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Parashat Yitro / פרשת יתרו Candle Lighting in Jerusalem 4:30 PM, January 29, 2016 19 Shvat 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](#)

Unity and Revelation

Even before receiving the Torah the Jewish people accomplished one of our national aspirations. The Torah records that when the Jews reached the Sinai Desert "and Israel camped there opposite the mountain."^[1] The word for "camped" – *va-yihan* – is written in the singular form, leading Rashi to comment that the nation was completely unified – "as one person with one heart."

It is not a coincidence that this level was reached immediately prior to the giving of the Torah. Tanna D'vei Eliyahu, a midrashic compilation, explains that Hashem waited until there was peace and unity amongst the Jewish people before revealing Himself to them.^[2] The Jewish people can only experience the Shekhinah when they are unified.

Though this intense level of unity only existed at Sinai and has since been a desideratum, in the ideal halachik system this experience is supposed to be partially recreated three times a year. In the wake of the great revelation at Sinai, Hashem instructed the Jews to construct a Mishkan and later a Beit ha-Mikdash where that intense connection to Hashem that existed at Sinai could continue to accompany the Jewish people.^[3] The connection between Mount Sinai and the Beit ha-Mikdash is so deep that according to one midrash Hashem actually took a part of Temple Mount in relocated it in the Sinai desert in order to create Mount Sinai.^[4] Also, according to Rashi, the name "*Har ha-Moriyah*" can refer to both Temple Mount and to Mount Sinai.^[5]

Rights of Jews to live anywhere in Jerusalem *The Kfar HaTeimanim Experience* Daniel Luria, Executive Director

This writer, finds it quite inconceivable - that certain world leaders of free democratic countries like the USA, speak against the rights of Jews to live anywhere in Jerusalem. Has someone forgotten the Jim Crow Laws and blatant discrimination against African Americans?

Do i sense a touch of international arrogance coupled with a dose of antisemitism?

How can it be "ok" for Arabs to purchase homes and live peacefully in predominantly Jewish neighborhoods, like Neve Yaakov or French Hill and East Talpiyot, yet it's apparently "not ok" for Jews to legally purchase and live quietly in predominantly Arab neighborhoods like Shiloach-Silwan or Maaleh HaZeitim-Ras El Amud?

To me, this attitude is unacceptable, especially when it is us - the Jewish People who are the only ones to have the natural, legal, historical, and ethical right to live anywhere in our Homeland, and especially in our united capital Jerusalem.

Thank G-d, and notwithstanding a number of attempts by a hostile Arab world to drive us into the sea, we the Jewish people, have returned to our ancestral Homeland as the only true indigenous people of the Land.

We have returned to "our" Jerusalem, after uniting the city in 1967 and today there are over 220,000 Jews living in the area defined by a hypocritical world as "East Jerusalem". Yes - with such numbers, Jerusalem cannot and will not be divided, yet enormous pressure still exists to make concessions in the Holy Basin.(Old City and its environs)

This is where Ateret Cohanim in Israel and Our Partners in the United States (Jerusalem Chai) step into the picture.

Ateret Cohanim, with the help of ideological investors and donors from Israel and abroad have "effectively" reclaimed old Jewish properties and returned Jewish life to the Holy Basin.

We were driven out by marauding Arab hordes in the pogroms and riots of the 1920's and 1930's, but today we are back "home".

But as with the revelation at Sinai, there is a prerequisite for the Jewish people to be able to experience the intensity of the Shekhina. Before arriving at the Beit ha-Mikdash the Jews needed to pass through the city of Yerushalayim. The Gemara refers to Yerushalayim during the holiday pilgrimages as a city that "makes all Jews into *haveirim*."^[6] In the context of the Gemara it is clear that *Haveirim* refers to a specific group who are believed regarding the purity of *trumah* and *kodshim*. However, many see the word choice of "*haveirim*" as also entailing a sense of friendship and unity.^[7] In order to finally arrive at the Beit ha-Mikdash and perpetuate the Mount Sinai experience, the people needed to first replicate the Sinai Desert experience and be able to camp as one person with one heart. Only then were they worthy of entering the Beit ha-Mikdash.

The lesson for us is clear. If we want to merit the rebuilding of the Beit ha-Mikdash and the revelation of the Shekhina, we need to understand that unity, is one of the essential prerequisites. This is all the more true for those who merit to spend time in Yerushalayim.

[1]Shemot 19:2.

[2]Parsha 3.

[3]See, for example, Ramban to Shemot 25:1.

[4]Midrash Tehillim, 68:15.

[5]Rashi to Ta'anit 16a d"h "*Morah la-Umot*."

[6]Yerushalmi Chagigah 3:6.

[7]See, for example, Maharitz Chiyut to Niddah 34a.

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In this week's chug the boys finished their coin project and started with lanyard key rings.



VISIT ISRAEL NOW

SHOW THE WORLD THAT WE ARE NOT AFRAID

One such area is the old Yemenite Village of Shiloach, overlooking the City of David and the Temple Mount of the Old City. A thriving and pulsating Yemenite Jewish neighborhood which was established in 1882, once was home to over 150 Yemenite families. The Yemenite Village was a success story and a symbol of the unfolding Zionist dream. The Arab pogroms of 1938 unfortunately forced the Yemenite Jews to leave and, notwithstanding British promises of safety and security, the village became the Arab neighborhood of Silwan. *Desecration of holy sites, looting, total destruction of Jewish homes, rampant illegal building and Arab squatters on old Jewish property - defined Silwan for nearly half a century.* All that changed in 2004, with the first Jewish families (9) returning to the old Yemenite Village of Shiloach.

Our Arab neighbors have not been welcoming. **There have been daily physical attacks on our families and children since 2004.** (126 reported attacks on just one building, Beit HaDvash in a 4 month period in 2015)

Despite the attacks, we now have (thank G-d) 17 Jewish families, soon to be 22 families. Over the last year alone, we have effectively doubled the Jewish presence in the old Yemenite Village of Shiloach (Silwan). There are many Jewish families and Yeshiva students who want to be at the "Jerusalem forefront" and who have already moved, or who want to move into the neighborhood.

As such, we now have enough young children to **justify our own nursery** in Kfar HaTeimanim. The nursery will eliminate the need to transport little children and toddlers in bullet proof vehicles to the City of David and the Old City at a tremendous cost savings. We plan to establish this nursery in one of the newly acquired buildings - **Beit Rachel**.

The Nursery Project will convert one apartment in Beit Rachel into a proper children's nursery. The projected cost of \$100,000 will fully equip the nursery. (security vehicles and transportation exceed that cost in 9 months)

An additional outcome of this neighborhood growth is that we simply do not have enough security vehicles to transport the children/adults to and from the neighbourhood.

It is not just a logistical nightmare - it is impossible, given the current number of bullet proof jeeps available for all the families and students. And it will probably take 6-8 months to convince the Government to add more security vans. We do not have the luxury of time. Children grow and our current families are expanding!

So for the next 6 months we (Ateret Cohanim) will be renting a private stone-proof security van, with a driver, at a cost of approximately \$25,000.

OTHER Kfar HaTeimanim PROJECTS:

- **Security station** at entrance of Beit Rachel - to protect the entrance to the neighborhood (security doors, cameras, intercom, screen for guard: \$35,000)
- **Spectacular scenic lookout** from rooftop of Beit Rachel with view of Ir David, Old City, Temple Mount and Kings Garden (Includes new flooring, guardrail and possible pergola: A major kavod in Jerusalem for a special donor-\$75,000)

Partner with us as we continue to make the "dream" come true

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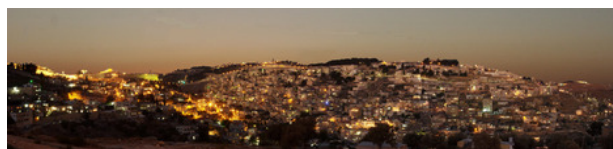
Making The Old City "Young" Again

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the view from the Yemenite Village

Support Our Ongoing Projects

Beit Wittenberg Childrens and Older Youth
Activities Center \$3000
Four Yaldei Tzion V'Yerushalayim Nurseries \$2000
Monthly Hosting of Students in our neighborhoods
for Shabbat: \$1800

Sponsor the monthly shiur in memory of
Rav Nechemiah Lavi HY"D on Sefer Nechemia: \$360

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Additional Ongoing Projects

Security Projects:

- Emergency/medical equipment in compounds,
- Self defense classes for youth,
- Cameras, lighting, pepper spray

Beit Wittenberg Family needs:

auxiliary help for families in Beit Wittenberg affected psychologically and traumatized by recent terror attacks.

Youth activities in the Old City and its environs:

Renovation and dedication of apartments in the area to add Jewish families or students

Major restoration of Beit Wittenberg as a monumental heritage house (Mark Twain also stayed in the building in 1867)

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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1/28/2016

This Week from Our Jerusalem-Parashat Yitro / xax" x@x^a xxax" x

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