

May and Should a Person Enter the Temple Mount Nowadays?

1. Morah Mikdash. Awe of the Sanctuary

משנה מסכת ברכות פרק ט משנה ה

לא יקל אדם את ראשו כנגד שער המזרח שהוא מכוון כנגד בית קדשי הקדשים לא יכנס להר הבית במקלו ובמנעלו ובפונדתו ובאבק שעל רגליו ולא יעשנו קפנדריא ורקיקה מקל וחומר

רמב"ם הלכות בית הבחירה פרק ז

הלכה א

מצות עשה ליראה מן המקדש שנאמר ומקדשי תיראו, ולא מן המקדש אתה ירא אלא ממי שצוה על יראתו.

הלכה ב

ואי זו היא יראתו לא יכנס אדם להר הבית במקלו או במנעל ... ולא יכנס לו אלא לדבר מצוה.

הלכה ז

אף על פי שהמקדש היום חרב בעונותינו חייב אדם במוראו כמו שהיה נוהג בו בבניינו, לא יכנס אלא למקום שמותר להכנס לשם ולא ישב בעזרה ולא יקל ראשו כנגד שער המזרח שנאמר את שבתותי תשמורו ומקדשי תיראו, מה שמירת שבת לעולם אף מורא מקדש לעולם שאע"פ שחרב בקדושתו עומד.

1. Mishna Berakhot 9:5

One should not show disrespect to the Eastern Gate, because it is in a direct line with the Holy of Holies. One should not enter the Temple Mount with a staff, or with shoes on, or with a wallet, or with dusty feet; nor should one make it a short cut, all the more spitting [is forbidden].

2. Maimonides. Hilchot Beit Habechira ch.7

Halacha #1

There is a positive commandment to hold the Mikdash (Temple) in awe, as [Leviticus 19:30] states: "And you shall revere my Sanctuary." Nevertheless, it is not the [physical building of] the Temple which must be held in awe, but rather, He who commanded that it be revered.

Halakha #2 ... Do not enter other than for the purpose of a mitzva

#7 Even though the Sanctuary today is in ruins because of our iniquities, we are obliged to revere it in the same manner as when it was standing.

One should not enter except where it was permissible; nor should anyone sit down in the [site of] the Azara or act irreverently while facing [the place where stood] the East Gate; for it is said: "You shall keep my Sabbaths, and revere My Sanctuary" ([Vayikra 19:30](#)). Now just as we are obliged to keep the Sabbath for all time to come, so must we revere the Sanctuary, for all time to come; for **even though it is in ruins its sanctity endures.**

2. Is the Temple Mount holy Today?

The debate between the Rambam and the Raavad

3. רמב"ם הלכות בית הבחירה פרק ו

הלכה יד

...ובמה נתקדשה בקדושה ראשונה שקדשה שלמה שהוא קידש העזרה וירושלים לשעתן וקידשן לעתיד לבא.

הלכה טו

לפיכך מקריבין הקרבנות כולן אף על פי שאין שם בית בנוי, ואוכלין קדשי קדשים בכל העזרה אף על פי שהיא חריבה ואינה מוקפת במחיצה ואוכלין קדשים קלים ומעשר שני בכל ירושלים אף על פי שאין שם חומות שהקדושה ראשונה קדשה לשעתה וקדשה לעתיד לבא.

3. Maimonides. Hilchot Beit Habechira ch.6

#14

how was [the Second Temple] consecrated? With the first consecration performed by Solomon, for he consecrated the Azarah (Temple Courtyard) and Jerusalem **for that time and for eternity**

#15

Therefore, we may offer all the sacrifices [on the Temple site], even though the Temple itself is not built. Similarly, sacrifices of the most holy order can be eaten in the entire [area of the] Courtyard, even though it is in ruin and not

הלכה טז

ולמה אני אומר במקדש ירושלים קדושה ראשונה קדשה לעתיד לבוא, ובקדושת שאר א"י לענין שביעית ומעשרות וכיוצא בהן לא קדשה לעתיד לבוא?

לפי שקדושת המקדש וירושלים מפני השכינה ושכינה אינה בטלה,

והרי הוא אומר והשמותי את מקדשיכם ואמרו חכמים אף על פי ששוממין בקדושתן הן עומדים אבל חיוב הארץ בשביעית ובמעשרות אינו אלא מפני שהוא כבוש רבים וכיון שנלקחה הארץ מידיהם בטל הכבוש ונפטרה מן התורה ממעשרות ומשביעית שהרי אינה מן ארץ ישראל, וכיון שעלה עזרא וקדשה לא קדשה בכיבוש אלא בחזקה שהחזיקו בה ולפיכך כל מקום שהחזיקו בה עולי בבל ונתקדש בקדושת עזרא השנייה הוא מקודש היום ואף על פי שנלקח הארץ ממנו וחייב בשביעית ובמעשרות על הדרך שביארנו בהלכות תרומה.

4. השגת הראב"ד

סברת עצמו היא זו ולא ידעתי מאין לו ובכמה מקומות במשנה אם אין מקדש ירקב ובגמ' אמרו דנפול מחיצות אלמא למ"ד קדושה ראשונה לא קדשה לעתיד לבא לא חלק בין מקדש לירושלים לשאר א"י ולא עוד אלא שאני אומר שאפילו רבי יוסי דאמר קדושה שנייה קדשה לעתיד לבא לא אמר אלא לשאר א"י אבל לירושלים ולמקדש לא אמר לפי שהיה יודע עזרא שהמקדש וירושלים עתידים להשתנות ולהתקדש קידוש אחר עולמי בכבוד י"י לעולם כך נגלה לי מסוד ה' ליראיו לפיכך הנכנס עתה שם אין בו כרת. +

שו"ת רדב"ז חלק ב סימן תרצא

ומ"מ יש לי לתת טעם למנהג שנהגו כל העולם לעלות באותם עליות לראות משם את הבית כלו ולא שמענו ולא ראינו מי שמיחה בידם. דע כי הראב"ד ז"ל סובר כי האידנא אין כרת למי שנכנס למקדש וכן תמצא בהשגה פרק ששי מהלכות בית הבחירה הרי שיעקר הדין הוא מחלוקת ... הילכך כיון דאיכא כל הני ספוקי /ספיקי/ תלו הדבר להקל

surrounded by a divider. We may also eat sacrifices of lesser sanctity and ... for through its original consecration, it was consecrated for that time and for eternity.

#16

Now why is it my contention that regarding the Sanctuary and Jerusalem, the first sanctification hallowed them for all time to come, whereas the sanctification of the rest of the Land of Israel, for purposes of Sabbatical year and tithes etc. did not hallow the land for all time to come?

Because the sanctity of the Sanctuary and of Jerusalem derives from the Divine Presence, which could not be banished. Does it not say "And I will bring your sanctuaries unto desolation" ([Vayikra 26:31](#)), The sages say: **Even though they are desolate, the sanctuaries retain their pristine holiness.**

By contrast, the obligations arising out of the Land as far as the Sabbatical year and the tithes are concerned had derived from the conquest of the Land by the people [of Israel], and as soon as the land was wrested from them the conquest was nullified....

4. Ra'avad

This is his [Maimonides] own opinion. I don't know where he got it. In a number of places in the Mishna [it teaches] that "if there is no Mikdash (Sanctuary) it [the Consecration] decays." And the Gemara states "the fall of the partitions..." Evidently according to the opinion that the first Kedushah (Consecration) does not consecrate for the future, he does not distinguish between the Mikdash and Jerusalem and the rest of Eretz Israel.

Further, I say that even according to R. Yose who says that the 2nd Kedushah (Consecration) **does** consecrate for the future, that only refers to the rest of Eretz Israel, but not to Jerusalem and the Mikdash. For Ezra knew that the Mikdash and Jerusalem were [destined] in the future to change and be consecrated with another consecration – eternal – through the kavod (glory) of God forever. So it has been revealed to me by the Divine sod (secret) to His fearers. Therefore one who enters there now is not subject to karet (excision).

5. Responsa of Radbaz (R. David Ben Zimra 1479 – 1573, Spain – Israel – Cairo)

To offer a reason why people nowadays ascend on the elevated areas, know that the Ra'avad feels that in our days there is no excommunication for one who enters the Temple compound ... so the issue is a dispute. Also the status of the elevated platforms ... and since there are so many disputes, people have taken the lenient position due to their desire to see the site of the Temple.

מרב חשקתם לחזות בקדש ... הנה כתבתי לך טעם המנהג
אבל אתה תהיה מן הנזהרים ולא תכנס לא לבית ולא
לעלייה אם לא תהיה רחוקה מהכיפה הרבה

... but you should be careful and do not enter the Temple Mount nor its elevated platform unless you keep far away from the dome [of the rock].

שמות רבה ב:ב
ר"א אומר לא זזה השכינה מתוך ההיכל שנאמר (ד"ה = דברי הימים = ב ז) והיו עיני ולבי שם וגו', וכן הוא אומר (תהלים ג) קולי אל ה' אקרא ויענני מהר קדשו סלה, אע"פ שהוא חרב הרי הוא בקדושתו, בא וראה מה כורש אומר (עזרא א) אל האלהים אשר בירושלים אמר להן אע"פ שהוא חרב האלהים אינו זז משם, א"ר אחא לעולם אין השכינה זזה מכותל מערבי שנאמר (שיר / השירים/ ב) הנה זה עומד אחר כתלנו.

6. Exodus Rabba 2:2

Rabbi Eliezer said: The Divine Presence never departed from the Temple, as it is written, 'For now I have chosen and sanctified this house so that My name shall be there forever and My eyes and My heart will be there all the days' (II Chronicles 7:16)... Even when [the Temple] is destroyed, it remains in its sanctity... Even when it is destroyed, God does not leave it.

Rebbe Acha said: The Shechina (Divine Presence) will never depart from the Western Wall, as it is written, "Behold – He stands behind our wall" (Song of Songs 2:9)

שה"ש פרק ב

Shir Hashirim 2:9

My beloved is like a gazelle or a young hart; behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh in through the windows, he peereth through the lattice.

ט דומה דודי לצבי, או לעפר האילים; הנה זה עומד, אחר כתלנו--משגיח מן החלונות, מציץ מן-החרכים.

#3 Assuming there IS sanctity, who may enter?

7. משנה כלים פרק א
לפנים מן החומה מקדש מהם, שאוכלים שם קדשים קלים ומעשר שני.
הר הבית מקדש ממנו, שאין זבים וזבות, נדות ויולדות נכנסים לשם.
החיל מקדש ממנו, שאין גוים וטמא מת נכנסים לשם.

7. Mishna Keilim ch.1

The area within the wall [of Jerusalem] is holier, for it is there that lesser holy things and second tithe may be eaten.
The Temple Mount is holier, for zavim, zavot, menstruants and women after childbirth may not enter it.
The chel is holier, for neither non-Jews nor one who contracted corpse impurity may enter it.

#4 Historical evidence of entry to the Temple Mount. (Sources from Golinkin)

1. Tosefta Berakhot (6:2, ed. Lieberman, p. 33 and parallels):

Ben Zoma (early second century c.e.), when he saw a large mass of Jews on the Temple Mount, used to say: Blessed is He who created all these people to serve me..."

2. Jerusalem Talmud (Pesahim 7:11, ed. Venice 35b):

Said Rabbi Yohanan bar Maryah (fourth century, Israel) in the name of Rabbi Pinhas (same): From the fact that we see the Sages removing their sandals under the portal of the [wall surrounding the] Temple Mount, we can derive that "under the portal" was never sanctified.

From here we can deduce that the Sages of that period did indeed enter the Temple Mount on a regular basis.

3. The Christian Pilgrim of Bordeaux who was in Jerusalem in the year 333 c.e. relates that the **Jews used to come to the Temple Mount every year on the Ninth of Av in order to recite lamentations over the Temple ruins** and to rend their garments. He adds that next to two monuments of Hadrian there was a perforated stone upon which the Jews used to pour oil. (Regarding the Pilgrim of Bordeaux, see A. Stewart and C. W.

Wilson, eds., Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem, London, 1896, pp. 21-22; Ben Zion Dinaburg, Zion 3 (5689), p. 78; Shmuel Klein, Zion 6 (5694), p. 33; Simhah Assaf, Tekufat Hageonim V'sifrutah, Jerusalem, 1955, p. 73; Ora Limor, Mas'ot Eretz Hakodesh, Jerusalem, 1998, pp. 31-32).

3. Ben-Zion Dinaburg proved **through the testimonies of rabbis, Karaites and genizah fragments that there was a Jewish “house of prayer and study” on the Temple Mount in the early Moslem period between the 7th and 11th centuries.**

4. **Maimonides himself paid a visit to the Temple Mount** on the 14th of October, 1165. Thus we are told by Rabbi Elazar Azkari in his Sefer Haredim which was written in Safed in 1588:

And thus I found at the end of a line which Rabbi Samuel bar Abraham Skail [of Sicily?] z”l copied in Acre from the handwriting of Rabbi Moses [Maimonides] the Light of the Exile. Thus it was written there: “On Tuesday, the fourth of Marheshvan, 4926 we left Acre to ascend to Jerusalem under dangerous conditions, and I entered the ‘Great and Holy House’ and prayed on Thursday, the sixth of Marheshvan ...” (Rabbi Elazar Azkari, Sefer Haredim, Sha’ar Hateshuvah, Chapter 65, Jerusalem, 5741, pp. 253-254. It should be noted that Shmuel Klein, Toledot Hayishuv Hayehudi B’eretz Israel, Tel Aviv, 1950, pp. 285-286 thinks that this sentence is a forgery, since it contradicts Maimonides’ halakhic opinion described above).

5. **The Meiri of Provence (1249-1315)** testifies in his Talmud Commentary “And the simple custom is to enter there [the Temple Mount], according to what we have heard”. (Beit Habehirah to Shevuot 16a, ed. Lange, Jerusalem, 5721, p. 29).

#5 Why did the Israeli Rabbinate absolutely prohibit entry to the Temple Mount?



THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE ISRAELI CHIEF RABBINATE IN THE TEMPLE MOUNT QUESTION¹

Yoel Cohen

<https://www.icpa.org/jpsr/s99-yc.htm>

Within hours of the Mount falling to the Israeli Army on the second day of the war, Israel Radio broadcast a warning issued by the Chief Rabbinate not to enter the area of the Mount... Given the uncertainty where the Temple building itself was located, Unterman and Nissim decided to impose a complete ban on the Mount.

When the Chief Rabbinate Council met on the last day of the war, there was a general consensus among the majority of council members that the Chief Rabbinate had to take a stand in warning Jews off the Mount. Rabbi Zolti, who was invited to attend the meeting as a member of the Religious Court, argued that "we are obligated to issue a formal warning" because of the penalty of kareth. The dynamic and widely respected Rabbi Zolti brought with him a prepared draft statement which was passed by the council without any alteration. In the statement, the Chief Rabbinate Council reminded the public that "in view of the fact that the holiness of the area never ceases, it is forbidden to ascend the Temple Mount until the Temple is built." ... Rabbi Halevi - who later, while Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, became a public advocate of Jewish ascent to the Mount - disagreed with the council and argued that the matter should be left to the local rabbi to inform his followers.

Although the Chief Rabbinate mustered the signatures of some 300 leading rabbis in support of the public ban ... IDF Chief Rabbi General Goren took a view diametrically opposed to the Chief Rabbinate and sought to enable Jews to pray in the permitted areas of the Temple Mount ...

#6 What do Today's Rabbis say about Ascending the Temple Mount?

FOR

- R. Shlomo Goren z'l, former Ashkenazi Chief R. of Israel
- R. Chaim David Halevi z'l, former Chief R. of Tel Aviv.
- R. Yosef Kapach z'l.
- R. Yechiel Michel Tukuchinsky z'l.
- R. Moshe Feinstein z'l Igrot Moshe, O.C.2:113
- R. Moshe Tendler
- R. Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe
- R. Dov Lior, Rav of Kiryat Arba.
- R. Shmuel Eliyahu, Rav of Tzfat.
- R. Eliezer Melamed, Rosh Yeshivat Har Beracha.
- R. Yuval Sherlo. Petach Tikva Yeshiva

#2017. Proponents of Ascent

- Abraham Zuckerman z'l, head of Bnei Akiva Yeshiva, Kfar Haroeh
- R. Nachum E. Rabinowitz z'l, Rosh Yeshiva, Ma'ale Adumim
- R. Chaim Druckman, head of Bnei Akiva yeshivas, Or Tzion
- R. Dov Lior, R. of Kiryat Arba, Hebron
- R. Zefania Drori, Rabbi/Rash Yeshiva. Kiryat Shmona
- R. Shalom Gold, Har Nof
- R. Avram Gisser, Ofra

- R. David Dudkevitz, Yitzhar
- R. Reem Hacohen, Otniel Yeshiva
 - R. Eliezer Waldman, Kiryat Arba
 - R. Yaacov Medan, Har Etzion Yeshiva
 - R. Hanan Porat, Kfar Etzion
 - R. Binyamin Kalmanson, head of Otniel Yeshiva
 - R. Shlomo Riskin, Efrat
 - R. Shabtai Rappaport, head of Shvut Yisrael Yeshiva, Efrat
 - R. Yitzhak Shilat, co Rosh Yeshiva. Ma'ale Adumim
 - R. Yehuda Chelouch, Chief Rabbi Netanya
 - R. Yitzhak Shapira, head of Od Yosef Chai Yeshiva

AGAINST

- R. Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook z"l
- R. Zvi Yehuda Kook z"l
- R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach z"l
- R. Ovadia Yosef z'l, former Sefardi Chief R. of Israel.
- R. Yitzchak Weiss z'l, the Minchat Yitzchak.
- R. Eliezer Waldenberg z'l, the Tzitz Eliezer.
- R. Issur Yehuda Unterman z'l, Ashkenazi Chief R. @ 6 Day War.
- R. Yitzchak Nissim z'l, Sefardi Chief R. @ 6 Day War.
- R. Yosef Shalom Elyashiv z'l.
- R. Yehoshua Neuwirth z'l.
- R. Shalom Cohen, Rosh Yeshivat Porat Yosef.
- R. Shlomo Amar, former Sefardi Chief R. of Israel.
- R. Eliyahu Bakshi-Doron z"l, former Sefardi Chief R. of Israel.
- R. Yisrael Meir Lau, former Ashkenazi Chief R. of Israel and current Chief R. of Tel Aviv. R. Avraham Shapiro z'l, former Ashkenazi Chief R. of Israel / Rosh Yeshiva of Mercaz HaRav. R. Chaim Kanievsky.
- R. Avigdor Nevensal, Rav of the Old City.
- R. Simcha HaKohen Kook, Rav of Rechovot.
- R. Arie Stern, Chief R. of Yerushalyim.
- R. Shlomo Aviner, Rosh Yeshivat Ateret Cohanim.
- R. Aharon Lichtenstein z'l, Rosh Yeshivat Har Etzion.

Considerations

Rav Goren, 1967

Communique. 1967. The prime minister should declare that the holy places of the Jews be placed under rabbinic supervision. All the Temple Mount is holy to the Jews and therefore it is in the jurisdiction of the Chief Rabbinate even though mosques were built there. Since it is forbidden for Jews and non-Jews alike to enter the Temple Mount the Chief Rabbinate should request the army to close the Temple Mount for everybody. This step should be taken immediately [Goren's emphasis] before the military curfew is lifted and before free access is given. Now the Arabs are in a state of shock, and their only hope is to stay alive and not be massacred. Now is the moment to set the conditions and basis for the status quo proposed. Through such a step, the exclusive Muslim rule on the Mount will be circumvented. Later it will not be possible to do anything. If this proposal comes from the rabbinate rather than the government it will be seen as a religious matter of holiness

איסור העליה להר הבית

אזהרה לרבים
כעת"י
אחינו הקרים הבאים לפני קודשנו ייחוללים חיי מקדשו ומרחוק השמרו בו

מהאיסור החמור
של הכניסה למקום המקדש והר הבית
(קריאה זו נובעת מהאסות ומפסיק א.ה.ר.כ.ב.)

רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב
רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי חיים חנוך הרב הראשי של ארץ ישראל הרב הראשי של תל אביב

אלו תש"ו
לכל אחינו בני ישראל בארץ ובחוץ לארץ הי"ו
אנו חוזרים ומזהירים על מה שהוזכרו סביר, שכל יוזם אשר יחליט להיכנס לכל שטח הר הבית, בלי הודעת ר"ח א"ח
שער נכנסים בו, ומלבד עצם החזרתו מאיסור המור זה של מניעה בטרדת מקום הקודש המקדש, יש גם מצוה רבה
של מרא המקדש ושמיירתו.

רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב
רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב

אב תש"ד
לאור ההזנה בימינו, הגנו לחזור ולהזהיר ששום דבר לא תשתנה והאיסור החמור במקומו עומד
ככל שטח הר הבית, ודי יראנו ישמעתו בקרוב.

רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב	רבי שלמה אליעזר הרב הראשי של תל אביב
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הרב אברהם יצחק הכהן קוק (אגרות ב אגרות תר"ן) ביחס לקריאתו של הרבון להר הבית
"צמיחה אחת בקדושת בית דבני עולה לבו (מבטלת) על כל מליציהם של ישועים מעשייתו"
הרב עב"י יודנה הכהן קוק (שיחות טוב סג 21)
"יש להותקן בחדרה ופחד מסביב להר הבית, כל המבקרים וכול החיילים (בין אלה המבטלים והלוחים ובין אלה
המבטלים מדעים) מכללי מכלל ריקוקה מקל וחומר"
הרב אברהם אליעזר שפירא מתגובה לכרוז הקורא לעלות להר הבית, ביחס ירושלים בישיבה.
"הל איסור על יוצאים לעלות להר הבית"

rather than a political idea. And since entry will be forbidden for Jews, the Arabs cannot claim discrimination.

Rav Goren

“I could not escape the feeling that from a historic perspective, assigning the Western Wall plaza for Jewish prayer was nothing but the result of the expulsion of the Jews from the Temple Mount by the Crusaders and Muslims together. Thus, an intolerable situation was created in which even after our liberation of the Temple Mount, the Muslims remained on top of Har Habayit, and we were down below; they were inside, and we were outside. The prayers at the Western Wall are a symbol of destruction and exile, and not of liberation and redemption, because Jewish prayers at the Western Wall began only in the sixteenth century – before that, Jews prayed for centuries on the Temple Mount ... only about three hundred years ago, the Jews began praying at the Western Wall. And this the proof: in every reference in the Midrash where it is mentioned that the *shechina* (Divine Presence) has not moved from the Western Wall, and learns this from the verse in *Shir Hashirim* (Song of Songs): ‘Behold! There he stands behind our wall’ – this refers to the western wall of the *azara*, or the wall of the *heichal*, in other words, the wall of the *Kodesh HaKodashim*, and not the wall of the Har Habayit, which we call the Western Wall”(pg. 26).

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Rabbi David Golinkin

<https://schechter.edu/is-it-permissible-for-jews-to-enter-the-temple-mount-in-our-day/>

there is an urgent practical reason for Jews to enter the Temple Mount. In 1967, the Israeli government decided to give the Muslim Wakf de-facto control of the Temple Mount. As a result, the Wakf has made a concerted effort to obliterate the remnants of Jewish antiquities on the Temple Mount. Furthermore, when the Wakf expanded the El Aqsa mosque in 1999, they illegally removed 250 truckloads of dirt containing thousands of years of Jewish and non-Jewish antiquities. Dr. Gabi Barkay and thousands of volunteers are now sifting through this dirt and recovering thousands of ancient artifacts. (The Jerusalem Post , December 24, 1999, pp. A6 and B2; In Jerusalem, January 28, 2000, pp. 4-5; *ibid.* , January 26, 2001 p. 3; The Jerusalem Post ,



February 2, 2001, p. A7; *ibid.*, December 24, 2001, p. A5; Hershel Shanks, *Moment*, August 2001, pp. 10-14 and June 2002, pp. 50-55, 75-76; In *Jerusalem*, February 1, 2002, pp. 4-5; *Ha'aretz*, May 14, 2004, p. 4; *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*, October 8, 2004, pp. 8-9; Gavriel Barkay and Yitzhak Zweig, *Ariel* 175 (October 2006), pp. 6-53 (Hebrew)).

The Wakf was able to get away with this plunder because Jews do not visit the Temple Mount, and they don't visit the Temple Mount because of the strict rabbinic rulings cited above. (Sadly enough, this is exactly what Rabbi Yosef Kafih and his colleagues predicted years ago in their letter to the Chief Rabbinate). Thus in our day, it is permissible to enter part of the Temple Mount and I believe we should make a concerted effort to do so in order to emphasize that the Temple Mount is our Holiest site and cannot be plundered.

Rabbi Eliezer Melamed

<https://revivimen.yhb.org.il/2015/10/31/the-temple-mount-in-israels-sovereignty-3/>

Ascending the Temple Mount Nowadays

If it were possible, it would be better to close the Temple Mount to all, to be guarded and separate in its sanctity until the Holy Temple is built. But as long as the Temple Mount is open to the Arabs, it is a *mitzvah* to ascend the Temple Mount in order to express Israeli sovereignty over the mountain. True, during the British Mandate the position of the rabbis, led by Rabbi Kook *ztz"l*, was to forbid entrance to the Temple Mount. However, this was after three centuries during which Jews were forbidden to enter the Temple Mount, and as a result, an uncertainty arose concerning the exact location of the Temple (whose area is less than ten percent of the Temple Mount compound). However, following the liberation of the Temple Mount in the Six Day War, a number of rabbis, led by Rabbi Goren *ztz"l*, returned to measure the areas of the mountain, and determined where the site of the Temple was, and in which areas one is permitted to enter while observing the *Halachic* purity laws. And thus we can return to the *minhag* (custom) practiced by *gedolei Yisrael* (eminent rabbis) for more than a thousand years, whereby after immersion in a *mikveh*, one ascends to the areas permitted on the Temple Mount, and prays for building the Temple and Israel's Redemption.

Moreover, the *mitzvah* of *yishuv ha'aretz* requires us to do so. Prior to the establishment of the State of Israel, due to the pressing situation we could not fulfill the *mitzvah*. At that period in time we were dependent on the mercy of the British, who, in addition to betraying the mandate assigned to them to build a home for the Jewish people, also claimed that if the Jews ascended the mountain, they would not be able to guarantee the security of Jewish lives' in the country. But today, with the grace of God, we have security forces that have the ability to protect our people and country.

Blessed be those who ascend the Temple Mount, fulfilling the *mitzvah* of *yishuv ha'aretz* in the heart of our holy land.

The Importance of the Vision

And if one should ask: Since the building of the Holy Temple is remote, why is it so important to preserve its memory, and the sovereignty of its location? The answer is, because the vision is the



foundation driving the entire process forward. When the vision is forgotten, the whole process comes to a halt.

Temple Mount Is More Important Than Peace

One doesn't have to be religious in order to understand that relinquishing the Temple Mount is not only relinquishing the past, it is primarily relinquishing the future. The future of all of us, here.

Natan Sharansky Oct 16, 2003

Since the existence of the Geneva initiative was publicly announced on Sunday, there has been much criticism of the process that led to the agreement. Once again the same gang of Oslo blazers ...is conducting negotiations on its own and committing Israel to far-reaching and irresponsible concessions.

Criticism of the process, although it is correct and justified, is diverting attention from the central and more important contents of the agreement - and primarily from the relinquishing of Jerusalem.

I remember a discussion in the Barak government, even before Camp David, in which Yossi Beilin tried to convince us that if we would only reach "some kind of agreement" on the Temple Mount, and give Palestinians the Christian Quarter of the Old City as well, the longed-for peace would come.

I asked, why the Christian Quarter? What connection do the Palestinians have to the Christian Quarter? Beilin looked at me in surprise and said, what do you care? That's the Christians' problem. We'll achieve peace and let the Christian world worry about freedom of religion and access to its holy places.

... Today, after Camp David, Taba, and now the relinquishing of Temple Mount in the framework of the Geneva accord, **I understand that Beilin's gang are not necessarily contemptuous of the values of other nations, they are contemptuous of all values. Of all, except one that is - peace.** This gang seems to have forgotten, or hasn't yet understood, that as much as we long and hope for peace, it is not a value that stands by itself. It is an essential condition for the existence of a country that wishes to live, but it isn't the goal. **It was not for the sake of peace that the State of Israel was established, and it was not because of peace that millions of Jews gathered here. Nor was it peace for which the Jewish people prayed for thousands of years. The Jewish people prayed for Jerusalem. Because of Jerusalem, the Jewish people returned to Israel from the four corners of the earth, for it they were willing to make all the necessary sacrifices. For that same dream of a thousand generations - "next year in rebuilt Jerusalem."**

It should be noted that if we totally relinquish every value for the sake of peace, we won't have peace either. Just as in the past, this time, too, the Palestinians will interpret such a relinquishing of what constitutes our very identity as a tremendous weakness that calls for war.

The values symbolized by Jerusalem are not only religious in nature. One doesn't have to be religious to understand that without our historical connection to Jerusalem, without the link to the past, without the feeling of continuity with the ancient kingdoms of Israel for whom the Temple Mount was the center of existence, we really are foreign invaders and colonialists in this country.

One doesn't have to be religious in order to understand that relinquishing the Temple Mount is a justification of the Palestinian argument: You have no right to exist in this country, you have



no connection to it, get out of here. One doesn't have to be religious in order to understand that relinquishing the Temple Mount is not only relinquishing the past, it is primarily relinquishing the future. The future of all of us, here.

The members of the Hovevei Zion Zionist movement were not religious - they were secular socialists who considered religion a degenerate and sick product of the exile. Despite that they fought with all their might against the Uganda Plan [a 1903 British offer to let the Jews build a homeland in Uganda]. It was clear to them that without a common past, without roots, the Zionist project had no chance of succeeding.

Even today we must understand that without Jerusalem and without our historical roots the Zionist project will not be able to survive. Without Jerusalem Israel will become just another Jewish community, one of many in the world, like that of New York, London or Toronto - except more dangerous, less wealthy and less comfortable. It will not be the center of the Jewish world, not the focus of its existence - just one more community. And if that's the case, why continue to live in it? For what? In the name of what?

The writer is Minister for Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs

Psalm 15

ט"ו

A Psalm of David.

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד ה' מִי־יִגוֹר בְּאֹהֶלךָ מִי־יִשְׁכֵּן בְּהַר

O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent?

קִדְשֶׁךָ:

Who shall dwell on your holy hill?

הוֹלֵךְ תָּמִים וּפְעֵל צְדָק וְדִבֵּר אֱמֶת בְּלִבּוֹ:

² He who walks blamelessly and does what is right

לֹא־רָגַל | עַל־לִשְׁוֹן לֹא־עָשָׂה לְרַעְיוֹ רָעָה וְחֶרֶף לֹא־

and speaks truth in his heart;

נִשָּׂא עַל־קִרְבּוֹ:

³ who does not slander with his tongue

and does no evil to his neighbor,
nor takes up a reproach against his friend;

נִבְזֶה | בְּעֵינָיו נִמְאָס וְאֶת־יְרֵאֵי ה' יִכְבֵּד נִשְׁבַּע לְהִרְעֵ

⁴ in whose eyes a vile person is despised,

וְלֹא יִמָּר:

but who honors those who fear the Lord;
who swears to his own hurt and does not change;

כֶּסֶף | לֹא־נָתַן בְּנִשְׁכָּו וְשָׁחַד עַל־נֶקִי לֹא לָקַח עֲשָׂה־

אֵלָה לֹא יִמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם:

⁵ who does not put out his money at interest
and does not take a bribe against the innocent.

He who does these things shall never be moved.

Rav Aviner (Beit El/ Atteret Kohanim Yeshiva)

[from the Israeli newspaper "Makor Rishon"]

Like many other things, **the subject of the Temple is beyond all human intellect.** We must therefore stand before it in trembling and not assume that we can understand its holiness with our human capabilities. But the opposite extreme is also destruction, and we must learn with our intellect as much as we can, to try to understand, to study and analyze. We must learn about the Temple from the perspective of Halachah and thought as individuals and in conference and public lectures.

Many great Torah scholars expressed their opinion in a clear and unambiguous manner that one



should not even touch the Temple Mount. For example, our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, was not less idealistic, courageous and dedicated than those pushing to allow visits to the Temple Mount, and he spearheaded the entire settlement enterprise, and at the same time, he ruled that it was forbidden to touch the Temple Mount. One who says to stay away from the Temple Mount is not necessarily weak, and one who is passionate about going up is not necessarily strong.

The claim that in relation to the Temple Mount we are like the G-d-fearing, Anti-Zionist Jews in relation to the Land of Israel is correct. But what does it matter? Is everything of equal value?

Have we reached the state that we are incapable of distinguishing between different levels of holiness? There are certainly many great things about those who are passionate about going on to the Temple Mount, but the idea itself – in my view – is a complete mistake and dangerous.

The Temple Mount – it time has not arrived yet. What time has arrived? To increase building the Nation through love and faith.

הר הבית - בידינו או בלבבנו? \ הרב משה ליכטנשטיין

...בכך שהציונות הדתית הפכה את העלייה להר הבית לדגל שהיא מניפה באופן בלעדי ובזה שכל העולים משתייכים לחוגיה בלבד, היא חוזרת על אותה טעות שנעשתה לפני עשרים-שלושים שנה בנוגע לארץ ישראל. אם כביטוי הקולע של הרב יואל בן-נון, הצליחה הציונות הדתית להתנחל בארץ אך לא בלבבות, אזי מעשיה ביחס להר הבית יביאו לידי אותה תוצאה בדיוק, ובמחיר כבד יותר.

ברגע שהר הבית ייהפך ממורשתנו ההיסטורית הלאומית לסדר יום של ציבור מסוים, ברגע שהציבור הכללי יזהה אותו עם "ציבור המתנחלים", נשלם מחיר יקר ביותר של החלשת זיקתו של כלל הציבור למקום. שני גורמים יביאו לידי כך. ראשית, עצם עובדת זיהויו של מקום המקדש עם קבוצה מסוימת, מחלישה את זיקת שאר הקבוצות האחרות אליו והופכת את העניין בעיניהם לסקטוריאלי.

שנית, וזהו לב העניין, סדר יומה של הציונות הדתית נתפס בעיני רבים בציבור הכללי כמאיים על סדר יומו שלו. כל עוד הר הבית נתפס בעיני הציבור הכללי כמורשת היסטורית שאין מימושה עומד על הפרק, אזי זיקתו למקום חזקה עשרות מונים מאשר אם הוא נתפס כשדה פעולה עכשווי של שאיפותיו ה"משיחיות" של הציבור הדתי. מאותו רגע שהר הבית ייתפס ע"י הציבור החילוני כזירת התגוששות ממשית בינינו לבין הפלשתינאים, מאותה נקודה בזמן שבו הוא יחוש שמנסים להשתלט על ההר, ירגיש הציבור הכללי מאיים ומבוהל, והציבור הדתי ייתפס על ידו כמי שמנסה להבעיר את המזרח התיכון עבור גחמותיו הדתיות. אינני בא להצדיק טענה זו, להגן עליה או לדון בה, אלא לקבוע שזו תהיה התחושה בקרב רוב הציבור. צא ולמד ממערת המכפלה ודימויה בעיני הציבור הכללי. מערש האומה וקברי יקרים, היא הפכה להיות נתפסת כאיום וכנטל. לצערנו, המקום הינו לצנינים בעיני רבים, ומשמש אצלם כסמל למאיים ולמפריד שבין חזון הציונות הכללית לחזון הציונות הדתית...

...לא אכחד כי בעת הזאת, תחושת הזהות של כלל הציבור עם הר הבית מותנה בהיותו נתפס כאידיאה של הלכתא למשיחא, שאינה עומדת על סדר היום המעשי כזירה למאבק שליטה, ולא אכחיש שיש בזה משום מחיר כואב מאד. ואולם, עלינו לשאול מה עדיף: הר הבית בידינו אך רחוק מלבבנו, או הר הבית בלבבנו אך לא בידינו? לדידי, התשובה פשוטה. עם כל הכאב והצער, עדיפים הגעגועים בלב למציאות שאיננה מאשר הניכור למציאות קיימת... אם לא זכינו שהרטט והרגש שעברו בלב כל יהודי בעת הכרזת "הר הבית בידינו" יתורגמו למציאות של הר הבית בידינו ובלבבנו, נדרשת מאתנו תבונה רבה לכלכל את מעשינו כך שהר הבית יישאר בלבבנו. אחרת, נכרות לא רק את הענף עליו אנו יושבים, אלא, ח"ו, את כלל הצמרת...