

American Friends of Ateret Cohanim/Jerusalem Chai

....Making the Old City young Again



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Parashat Shmini / פרשת שמני Shabbat Parah / שבת פרה Candle Lighting in Jerusalem 6:18 PM, April 1, 2016 22 AdarII 5776



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 Old-Young City

One of the most distinctive features of the Old City of Yerushalayim is the historical layering. Literally on top of each other will be remnants of Turkish period, the British and finally the modern Israeli. In the archeological sites of the city one can discern how each time period left its indelible mark on the city. Yerushalayim spans time – from the most ancient to our contemporary time.

In the first pasuk of the parsha, Moshe instructs the Kohanim and the elders of Israel regarding the inauguration of the mishkan. [1] The midrash[2]notes that while it is very reasonable for Moshe to review these laws with the kohanim as they will be the ones performing the service, the inclusion of specifically the elders of Israel is a little more surprising. What role do they have in the inauguration of the Mishkan?

Rebbi Shimon bar Yochai responds that we find

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Executive Council member Rubin Margoles delivers Shalach Manot to the Border Guards. Joining Rubin is Daniel Luria (Executive Director-Ateret Cohanim).

Hashem displaying respect for the elders in many different contexts. In Mitzrayim, by the burning bush, in the desert, at Har Sinai and now at the inauguration of the mishkan, Hashem bestowed honor on the elders. According to this approach there is no inherent connection between the mishkan and the elders. Their inclusion in the instruction fits into a more general pattern of honor.

Rebbi Yishmael ben Bibi, however, notes that there is a unique connection between the elderly and the city of Yerushalayim, the heir of the mishkan:

In the future, Hashem will convene a meeting of the elders and opposite his elders is honor, as the pasuk says: 'For Hashem has ruled on Mount Zion and in Yerushalayim, and opposite his elders is honor (Yeshayahu 24:23).

According to Rebbi Yishmael ben Bibi, the place of the elders in the future will be Yerushalayim. It is there that Hashem will show them the honor and dignity that they deserve. This fits the description of an ancient city which embodies its people's history, housing the Beit ha-Mikdash and its service which dates back thousands of years. In this sense, Yerushalayim is the city of the ancient and the old.

But at the same time as the city represents the older generation, it also symbolizes the new and the fresh. We daven every day that Hashem "shine a new light on Zion." We want a restoration of our glorious past, but at the same time we balance that with ensuring that Yerushalayim contains the best of the new and innovative. A common refrain is *chadesh yameinu k'kedem*. On the one hand we want our past history, but we want it in a way which is *chadesh* – where there is a newness and a freshness.

Similar to the very architecture of the city, Yerushalayim brings together the old and the young, our ancient history and traditions with a sense of energy, vigor and innovativeness. This vision is beautifully captured by Zecharyah in his famous vision:

So said the Lord of Hosts: Old men and women shall yet sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each man with his staff in his hand because of old age. And the streets of the city shall be filled, with boys and girls playing in its streets. So said the Lord of Hosts: As it will be wonderful in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, it will also be wonderful in My eyes, says the Lord of Hosts. [3]

May we see it soon in our day.

[1]Vayikra 9:1

[2]Vayikra Rabbah, parsha 11.

[3]Zecharyah 8:4-6.

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Making the Old City Young Again



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the view from the Yemenite Village

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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.