

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



[Our Website](#) | [Tours](#) | [Donate](#) | [Advocacy](#)

Parashat Lech-Lecha / פרשת לך-לך Candle Lighting in Jerusalem 5:18 PM, October 23 ,2015 Cheshvan 10, 5776



## Despite All: Jews Reclaim Jerusalem Synagogue after 80 Years

*Defying Arab terror, squatters and drawn-out legal battle, Jewish community of Shiloach (Silwan) achieves major milestone.*

By Hillel Fendel (information from Daniel Luria) [From the Times of Israel](#)

## Jews finally return to the Yemenite Great Synagogue Ateret Cohanim



A key Jewish community in eastern Jerusalem – practically right under the Temple Mount, to be precise – celebrated its third milestone in six months on Monday: The return of the old Yemenite Great Synagogue in the Shiloach village to Jewish hands after nearly 80 years.

## 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](#)

American Friends of Ateret Cohanim / Jerusalem Chai gratefully acknowledges the legacy of

מרת מרים דבורה בת ר' צבי הירש

Miriam D. Leifer

נפטרה א' סבת תשע"ד

December 4, 2013

Her devotion to the children of Ateret Cohanim's courageous families serves as an inspiration to all of us.

## Yerushalayim – The Perfect City

Our first encounter with our future capital occurs when Avram returns from his successful battle with the four kings. We learn of Malkitzedek, king of Shalem, who goes out of his city to greet and bless Avram.[1] Many midrashim identify this city as Yerushalayim and explain that the name Shalem gets incorporated into the ultimate name of the city.

As the word *shalem* means “complete” or “perfect,” there must be something about the city which bears these qualities. One midrash relates to the perfection of the city’s inhabitants:

The daughter of Yerushayim fears God and is perfect to God.[2] This passage would conjure the image of Yerushalayim as a city of special souls. It was a place for the spiritual elite who would thrive in the unique environment of proximity to the Beit ha-Mikdash. The holiness of the area would



attract them to live there they would live a God-intoxicated life.

This image of the inhabitants of Yerushalayim is bolstered by stories recorded in Chazal. The people of Yerushalayim were recognizable by their superior wisdom and Torah knowledge.[3] The Gemara records that they had unique stringencies in the observance of mitzvot.[4] All of this indicates that Yerushalayim was the city for the spiritual elite.

But what of the average person? Is there a place for a regular Jew in the city of perfection? What if one was not on the level of the inhabitants of Yerushalayim and would feel foreign in the intense spiritual environment? A natural reaction of the average Jew might have been to conclude that Yerushalayim was not for him. It was too beyond his comprehension and lifestyle to feel at home in the city. While respecting the people who lived there, he might prefer to keep his distance.

Perhaps this tension can shed light on the many passages in Chazal which emphasize that every Jew has a place in Yerushalayim. Every Jew must visit three times a year. Every Jew owns a piece of Yerushalayim as it was not designated for a specific tribe.[5] Each Jew must realize that he too can feel at home in the unique atmosphere of Yerushalayim.

Some people can plunge right in and make Yerushalayim their permanent residence. For others, it's a gradual process of acculturation. Each visit to Yerushalayim furthers the process of inspiration and familiarity serving to educate "regular" Jews from around the country about the joy of closeness to Hashem. The Sefer Hachinuch,[6] in particular, emphasizes the educational element in these semi-annual pilgrimages to Yerushalayim and the affect that these visits can have on one's hometown and family. Yerushalayim is not only the city of perfection, but also, and perhaps more importantly, the city that helps inspire people on the path to perfection.

[1]Bereishit 14:8

[2]Eicha Rabbah 2:17.

[3]Eicha Rabbah 1:4.

[4]Sukkah 41a.

[5]Yoma 12b.

[6]See, for example, mitzvah 247; 360.

[click here for a pdf copy](#)

**SHOW THE WORLD THAT WE ARE NOT AFRAID**

**VISIT ISRAEL NOW**

Book a Tour With Us [CLICK HERE](#)  
See our Jerusalem!

See Jerusalem of 150 years ago and today with our [tour guides](#)



**[Take a tour with us, you will never forget the experience](#)**

Defying a Supreme Court ruling handed in February of this year, the Arab squatters on the holy property refused to leave – and were therefore forcibly removed from the building in a well-protected early-morning operation.



Given the sensitive nature of the mission, and the location – a neighborhood (Silwan/Shiloach) largely populated by hostile Arabs, overlooking the City of David – and the wave of terrorism currently underway, many Border Police units, special police units and others took part.

This past May, festive Jewish prayers were held in a small part of the long-hidden and inaccessible Hechal Shlomo synagogues of the Yemenite village - for the first time in 77 years. The synagogues are part of the "**Yemenite Hekdesh Benvenisti**" community buildings owned by the old Yemenite community of Jerusalem, which first struck roots there in the 1880's.

The second milestone occurred two months ago, when a group of Jewish families moved into the **Beit Rachel** complex of the old Yemenite village. Despite the never-forfeited Jewish ownership of the buildings, six apartments were "purchased" from the Arab families who took over the property when Jerusalem fell under Jordanian control in 1948.



**And now, the icing on the cake: The entire old Yemenite synagogue in the Shiloach is finally and completely back in Jewish hands.**

As mentioned, in May of this year, the Ateret Cohanim organization helped facilitate the return of less than a third of the synagogues back to the rightful Yemenite heirs – namely, the Yemenite communal property of Hekdesh Benvenisti. To regain the remaining two-thirds, however, it appeared that a court ruling of seven years ago was not enough – and the Hekdesh actually offered the illegal Arab squatters money for them to leave. Even more unbelievably, the Arabs refused the offer – and seven years of court battles ensued, until the Supreme Court ruled in February that they must leave and allow the owners to return.

Finally now, eight months later, the ruling was actualized, and the main landmark of the Jewish Yemenite community of Jerusalem is Jewish once again. The Hekdesh and Ateret Cohanim are now embarking on a campaign to restore the entire synagogue to its previous glory.

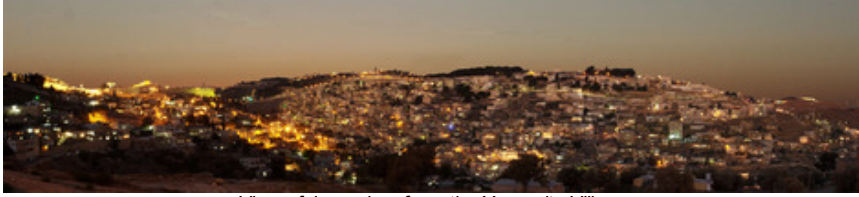
A timeline of the Yemenite Jewish community, as provided by Ateret Cohanim:

**1882** - Yemenite Jews make the dangerous trek to Jerusalem. Village established with a peak of 144 Yemenite families.

**1885** - First Yemenite Synagogue was established. (The Great Synagogue - Ohel Shlomo)

**1936-7** - Yemenite Jews driven out by marauding Arabs in pogroms of the 1930's.





View of Jerusalem from the Yemenite Village

**We cry and mourn for those who have been murdered by Arab Terror and we pray for those injured and in pain; for their sake and the sake of Jerusalem we still carry on living and redeeming.**

**Now, more than ever, We need YOU to help us Protect the Children living in East Jerusalem**



PARTNER WITH  
**AMERICAN FRIENDS OF ATERET COHANIM**

**block by block  
courtyard by  
courtyard  
neighborhood  
by neighborhood.**

Children living in the Shiloach (Silwan) and East Jerusalem are subject to:  
**DAILY HARASSMENT • STONES AND ROCKS • FIREBOMBS**

We respond by building  
**SAFE AND PROTECTED PLAYGROUNDS**

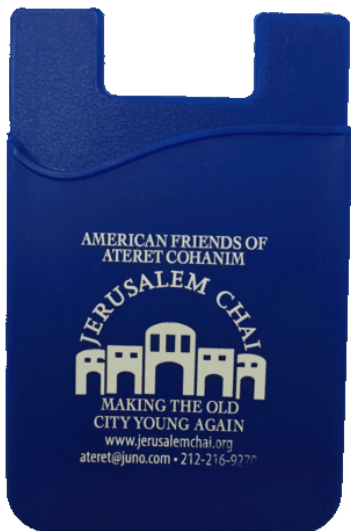
SPONSORSHIP LEVELS: \$18 • \$36 • \$72 • \$180 • \$360

248 West 35th Street • NY, NY 10001 • 212-216-9270 • jeruchal@gmail.com • www.jerusalemchai.org/donate

*Making the Old City young Again*

**Your donations help us keep the children smiling click here**

## Keep Jerusalem on Your Phone



### Keep Jerusalem on your cell phone

Please send us your name, address and current email address and we will send you this American Friends of Ateret Cohanim / Jerusalem Chai cellphone wallet absolutely free

[click here](#)



### Our Kotel Compass

Always pointing in the direction of Jerusalem (and follows the halacha in Israel). A phone app and companion for your trip to Israel. The Kotel Compass App (Available in the ISTORE or ANDROID MARKET is free and you can book your tour from the App.

**IPHONE [Click here](#) and Android Users [Click here](#)**

**1938** - Last remaining Yemenite Jews removed from homes by the British authorities who could not or would not protect them. The British promised, however, that the Jewish refugees would be able to return when things quieted down. This promise was not fulfilled, and the holy items were desecrated, and the neighborhood was occupied and overrun.

**2004** - The first modern-day group of Jews move into the Yemenite Village in 2004. The property sales have been ratified by Israeli courts, and there is no dispute that the apartments are owned outright by Jews.

**2015** – The return of the Yemenite Synagogue, whose main sanctuary will be called Heichal Yonatan, in honor of Jonathan Pollard.

"It is our hope that Jews and Arabs will be able to live side by side with each other in peace and coexistence, as can be seen when Arabs legally move into predominantly Jewish neighborhoods like Pisgat Ze'ev, Ramat Eshkol, French Hill, Armon HaNetziv," Ateret Cohanim said in a statement.

### FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO RESPOND TO ARAB TERROR HELP OR BE INVOLVED WITH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) Security projects, emergency/medical equipment in compounds, self defense classes for youth, cameras, lighting, pepper spray
- 2) Beit Wittenberg Family needs - possible "auxillary" help for families in Beit Wittenberg affected psychologically and traumatized by recent terror attacks. And also possible project in area in memory of Rabbi Nechemiah Lavi hy'd.
- 3) Youth activities in the Old City and its environs.
- 4) Renovation and dedication of apartments in the area to ADD JEWISH FAMILIES OR STUDENTS.
- 5) Invest in our efforts to modernize apartments and **ADD JEWISH LIFE TO THE AREA** of old Jewish Quarter.
- 6) Major restoration of Beit Wittenberg as a monumental heritage house (Mark Twain also stayed in the building in 1867)

**AM YISRAEL IS NEEDED NOW.  
TOMORROW IS TOO LATE.**

***The tragedy in the Old City has traumatized many of our children and their parents. However, they are committed and determined to continue to live and learn in the areas of so called East Jerusalem which we refer to as the Old Yeshuv. Help them as they go through this difficult time in their lives.***

**Donate Now**

**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

Mazel Tov to Executive Board member Dr. Paul and his wife Drora who will be receiving the Rachel Emainu Bonei Yisroel Award by the Rachel's Children Reclamation Foundation

were once predominantly Jewish, including the Old City, Maaleh HaZeitim, The Yemenite Village (Shiloach) and Kidmat Zion

Rachel Imeinu Memorial Recognition  
**75 Sefer Torahs Dedication at Kotel**  
Comments by Sgt. David Hales, Givati



KEYNOTE ADDRESS:  
**NOT BY RACHEL'S  
TEARS ALONE**  
DR. MORDECHAI  
KEDAR

Young Leadership Award  
**TIFERET LEVI**  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Can You Hear Us  
**SHLOIMY  
BLUTH**



Rachel Imeinu Actualist  
**ESTHER SARAH  
SHLEIFSTEIN**



Rachel Imeinu Bonei Yisroel Award  
**Dr. PAUL and  
DRORA BRODY**



Breaking the Silence Award  
**MICHAEL  
CHENKIN**



Chessed Award  
**ROBERT SIDI, Esq.**



**RACHEL'S CHILDREN RECLAMATION FOUNDATION**  
21st Annual NY Citywide Commemoration  
**YAHRTZEIT OF RACHEL IMEINU**  
**11 MarCheshvan 5776**  
**JEWISH MOTHER'S DAY**  
will be marked this year on 12 MarCheshvan

**Sunday Evening, October 25, 2015, 6:00 P.M.**  
**GALA BUFFET JOURNAL DINNER**  
Manhattan Beach Jewish Center, 60 West End Ave Brooklyn, NY  
Musical Presentation from the Dome of Kever Rachel  
**"WE ARE RACHEL'S CHILDREN"**  
Lyrics by Evelyn Hales, Music by Cecelia Margules



Vocal by Michael Elias

*"Remember, A visit to Israel without going to Kever Rachel is like going home and not visiting your mother"*  
Evelyn Hales, founder and president of RCR and Bonei Rachel Corp  
RVP: \$180 per person; \$1800 per table;  
Donors: \$5000 per table; \$10,000 per table; Journal Ads  
Your donations support our projects for Kvat Yisroel and Bonei Rachel  
Mail to: RCRF, 60 West End Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11235  
718-648-2610 • 212-470-0967  
\*rachelchildren@gmail.com • www.facebook/rachelchildren.org



5776 - תשע"ו May it be the year of "The City - Jerusalem" (ירושלם), and her residents. ('יושביה')

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.

[Our Website](#) | [Tours](#) | [Donate](#) | [Advocacy](#)

[Click to view this email in a browser](#)

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

American Friends of Ateret Cohanim/Jerusalem Chai  
248 West 35th Street  
New York, NY 10001  
US

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

**Vertical  
response**  
A DELUXE COMPANY  
Free Email Marketing >>