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# American Friends of Ateret Cohanim/Jerusalem Chai

....Making the Old City young Again



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Parashat Shmini / פרשת שמני Candle Lighting in Jerusalem 6:29 PM, April 18, 2015 29 Nisan 5775

## 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](#). This week's Dvar Torah sponsored by the **Essrog Family**:  
לז"נ העניע בריינע בת הרב צבי הירש ע"ה  
ה"לז"נ יצחק שמואל בן הרב שמעון דוב ע

## Our Paradoxical Relationship with Yerushalayim

Jews are naturally attracted to holiness. [1] Whenever we sense the presence of God in a place or an activity our attention is caught and we are drawn to it. This can explain the mysterious allure that Yerushalayim has on a wide variety of Jews with different backgrounds and life situations.

However, this natural tendency needs to, at times, be tempered. The Shekhina is not only a place of comfort and security, of joy and elation. It is not only a place for humans to take refuge in times of need. Standing in close proximity to Hashem is an overwhelming experience, which demands awe, respect and fear. At the same time that holiness attracts, it also demands preparation, boundaries and separations.

It is this element that emerges from this week's parasha and haftarah. Parashat Shemini describes that in the midst of the celebrating the inauguration of the Mishkan, Nadav and Avihu bring a "foreign fire" to Hashem and are punished with death as a result. Many commentators explain that at the root of their sin stood an admirable, but, unfortunately, unchecked religious passion. [2] In their desire to come close to Hashem they overstepped the proper boundaries and were burnt by the same fire that initially attracted them. It is for this reason that the Midrash[3] connects their death with an earlier event in their career. The Torah describes that at Har Sinai, Nadav and Avihu "gazed at God, and they ate and drank." [4] This collegial relationship with Hashem, while stemming from genuine religious passion, stood at the root of both the improper gazing and the offering of the "foreign fire."

## In Commemoration of Yom Hashoa



## The New Yemenite Village Website click the picture to learn more



Our current projects in the Old City of Jerusalem and areas adjacent to the Old City actualize our mission of "Making the Old City, Young Again"

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Today, the walled city of Jerusalem (the Old Yishuv)

This dual relationship with sanctity is also true regarding Yerushalayim. One the one hand, we are attracted to our ancient city. Throughout the long exile we have prayed "next year in Yerushalayim," yearning to be close to be within its embrace. And now that travel is easier, Jews from all over the Diaspora are drawn to visiting Yerushalayim. Perhaps this deep, inner feeling of intimacy with Yerushalayim is concretized in the halakha by the commandment to visit the Beit ha-Mikdash and Yerushalayim three times a year. The command to make this pilgrimage parallels our natural inclination to be close to the city.

All this notwithstanding, we must simultaneously be cognizant of the necessary boundaries that exist in our relationship with the holiness of the Beit ha-Mikdash and Yerushalayim. The area is divided into three different "camps," each ascending levels of restrictions on the impure. [5] The holiness of Yerushalayim and the Beit ha-Mikdash are described as "holiness of walls" as they are demarked by a physical barrier. [6] Even when with the proper preparations we are finally able to enter the Beit ha-Mikdash there is a separate mitzvah to have a sustained awe of the environment. [7]

***May we merit to cultivate the proper relationship with Yerushalayim.***

[1] See, for example, Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, chapter 19.

[2] See, for example, Akeidat Yitzhak parashat Emor, end of Sha'ar 67; Sefat Emmet, Shemini 5636.

[3] Vayikra Rabbah, Aharei Mot 20:10.

[4] Shemot 24:11.

[5] Rambam, hilkhhot Bi'at Mikdash chapter 3.

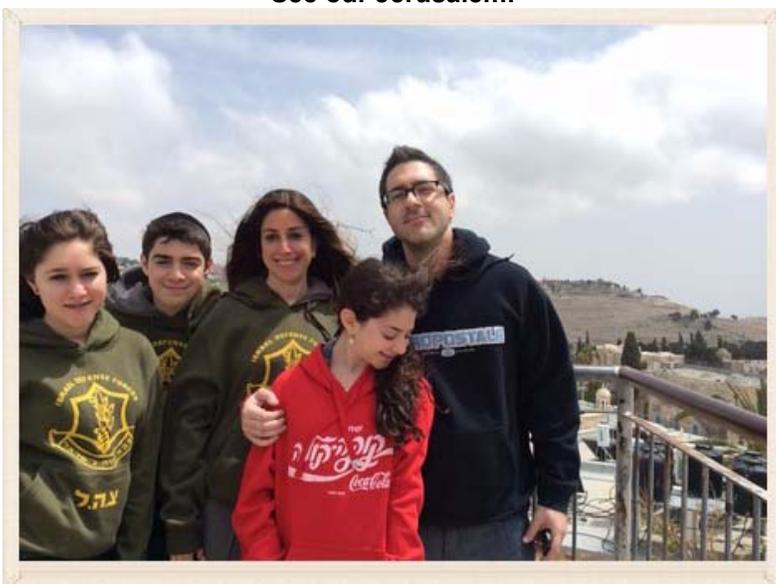
[6] See, for example, Tosfotot Yevamot 82b s.v. "yerusha rishonah."

[7] Rambam, hilkhhot Beit ha-Behirah 7:1.

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**The Kipperman Family at Beit HaTzalam**

and the areas immediately adjacent to it, have come back to life with children and families due to the work of Ateret Cohanim. The miracle that was the rebirth of the State of Israel in 1948, the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967 and the continued growth of the Jewish community in these areas, are constant reminders of the eternity of our religious belief. Help Us Continue Our Work

***Established in 1978,  
This year is our "double chai" year***



**American Friends of Ateret Cohanim /  
Jerusalem Chai**

Our Mission

The Old City is home to nearly 35,000 people..

The Jewish population of the Old City numbers 5000 of which 4000 reside in the Jewish Quarter. The additional 1000 are living and learning in the area of the Old Jewish Quarter (Referred to as the Moslem and Christian Quarters in East Jerusalem)

For nearly four decades, the efforts of American Friends of Ateret Cohanim/Jerusalem Chai have been instrumental in meeting the social, recreational, and educational needs of the families and Yeshiva students who have returned to areas that were once predominantly Jewish.

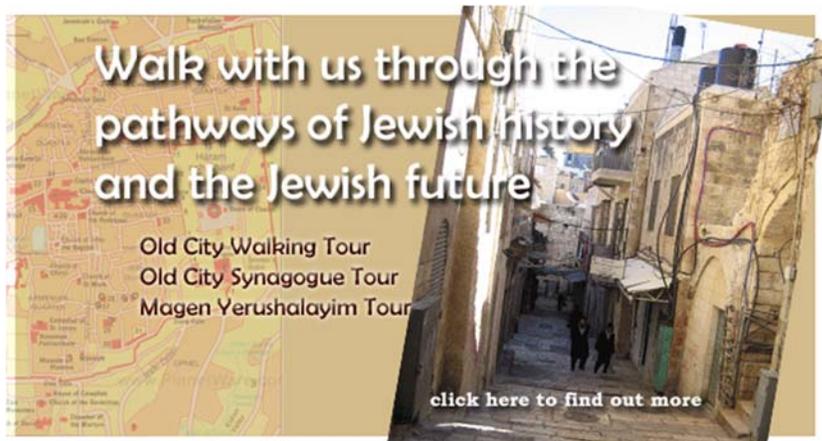


תשע"ה- 5775

May it be the year of "The City -  
Jerusalem" (עיר), of Hashem. ('ה')

May G-d's City - Yerushalayim, be rebuilt and restored to its previous glory for Am Yisrael.

**Moishe, Toby, Devorah, Chaim and Raizy Kipperman.**  
**They live in Marine Park, Brooklyn.**  
**Moishe's comment about their tour "We had a blast!"**



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Next year in a united Jerusalem with a flourishing Jewish life centred around religious educational institutes.  
Lehitrout BaAretz



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