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## American Friends of Ateret Cohanim/Jerusalem Chai ....Making the Old City young Again



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Parashat Ki Tisa / פרשת כי תשא Candle Lighting in Jerusalem 4:54 PM, February 26, 2016 17 Adar 1 5776



### **KOL KAKAVOD to U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, SAMANTHA POWER, AS SHE SLAMS THE UN BIAS AGAINST ISRAEL**

by Yair Rosenberg

*'The only country in the world with a standing agenda item at the Human Rights Council is not North Korea, a totalitarian state that is currently holding an estimated 100,000 people in gulags; not Syria, which has gassed its people – lots of them. It is Israel.'*

This past week, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power decamped to Israel, where she met with political leaders, visited Yad Vashem, and even played basketball with young

## 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](#)**

*We mourn the tragic death of Israeli reserve officer Eliav Gelman z"l, beloved husband and father of two children who was killed by friendly fire as Israeli forces tried to stop a terrorist stabbing attack. We dedicate this week's divrei Torah on Jerusalem to his memory.*



### Teshuva Through Unity

The Chassidic book Yalkut Moshe records a most interesting teaching. In his commentary to parshat Acharei Mot he asserts that just as the service of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur atones for the sins of the Jewish people, so too Yerushalayim atones for those who dwell within it.<sup>[1]</sup> How are we to understand this? Why would simply living in Yerushalayim help atone for sins?

Perhaps the conceptual basis for an explanation can be gleaned from the Shem Mishmuel on this week's parsha.<sup>[2]</sup> He wonders about the placement of the kiyor in the order of the parsha immediately following the mitzvah for each Jew to give a half shekel. He explains that the kiyor, which is used for washing, represents the ability for a person to wash away their sins. But, he asks, once a person sins one plummet in spiritual levels, making it difficult for one to muster the energy necessary to do proper teshuvah? The sinner, then, seems to be caught in a bind, desiring to do teshuva but not being on the level to execute his wish?

The Shem MiShmuel answers that this question would be valid if teshuva was purely the perview of the individual as an individual. However, Chassidus teaches that the first step in the teshuvah process is simply to connect oneself to the Jewish people as a whole. Once one practically and

Israelis and Palestinians in a coexistence program. For the most part, it was a typical official visit—scripted and unsurprising. That is, until Power decided to level some unusually blunt criticism at her own place of work.

An Obama confidante, Power is known for being more pointed in her public statements than other ambassadors, as when she openly rebuked European countries for skipping a major conference on anti-Semitism in 2014. Her address on Monday at the American International School in Even Yehuda proved to be no exception.

In the speech, delivered to Israeli and Palestinian Model U.N. students, Power defended the necessity of the U.N., but also offered a rare unflinching look at its manifold failures, particularly with regard to the world's only Jewish state.



the view from the Yemenite Village

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perceptively views oneself as bound with the nation, then the merit of the nation will help them achieve complete teshuvah. But a prerequisite for individual teshuvah is to cultivate a connection with the Jewish people.

This is why the kiyor, representing teshuvah, comes on the heels of the mitzvah of the half shekel. The fact that each Jew donates a half coin to the Beit ha-Mikdash for the sake of communal sacrifices illustrates that we are all intricately bound together. It is this perception that is gained through the mitzvah of half-shekel that allows one to approach the kiyor and perform teshuvah.

The Noam Elimelech<sup>[3]</sup> explains that this is why some have the custom to recite before performing mitzvah that one is engaging in the mitzvah "for the sake of all of the Jewish people." As individuals who sin we really have no right to approach Hashem through the mitzvah. It is only as a member of the community that our sins can be absolved through the merit of the community, allowing us to perform a mitzvah.

With this in mind we can return to our initial question. Yerushalayim is not just a geographic location, but it is also the great unifier of the Jewish people, where all Jews become friends. In this sense it is the place where we can connect to the broader Jewish people, and thereby begin the process of teshuva.

<sup>[1]</sup> Shem Mi-Shmuel parshat Ki Tisa.

<sup>[2]</sup> Shem Mi-Shmuel parshat Ki Tisa.

<sup>[3]</sup> Noam Elimelech, parshat Devarim.

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5776 - תשע"ו May it be the year of "The City - Jerusalem" (עיר), and her residents. ('ויושביה') May G-d's City - Yerushalayim, be rebuilt and restored to its previous glory for the Jewish People. Next year in a united Jerusalem with a flourishing Jewish life centred around religious educational institutes.

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2/26/2016

This Week from Our Jerusalem- Parashat Ki Tisa / xax"x@x^ xx x^ax@x

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