalem is Israel's undivided capital!"

While Barkat was making his request, the video switched back and forth to a clip from Trump speaking at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) conference of 2016 and conveying his intentions to move the US embassy to Jerusalem.

"We will move the American Embassy to Jerusalem, to the eternal capital of the Jewish People," Trump said in the clip.

Barkat then asked Israelis to "join me in signing a letter supporting President Trump's decision to move the US Embassy to Jerusalem, and his decisions to support the State of Israel."

The letter, found on the website ([click here](#)) reads:

"Welcome President Trump,

Israel thanks you for your enduring, unequivocal support for the State of Israel and welcomes your ambassador to Jerusalem."

The mayor also contrasted Trump's support for Israel with Obama's policies over the last eight years, focusing on a call

Jerusalem Divrei Torah

The centrality of Jerusalem to the Jewish People is indisputable and is the core of our mission. Our Divrei Torah by [Rabbi Yosef Bronstein](#) focus on Jerusalem and its connection to the weekly Torah portion. For a pdf to discuss at the Shabbat table, please [click here](#). To sponsor a Dvar Torah please [click here](#)

The City of Identity

One of the fascinating points of this week's parsha is the lack the reason for the slavery in Egypt. We know of the exponential growth experienced by the family of Ya'akov and that Pharaoh was concerned that they would become a significant fifth column and therefore devised a plan to enslave them. While on the regular historical level such a narrative is plausible, in the Torah's worldview every punishment is precipitated by a sin. What was the sin of the Jewish people to deserve centuries of slavery?

One approach finds the sin in the verse "The children of Israel were fruitful and swarmed and increased and became very very strong, and the land became filled with them."^[1] The midrash comments that "the theaters and the circuses were filled with them."^[2] This implies that the sin of the Jews in Egypt was unfiltered acculturation bordering on assimilation into the broader Egyptian society. This was the sin that made the Jews deserve the slavery, which, forcefully separated the Jewish minority from the broader Egyptian society.

If this was the sin, then what is the antidote through which the Jews merited redemption? A different midrash states that they were redeemed in the merit of not changing their names, language and clothing.^[3] As much as they were acculturated they never let go of their basic Jewish identity as expressed in those items. This was the key to their redemption.

Rabbi Asher Kursiyah^[4] notes that the first letters of the three items to which the Jews held to – *shemam* (name), *leshonam* (language) and *malbusham* (clothing) – spells *shalem* or completeness. It was these items that created the Jewish identity and kept the Jews "whole."

How fitting it is that this same word is a building block of the name of our capital – Yerushalayim. In addition to other important aspects of Judaism and the Jewish people, an association with our holiest city is deeply embedded in the Jewish consciousness. Since the times of Dovid when Hashem revealed His choice of Yerushalayim, it is impossible for a person to identify as Jewish and not feel a connection to Yerushalayim. Every Jew feels a spark when walking

through Yerushalayim's narrow alley-ways and when approaching the Kotel. In short, a Jew cannot be "whole" (*shalem*) without a connection to Yerushalayim.

May we all merit to fully hold onto and express our Jewish identity!

[1] Shemot 1:6.
 [2] Tanchuma Parshas Shemot, siman 2.
 [3] There are many variations of this midrash, each highlighting different items that the Jews held onto in Egypt. This threesome is the quotation of Rabbi Elyahu Bachur in the introduction to his 16th century book *HaMeturgaman*. For the debate regarding the authenticity of this formulation see Rav Reuven Margoliot, *O'lot*, perek 22.
 [4] <http://www.orotmodiin.co.il>

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Support American Friends of Ateret Cohanim as we Celebrate United Jerusalem's 50th Anniversary

For nearly 4 decades the mission of Ateret Cohanim has been to bring Jewish life back to the Old Yishuv of Jerusalem, the area today known as East Jerusalem. Through its network of communities, yeshivot, play centers, social and recreational facilities, Ateret Cohanim has made the Old City. Young Again.

Support American Friends of Ateret Cohanim Monday Night, February 6 | Doors open at 7 pm

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Jerusalem Chai 50th Anniversary

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by Obama for a freeze in Israeli construction in Judea and Samaria.

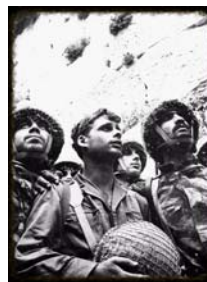
Barkat concluded the video in a creative fashion, making use of Trump's campaign slogan of "Make America Great Again." Switching to English, the mayor called upon Israelis to help, "make the US and Israeli relationship great again!"



Shimon and Rivka Saltz of Far Rockaway, NY visit "Our" Jerusalem



Rosh Hashana 5777 marked the beginning of the 50th year



since the redemption of Jerusalem during the Six Day War. It was our soldiers and our leaders who looked upward with trust and faith as they hoisted the Israeli flag on the Har Habayit and lovingly touched the stones of the Kotel, the Western Wall, after 2000 years of physical separation.

Our commitment and deep appreciation to their service and sacrifice will IY"Y ensure that Jerusalem always remains in the secure hands of the Jewish people. Protecting the families who live there today is our duty and responsibility. This cannot be their struggle alone.

Now more than ever we have the opportunity to make changes in the landscape of what the world calls



East Jerusalem and we call HOME



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5777 - תשע"ז *May it be the year of "The City - Jerusalem" עיר of Gold זהב*
May G-d's City - Yerushalayim Shel Zahav, be rebuilt and restored to its
previous glory for the Jewish People. May it be a year of עז - strength for
Jerusalem and Am Yisrael. Next year in a united Jerusalem with a
flourishing Jewish life centered around religious educational institutes.

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