



DANGEROUS LIAISON

THE DYNAMICS OF THE RISE OF THE TEMPLE MOVEMENTS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

MARCH 1, 2013

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PREFACE: THE NEED FOR A NEW ANALYSIS OF THE TEMPLE MOUNT/ HARAM AL-SHARIF

The Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif is one of the most complicated and sensitive issues on Israel's agenda, activating friction points between Israel and the Palestinian population, the Arab nations surrounding Israel, the Muslim world and domestically, within the Israeli Jewish community itself.

Over the past several hundred years, a status quo has been maintained according to which the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif area (henceforth: the Mount) is an area reserved for Muslim prayer and the Western Wall is a prayer area reserved for Jews. Over the last decade, the status of these areas has gradually shifted, driven by a revival of activity by Jews determined to strengthen the status of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif complex as a Jewish religious center and to marginalize the claims of Muslims to the Mount. In the past year alone, hundreds of national religious Jewish pilgrims have ascended the Mount, including groups of rabbis, women, members of Knesset and recently, soldiers in uniform.

It is necessary to take a sober look at the activities of the organizations advancing this agenda and to examine the official institutional support Israel allocates to underwrite their activities. As will become clear, the Jerusalem Municipality and other government ministries directly fund and support various activist organizations driven by the mission to rebuild the Temple.

This report aims to present information about the growing activity of organizations working to change the status quo on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and, in some cases, to actually erect the Third Jewish Temple upon it. The report describes the historic, legal and halachic background of the state of affairs on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif complex today, introduces the main players within the pro-Temple movements and demonstrates the deepening association between these movements and official Israeli authorities.

The sensitive political and religious status of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and the impact of activities conducted there on Israel's future are clear. The movements' growing momentum and dangerous provocations to change the status quo are not receiving adequate attention, nor is the disturbing connection between these movements and official Israeli institutions. This report seeks to expose these trends—to present and analyze the dynamics of the growth of the Temple movements, their insidious leaching into the public domain and political center in Israel and the nature and depth of ties between Temple groups and the Israeli establishment.

This report focuses on a site that, by Jewish tradition, is referred to as the Temple Mount and by Islamic tradition, Haram al-Sharif. To avoid complication, the terms “Temple Mount” or “the Mount” will be used, while stating in advance that wherever these terms appear, they refer to the site known as the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif.

INTRODUCTION: TEMPLE MOUNT/ HARAM AL-SHARIF AS A FOCAL POINT OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

The significance of the Temple Mount in Jewish tradition requires little elaboration. Its paramount importance is reflected in Jewish law, prayer and holiday traditions. However, since its destruction, the Temple has remained largely symbolic—an object of longing, deferred to a seemingly unattainable future era, and framed by a system of restrictions and rituals that moderate preoccupation with the question of its reconstruction. It is precisely because of the sanctity of the Temple Mount complex—the site of the First and Second Temples—that there is a halachic prohibition against visiting the Mount, as differentiated from the case of the ritual sacrifice service, which found a substitute in public prayer in synagogues.

The Islamic name given to the Temple Mount complex is Haram al-Sharif—for Muslims, the third holiest site in Islam after Mecca and Medina. The Islamic Waqf, responsible for oversight of the complex, is appointed by Jordan and its status is anchored in the peace agreement between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom. The Islamic shrines located on the Mount—the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock— have become fundamental symbols of Palestinian nationality that unify Muslims and Christians, both secular and religious. In recent decades, the strengthening of Islamic movements has led to the elevation of the site's importance in the Muslim world. At the same time, elements within these movements have increased their tendency to deny the Jewish people's historic attachment to the Temple Mount.

The religious and political conflict surrounding the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif has provoked violence and bloodshed in the past and continues to constitute one of the central obstacles to resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the status of the Temple Mount came onto the agenda between Israel and the Palestinians during the Oslo peace process, Israel raised the possibility of permitting Jews the right to pray on the Mount. At no stage of the negotiations did Palestinians indicate willingness to discuss concessions regarding an exclusive Muslim presence on the Mount. In unofficial talks, Palestinian representatives advised Israeli representatives not to raise the suggestion of granting rights of worship on the complex to Jews, a development that would have the potential to elevate conflict over the Mount to the status of a religious war. Ultimately, the question of a settlement on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif became a central stumbling block in the negotiations, which have been dormant for more than a decade,

between the Taba conference in 2001 and the recent resumption of negotiations in 2013.¹

The objection to any arrangement granting prayer rights to Jews on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif recurs in statements made by various Muslim religious and public figures. For example, Sheikh Akrama Sabri, President of the High Muslim Council and former Mufti of Jerusalem, has claimed that the area of the Al-Aqsa Mosque belongs exclusively to Muslims and denies any Jewish rights to the area. Sabri has firmly resisted any agreement allowing Jews to pray in the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif plaza². Muhammad Hussein, the Mufti of Jerusalem, and other religious figures have made similar claims.

Attempts to forcibly realize Jewish worship rights on the Mount therefore constitute an explosive religious and political issue. In recent years unofficial and private Jewish organizations have been progressively escalating activities surrounding the Mount. Being careful to note the differences between them, the activists and organizations promoting these ideas will henceforth be referred to as "the Temple movements." These groups receive support and assistance from government bodies, as well as the encouragement of a public political lobby. Their purpose is to raise awareness and stress the importance of the Mount and the Temple for the Jewish people today. These developments have considerable public significance.

This report will examine the significance of Temple movement activists' demands and actions, exploring the people and groups behind efforts to change current arrangements on the Mount and the network of ties between these groups and the Israeli establishment, including the provision of public, political and economic assistance.

The decision to focus on Temple group activists and their ties to the establishment was precipitated by the considerable expansion of Jewish circles with the overriding objective of advancing construction of the Third Temple while harming Islamic holy sites, or working, as an interim goal, toward a unilateral change of arrangements on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. Their deepening ties to the Israeli political and official establishment have only exacerbated concerns. It should be stated here that this document does not intend to review Islamic activities to expand prayer areas on the Mount, the archeological damage caused by such expansion or Islamic denial of the historic connection between the Jewish people and the site. Neither does it intend to examine the activities of fundamentalist Christian groups, who also have motives related to the status of the Mount.

There is mutual and reinforcing interaction between Muslim and Jewish trends: the Temple movements bolster themselves with quotes from Muslims and Arabs who negate

1 See Shlomo Ben Ami, **A Frontline without a Home Front: Journey to the Limits of the Peace Process**, [Hebrew] "Yedioth Ahronoth", Tel Aviv, 2004; Gilead Sher, **The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Negotiations 1999–2001: Within Reach** (New York: Routledge), 2006; Menachem Klein, **Shattering a Taboo: The Contacts Toward A Permanent Status Agreement in Jerusalem 1994-2001** (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies), 2001; Robert Malley, Hussein Agha, "Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors", **The New York Review of Books**, July 12, 2001; Akram Haniyah, "Special Document: The Camp David Papers", **Journal of Palestine Studies** 30 (Winter 2001): 75-79; Charles Enderlin, **Shattered Dreams: The Failure of the Peace Process in the Middle East 1995-2002**, trans. Susan Fairfield (New York: Other Press), 2003.

2 See for example, Elad Benari, "Terrorists Warn Israel: Harming Al-Aksa Will Open Gates of Hell", **Arutz Sheva**, August 22, 2012.

Jewish attachment to the site and the Temple while Islamic movements buttress their arguments by stressing Jewish threats to worship arrangements and Islamic shrines on the Mount. Islamic construction work undertaken without archaeological supervision, and Israeli archaeological excavations and construction plans surrounding the Mount, also intensify mutual suspicion, accusations and pretexts for action. This feedback loop escalates the discourse and actions taken by both sides and strongly influences decision makers from both camps. Though Arab and Islamic activity has attracted public interest and government response, we suggest that the considerable dangers posed by the Jewish Temple movements, their goal of achieving a radical unilateral change in the system of arrangements on the Temple Mount and the problematic nature of government collaboration with these groups has not received the public attention it merits. The immediate dangers threatened by these civil and political activities, and the role of the Israeli administration in exacerbating them, provide a strong rationale for turning the spotlight on the Temple movements.

After Israel conquered the Mount in 1967, a status quo was reached between Israel and the Muslim Waqf governing worship arrangements on and around the Mount. Since then, Jewish Temple activists have attempted on several occasions to physically vandalize Islamic shrines on the Mount in order to promote the construction of the Third Temple and the process of redemption as they understand it. In the last three decades, there has been a considerable increase in movement-sponsored public education activities and dozens of organizations have arisen with the goal of raising public awareness about the importance of the Temple Mount and its reconstruction. These groups are backed by an increasing number of public figures, Knesset members and state institutions. It should be stressed that while most of these groups' activities are legal, the conflict of interests raised by the cooperation and funding they receive from government bodies cannot be taken for granted.

The Temple movements promote an ideology that places the Temple at its center—not as a symbol or distant goal but as a real object of political, religious and cultural actions to force a fundamental change of the existing arrangements on the Mount. For these groups, building of the Temple is an action plan and a theological and practical operational order. Considering the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif's religious, cultural, political and symbolic status, and in light of past attempts to alter the status quo, a forced and unilateral change of arrangements violates the right of Muslims to determine worship arrangements for their holy sites and therefore has a tremendously explosive potential.

While state authorities may exercise their prerogative to support movements and organizations operating within the law, they must do so with transparency and with full responsibility for the potential consequences of their actions. Furthermore, with regard to educational activities, the historic and halachic status of the Mount must be presented comprehensively and without bias, acknowledging the Mount's sanctity and status in Islamic tradition and Israel's duty to defend the religious aspirations of Muslims—an acknowledgement clearly not reflected in Temple movements' activities. This report does not aim to present a normative, political, religious or moral approach to the question

of Jewish or Muslim rights to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, nor to advocate a particular political solution or take a stand on questions related to the Temple and its reconstruction, whether by man or by God. The goal is to present data collected about the growing activity of the Temple movements and to evidence their connection to Israeli government and public bodies.

The material on which this report is based was collected from four primary sources: field research; monitoring of sectarian and general media coverage; a literature review; and interviews with key players and activists.

PART I: THE GROWING ACTIVITY OF THE TEMPLE MOVEMENTS IN ISRAEL: HISTORIC AND IDEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

While there is no doubt as to the central status of the Temple in Jewish tradition, most religiously observant Jews are not moved to action when they pray three times a day in the “shemoneh esreh” prayer, “May our eyes behold your return to Zion” and end with the personal whispered prayer, “May it be your will... that the Temple be rebuilt speedily in our days”. Many commandments and holidays are connected to the Temple, mourning for its destruction has not ceased for 2,000 years and many hope, believe and expect it to be rebuilt “speedily in our days” or “in the days of the Messiah”. Mount Moriah, on which the First and Second Temples stood, is the site where the Third Temple is intended to be built.

Today there are two main buildings on the Mount: the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, built during the first Islamic period in the seventh century BC. Beyond the sanctity of Al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock to Muslims, these sites have become central symbols of Palestinian nationality that unite Christians and Muslims—secular and religious—in the same way the Western Wall cements Israeli nationality. It is noteworthy that in the Islamic faith, the entire Mount is considered to be a mosque. Social, political and religious developments, the strengthening of Islamic movements and the Palestinian national struggle have all played a role in elevating the site's importance over the last decades for the Muslim and Arab worlds and among Palestinians.³

3 Political connection and religious connection are not two completely disparate matters, of course, but do have an influence on each other. As Yitzhak Reiter writes in the context of the Temple Mount: “The level of a site's sanctity is linked to the political conditions around it. Even though in ancient times there was no separation between religion and politics (and some would say the same is true in the modern age), considerations that we would call political had an influence then as they do today on the centrality of a sacred site in religious faith and on the intensity of the religious sentiment that developed towards it.” Yitzhak Reiter, “Introduction” in Yitzhak Reiter, ed., **Sovereignty of God and Man: Sanctity and Political Centrality on Temple Mount** (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2001), 6. For an in-depth review of the process of elevating the sanctity of Al-Aqsa and al-Quds in the Muslim world and denying the Jewish connection to the holy sites in Jerusalem, see the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies’ report: Yitzhak Reiter, **From Jerusalem to Mecca and Back. The Islamic Consolidation of Jerusalem**, (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies), 2005.

PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT/ HARAM AL-SHARIF

The current situation at the holy sites in Jerusalem is rooted in the status quo established during the Ottoman era.⁴ The overriding principle guiding worship arrangements over the past 500 years is the separation of worship sites: Muslims conduct their religious worship in Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock and Jews worship at the Western Wall. This principle was revalidated after Israel occupied the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif in 1967. Ten days after the occupation, on June 17, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and the members of the Higher Muslim Council agreed that IDF soldiers would vacate the Mount area and deploy around it, allowing internal supervision to remain under the purview of the Waqf and designating authority for external security to Israel's security forces. The interdiction against Jewish prayer on the Mount was accepted by a ministerial committee for the protection of holy sites and was tacitly indicated by halting Rabbi Goren's activity on the Mount and ordering security forces to evict Jewish worshipers attempting to pray on the Mount.⁵ This arrangement satisfied both the Waqf and the Orthodox Rabbinate. The "constructive ambiguity" that enabled the status quo of 1967 has now become an opening for disrupting the arrangement developed at that time.

The Waqf manages the Mount and controls the opening and closing of its gates, except for the Mughrabi Gate. It establishes the rules of conduct and attire and is responsible for maintenance. The Waqf also maintains the right to collect entrance fees for the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock but not to the Mount itself. It is also prohibited from waving flags or performing work or excavations without coordination with Israel.⁶ In July 2012, Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein instructed legal advisors to the Israel Antiquities Authority, the Jerusalem Municipality and the Israel Police that the Mount is part of Israeli territory and therefore Israeli law, including the Antiquities Law and the Planning and Building Law, applies to its governance.⁷ He went on to instruct that because of the unique nature of the site, the law should be applied with extreme sensitivity and attention

4 See Yiftah Zilberman, **The Struggle over Mosque/Temple in Jerusalem and Ayodhya** (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies), 1997.

5 Shlomo Goren, **Temple Mount Book - Meshiv Milchama**, Part 4, 1992, 15; Amnon Ramon, **The attitude of the state of Israel and different sections of the Jewish public to the Temple Mount (1967-1996)** (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute of Israel Studies, 1997), 7.

6 In October 2007 the Knesset's State Control Committee asked the State Comptroller to write an opinion about repair work the Waqf initiated on the Temple Mount. The Comptroller checked the conduct of the Israeli authorities – the Prime Minister's office, the Justice Ministry, the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Domestic Security, the Israel Police, the Israel Antiquities Authority, the Jerusalem Municipality and the Israeli committee to UNESCO operating in the Education Ministry, mainly in the years 2001-2007, and completed the inquiry in 2010. After completing the examination, the Comptroller showed his findings to the Knesset committee that in consultation with the comptroller, the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Domestic Security, the Justice Ministry, the Foreign Ministry, the Shabak, the Police, the Israel Antiquities Authority and the Jerusalem Municipality decided not to present the opinion to the Knesset (which is to say, not to publish it), and to publish only its introduction and conclusions "to protect national security and prevent harm to Israel's foreign relations." The material for which publication was permitted is available here.

7 **Reshet Bet News**, July 17, 2012.

to pragmatic considerations.⁸ The peace agreement between Israel and Jordan states that the Hashemite Kingdom has preferential status on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif; therefore, any change in arrangements on the Mount necessarily involves the Hashemite Kingdom and Israel's relations with it.

Israel maintains a security presence in the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif envelope and in special emergencies, within the complex itself. At times, it imposes various restrictions on entry for stated security reasons (for instance, prohibiting entry of Muslim worshipers under the age of 45 or barring the entry of Jews on Muslim holidays), and deploys an Israeli police presence in the complex in the "mahkama" building. The State allows the entry of non-Muslims, Israeli Jews and tourists into the site through the Mughrabi Gate during designated hours coordinated with the Waqf. Because non-Muslim visitors do not have worship rights, Jewish prayer and rites are forbidden at the site. Furthermore, the Israeli Police bars the entry of certain individuals it considers provocateurs from entering the Mount. The list of people barred from entrance currently includes 20 activists from the Temple movements.⁹

Israel does not have a coherent and conclusive policy regarding arrangements on the Mount.¹⁰ The present status quo barring Jewish prayer on the Mount was accepted and ratified by the Supreme Court, which considered the issue on several occasions in response to petitions submitted by the Temple movements. The Supreme Court recognized that Jews have a right to pray on Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif; however, it ruled that the executive branch maintains the discretion to forbid Jewish prayer for security reasons.¹¹ Recent evidence points to the Police practice of allowing people who enter the Mount complex to pray silently but not publicly.¹²

The status quo in effect since 1967 stems from the need to balance conflicting interests: on the one side, Israel's desire to impose Israeli sovereignty on the Mount and on the other, various commitments to defend the holy sites of other faiths¹³. The fear of violent flare-ups within the Muslim public, the reaction of the Muslim world and the criticism of

8 Yitzhak Reiter points out that the Waqf claims that Police permission for the activity of the Temple movements proves that the Israeli government stands behind them. Reiter believes that any provocation by Temple activists such as a demonstrative prayer by Jews on the Mount could lead to a violent outbreak, because "gas fumes" fill the air and the slightest spark would be enough to ignite them. Yitzhak Reiter, interview with author, November 28, 2012.

9 Yizhar Be'er, interview with Yehudah Glick, May 7, 2012.

10 According to Ami Ayalon, "The Israeli government, at least in my time, never developed a clear policy that was turned into directives on the subject of Temple Mount." Ami Ayalon, interview with Yizhar Be'er and Yehudit Oppenheimer, December 12, 2013. The conduct of the cabinet ministries and security agencies, as it emerges from the data and findings that will be presented herein, indicates that the government still has no coherent policy on this subject today.

11 HCJ 257.89; HCJ 2410/90. For further information, see Ramon, 9.

12 According to the testimonies of Temple movement activists, they were promised this by the site commander, Deputy Commander Avi Biton. See Shlomo Pyotrakovsky, "Rabbi Ariel allowed to return to Temple Mount," **Besheva**, September 20, 2012 (<http://www.inn.co.il/Besheva/Article.aspx/12343>); Hagai Huberman, "Shame on Temple Mount," **Matzav Haruach**, October 12, 2012 http://the--Temple.blogspot.co.il/2012/10/blog-post_1741.html (May 5, 2013).

13 See Zilberman, 1997. Among other sources, the undertakings that stem from the Declaration of Independence, the Oslo accords, and the peace accord with Jordan.

the international community are also significant factors. Over the years, the status quo has been modified and maintained through informal and unwritten contacts between the Israeli authorities and the Waqf, which answers mainly to Jordan.¹⁴

After 1996, following the opening of the Western Wall Tunnels, contacts between Israel and the Waqf diminished, almost breaking off completely. Today Israel interacts with the Waqf almost entirely through the Police. Such breakdowns in cooperation increase the possibility of violent outbursts resulting from provocation, incitement or a unilateral attempt to change the status quo. Violent outbreaks have occurred in the recent past in response to perceived attempts to change the status quo on and around the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif.

According to Ami Ayalon, former head of the Israel Security Agency (a.k.a. the "Shabak"):

"The very fact that Jews who want to change the status quo, whether it is Feiglin or anyone else, ascend the Mount and pray, is a recipe for explosion. We [Shabak] have said that even though the status quo is problematic, stability is very valuable and anyone who wishes to change the status quo must do so very patiently, in the broadest circles. Such a process must include the kings of Morocco, Jordan and Saudi Arabia as well as the president of Egypt. The second circle includes the leadership of the Palestinian Authority. [...] All of this must be part of a broader political process. Only a combined treatment by all of these parties might bring about a change in the status quo on the Mount."¹⁵

Cmdr. Mickey Levy, former commander of the Jerusalem District of the Israel Police, states:

"The status on [the] Temple Mount should be maintained as it is. The Court has ruled that any [Jew] who wants to worship God should be directed by Police forces to the Western Wall. Period. Any attempt to change the status quo on the Temple Mount will be perceived as an emotional-religious attempt, and we cannot even begin to imagine the destruction, the damage, the casualties and the loss of life in vain. Nobody can measure that. [...] There is no choice. This is the lesser evil. I was at that site for so many years. So many times stones were thrown at us from there and I burst into the Temple Mount at the head of police forces to quell riots. When I was there I compared myself to the Dutch boy with his finger in the dyke to prevent the water from bursting out. I, too, pushed my finger into the Western Wall and prevented the outbreak. If we are not exceedingly cautious, World War III will start here. We must be careful and act with wisdom, exercising caution and not arrogance."¹⁶

Hundreds of Jews and tens of thousands of tourists ascend the Mount every month. For example, in October 2012, 840 Jews and 31,058 tourists ascended it.¹⁷ In recent

14 Yitzhak Reiter, **Options for the Administration of the holy places in the Old City of Jerusalem**, (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies), 2008.

15 Ami Ayalon, interview with Yizhar Be'er and Yehudit Oppenheimer, December 13, 2012.

16 Interview by Arnon Segal with Mickey Levy, "House of my dreams," **Makor Rishon**, January 11, 2013.

17 Arnon Segal, "Daf Habayit," **Makor Rishon**, November 16, 2012.

years there have been 10-15,000 ascents by Jews every year (often serial ascents by the same people).

TRADITIONAL JEWISH BARRIERS RESTRAINING THE GROWTH OF TEMPLE MOVEMENTS

Despite the centrality of the Temple in Jewish tradition, after the destruction of the Second Temple in the Middle Ages a system of restrictions and substitutes was developed which prevented Jews from engaging in practical questions regarding building of the Temple and prohibited their entrance to the Mount complex. Thus, the desire to build the Temple was postponed until the "days of the Messiah", the rite of animal sacrifice was supplanted by public prayer in synagogue (considered to be a "miniature Temple") and the paschal sacrifice was replaced by use of the shank bone on the Seder plate during Passover. From the 16th century the Western Wall, rather than the Temple Mount, became the direct object of prayers, longing and yearning.

Many supreme halachic authorities such as Rashi, Maimonides and Nachmanides ruled that the Third Temple would be built by God rather than by human action.¹⁸ This position was advanced by those seeking to restrict the scope of permissible actions toward reconstruction of the Temple for Jews and to neutralize some of the messianic tension fanned by the hope of its construction. In the modern era, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, the leader of Gush Emunim, as well as large segments of religious Zionism, ruled that one must not act now—in the current era—to rebuild the Temple.¹⁹

Even if we were to ignore these principled rulings, the very ascent to the Temple Mount by Jews has been forbidden by various halachic rulings. The interdiction is rooted in the laws of purity and impurity, based on the idea that all Jews today are polluted by the "impurity of death" through primary or secondary contact with the dead. According to halachic tradition, one must not enter the area of the Temple without being cleansed from the impurity of death. This purification ritual is no longer possible given the

18 The source of the idea is the apocalyptic literature of the first centuries of the Christian era, and especially the Book of Zerubavel attributed to the seventh century. A number of tractates of the Gemara also use the phrase "the Temple will be built speedily", which the early commentators understood as evidence that the Third Temple would be built by Heaven. For example, Rashi writes in two places: "But the future Temple we await will be revealed, built and perfected and will come from Heaven, as Scripture says 'your hands will establish God's Temple.'" Maimonides opined that the Third Temple would be built by the Messiah. In *Laws of Kings*, in his book *Mishneh Torah*, he writes that "the Messiah King is going to restore the Kingdom of David to its old grandeur of the first government and build the Temple and gather the dispersed of Israel" (*Laws of Kings and Wars*). Nachmanides, in *The Book of the Dispute*, also supports Maimonides' approach: "The Messiah will build the Temple in Jerusalem" (*writings of Nachmanides, Part 1, 315*).

19 "When people come to me claiming it is time to build the Temple, I tell them: what you are demanding does not stem from your great Torah learning but from your Torah ignorance. Construction of the Temple is not a commandment upon the individual but upon the public, of the Jewish community, and just like there is a commandment to build the Temple, there is also an order to the Commandments... I told the people who demand to build the Temple: are you in a hurry to build the Temple? There is no hurry. First let us establish the Kingdom of Israel" (*Conversations of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda, Messiah Chapters 4; Talmud Torah, addition 2*).

requirement of a special rite involving the ashes of a red heifer, which cannot be found today.²⁰

Doubts as to the exact location of the Temple also contributed to prohibitions against Jews' ascent. Though the Temple did not extend over the entire area of the Mount, inability to specify its location led great interpreters of halachic Judaism to rule that one must not ascend the Mount area

at all. Before the Mount was captured in 1967, the interdiction against Jewish ascent to the Mount was accepted by all mainstream interpreters of halachic Judaism. Even after Jerusalem was "united" in 1967, the Chief Rabbinate, the Haredi rabbinical leadership and the national religious rabbinical leadership reiterated the prohibition against the entry of Jews to the Mount. Over the years, leading rabbis such as Ovadia Yosef, Mordechai Eliahu, Eliahu Bakshi Doron, Moshe Amar, Shlomo Aviner and many others maintained the absolute ban.²¹ The Chief Rabbinate even fixed a sign at the entrance of the Mughrabi Gate prohibiting entry to the Mount "according to Torah law."

In recent years we have witnessed a change in the definitions of the prohibition by religious Zionist rabbis, who call on Jews to ascend certain areas of the Mount "in a state of purity" and even lead such ascents themselves. They rationalize these actions based on the belief that they have the ability to identify where the boundaries of the ancient Temple ran and to direct their students accordingly. Among these rabbis are many of the leaders of the historic Gush Emunim, rabbis of the "settlement enterprise" and students of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook (who himself opposed ascending the Mount), including Rabbis Chaim Druckman, Dov Lior,



20 There have been attempts in the past to find the red heifer, which continued this stage, but so far without success. See Gershon Gorenberg, **The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount**, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 7-29.

21 The mainstream position among Haredi Judaism about the Temple Mount is represented well by MK Moshe Gafni of the Torah Judaism faction, as he expressed it in the Knesset in 2009: "This situation of Jews ascending the Temple Mount and bringing up the terrible dispute between Jews and Muslims is an unacceptable phenomenon. First, ascending the Temple Mount is forbidden. It is not allowed, punishable by extirpation. Second, what do they want to gain by ascending the Temple Mount? Do they want there to be bloodshed in the most severe sense of the word? There cannot be greater bloodshed" (Knesset session no. 64, October 28, 2009). Haredi objection to ascending the Mount can also be discerned from the reaction of the Lithuanian-Haredi publication Yated Neeman to the ascent of the Mount by the Religious Zionist rabbis. The journal called those rabbis "idol worshipers", "Reform Jews" and "merchants of the Torah's commandments." Another article in Yated Neeman said "those who worship the Zionist calf are willing to bend anything for that calf even if they are the last ones who still worship it"; "They wish to desecrate and pollute the Temple Mount, the site of our Temple, out of faith in the false worship of Zionist redemption, as if by Jews ascending the site of the Temple, redemption will be brought nearer" (according to Yair Ettinger, "Haredim: the rabbis who ascended Temple Mount are idol worshipers," **Haaretz**, May 15, 2007).

Nachum Eliezer Rabinowitch, Eliezer Waldman, David Dudkevitz and Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, head of the Temple Institute.²²

This change in halachic policy arose in response to the Oslo accords.²³ Negotiations with the Palestinians ignited fears that a compromise with the Muslim world would also include renunciation of the Mount. As a reaction, members of the Movement for Temple Renewal acted to increase the number and frequency of ascents to the Mount to signal to decision makers, as well as to Muslims, that there would be no concessions on the Mount. The Movement for the Temple Renewal found their allies in the Yesha (Judea and Samaria) Rabbis Committee. In 1996, after consulting members of the Movement, the Yesha Rabbis Committee ruled that ascent to the Mount was permitted and called on every rabbi "to ascend, himself, and to instruct his community that one must ascend while respecting all the boundaries of Jewish law."²⁴

The Temple movements were able to reap the fruits of that halachic change in 2003, when the Mount reopened to non-Muslims after being closed for three years following the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa intifada. Since the Yesha Rabbis Committee issued their halachic ruling, additional rabbis have added their signatures to it and it is periodically updated and appended. Those who oppose entry of Jews to the Mount are also active, publishing updates that forbid ascent to the Mount. A halachic update reiterating the prohibition against ascending the Mount was published in 2004, signed by former Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, Chief Rabbi Yonah Metzger, Chief Rabbi Shlomo Moshe Amar and others. Another update was published in 2011 (see photos of notices of those rulings below).

Today various rabbis from religious Zionist circles openly call for ascent of the Mount. A distinction should be made between the call to ascend the Mount, which actually refers to walking around the perimeter of the complex to avoid entering an area that requires halachic purification, and the call for reconstruction of the Temple. Many of the rabbis who support ascending the Mount reject the call for construction of the Temple, some maintaining that such action is not politically or halachically acceptable. However, Temple movement activists driven by the goal of rebuilding the Temple draw encouragement from the permission to ascend issued by the more moderate rabbis, perceiving it as one of a series of stages on the way to realizing their ultimate goal.

22 On the increasing stream of Jews who ascend the Mount by permission of the Yesha Rabbis Council we can learn from the words of Yehuda Glick in an interview with Yizhar Be'er (May 7, 2012) : "When I ascended the Temple Mount for the first time in 1990, we used to go in one at a time. Today people go in even in groups of fifty. At that time we were barely a quorum of ten Jews because of the halachic perceptions. Today there are more and more; we have made great strides. Even rabbis Yuval Sherlo, Rabbi Shai Piron and Nachum Langental [leaders of the moderate stream of religious Zionism, Y.B.] ascend the Mount. Within the national public, the Temple and the Temple Mount are mainstream issues. How do I know? Almost every other week the chief rabbis issue a counter poster [against ascending the Temple Mount, Y.B.]. They don't issue posters against eating cats, but in our case they are worried."

23 After the Mount was captured in the Six-Day War, the Chief Military Rabbi Shlomo Goren ascended it and held a prayer on it but his activity was stopped by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan. See Shabtai Ben Dov, "A ladder to the destined kingdom of Israel," *Sulamot* 3, 170-171.

24 The full decision is on the yeshiva website, www.yeshiva.org.il/forum/print.asp?id=49886 (May 5, 2013). The rabbis who call to ascend the Temple Mount also believe one must not access the center of the Mount and the permission they grant is good only for the peripheral area of the Mount, which they believe we can be sure was not part of the Temple.

Today, discourse surrounding the Temple has infiltrated mainstream Religious Zionism, with commentary about the Temple Mount heard in every quarter. For example, Rabbi Yaacov Medan, head of the Har Etzion Yeshiva and considered a moderate, focuses on acceptance of the idea by secular Jews:

"Everybody wants very much for the Temple to come down from heaven in a ball of fire, because that would release us from the need to confront the secular Jews about it. After all, we have much more important fights like the service of women in the IDF. So who wants to fight about the Temple, too? We rabbis also have work to do on this matter, in two forms: First of all, to tell the public that rebuilding of the Temple is vital, and secondly that it is possible. In the immediate range, we must promote ascents of the Mount, in a state of purity, of course."²⁵

Medan's appeal was joined by Rabbi Shabtai Rappaport, head of the seminary of the High Torah Institute, and Rabbi Yaacov Ariel, the Rabbi of Ramat Gan and the president of the Tzohar rabbis organization. On the other end of the spectrum come the words of Rabbi Shmuel Eliahu, the Rabbi of Safed:

"The kingdom of which we dream knows how to defeat its enemies and vanquish them. It leaves no wounded in the field to plan the next war. The kingdom is full of glory and there is no glory but the Temple. It is a kingdom that says wholeheartedly that it wants the Temple – city of justice, faithful city, an establishment that will shine light on the nations, even if we have to erase the mosques from this holy Mount."²⁶

IMPRESSIONS FROM A GROUP OF RABBIS ASCENDING THE TEMPLE MOUNT

On May 17, 2012 a researcher of Keshev and Ir Amim joined a rabbis' pilgrimage to the Mount. The group included at least 17 rabbis of Religious Zionism. Among the pilgrims were Rabbis Yisrael Ariel, Dov Lior and Yehuda Kreuzer.

The rabbis walked around the perimeter of the Mount's plaza on a route circumventing the Dome of the Rock in order to avoid the danger of entering the estimated location of the Temple. The group was accompanied by Police charged with protecting the area, diverting curious passersby and ensuring the rabbis satisfied all of the rules set forth for their visit. During the tour, Rabbi Yisrael Ariel spoke at length about his participation in capturing the Mount during the Six-Day War, recounting that Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook and Nazirite Rabbi David Cohen, who had ascended the Mount that very night, rationalized their entry by virtue of the laws of "conquest". In this

25 Uri Polack, "Rabbis Medan, Ariel and Rapoport: Hasten to build the Temple," **Kipa**, May 24, 2012.

26 Uri Polack, "Rabbi Eliahu: Dreaming of a kingdom that erases the mosques from the Temple Mount", **Kipa**, May 23, 2012.



Rabbi Yisrael Ariel (holding the umbrella) with Rabbi Dov Lior at his right



Photos: Researcher of Keshev and Ir Amim

way, the rabbi attempted to condition his response on what he had already stated in other places—namely, that even today, despite halachic questions, it is possible to permit ascent to the Mount on the basis of the "commandment of conquest". Temple movement activists like Rabbi Ariel broaden the range of interpretations deriving from the commandment to conquer the Land of Israel, which appears in several places in the Bible, to include the question of control of the Mount and reconstruction of the Temple.

The rabbis also devoted time to the question of women's ascent to the Mount. Though some supported sanctioning women's ascent, Rabbi Dov Lior avoided a direct response to the question. According to Rabbi Lior, the time is not yet ripe to issue a general permit for women's ascent though women may contribute to the struggle in other ways. He also suggested establishing a women's section on the edge of the Mount. Another Rabbi opined that it was by the merits of righteous women that Jews made the Exodus from Egypt, surmising that it would also be by the merits of righteous women that Jews would "manage to liberate this Mount more than it is liberated today. And the adroitness of women will achieve what men cannot achieve." Rabbi Dov Lior added that the initial takeover of Beit Hadassah in Hebron was achieved by women. Rabbi Yisrael Ariel had the last word: "For a holy war you take even a groom from his chamber and a bride from her wedding canopy. Does anyone here doubt that this is a holy war?"

Before leaving the area, the rabbis had their picture taken in front of the Dome of the Rock and thanked the police for their fair treatment while passing through the gate. Once in the plaza outside the Mount, the rabbis began dancing in a circle, singing "God is Mighty! May he soon rebuild his Temple. Speedily, speedily, in our day, soon" and "May the Temple be built and the City of Zion be filled. And there we will sing a new song and with joy ascend." Some ripped a tear in their shirts as a sign of mourning for the destruction of the Temple.



בס"ד, אייר תשס"ו:

קריאת הרבנים אל העולים להר הבית בטהרה

מלאת ארבעים שנה לשחרור ירושלים עיר הקודש, הר הבית ומקום המקדש, שזכינו לחזור אליהם בחסדי השם יתברך ונפלאותיו - עלינו להתעורר בלב ונפש לדרישת המקום הקדוש ולעסוק בלימוד ענייני המקדש כהכנה להחזרת השכינה לציון.

אנו קוראים לכל הציבור הקדוש העולה להר הבית בטהרה, לבוא ולעלות בימים אלו אל המקומות המותרים בכניסה בהר הבית - בטהרה ובמורא מקדש על פי הוראות הרבנים - לעורר את האהבה למקום הקדוש, ב"עבודה שבלב" במקום הזה שבו נשמעת התפילה ביותר.

הרב נחום אליעזר רבינוביץ'
ראש ישיבת ברכת משה, מעלה אדומים

הרב אברהם צוקרמן
ראש ישיבות בני"ע, כפר הרוזא

הרב צפניה דרורי
רב העיר וראש ישיבת קרית שמונה

הרב מרדכי רבינוביץ'
כוכב יעקב

הרב ישראל רזון
ראש מכון צמח

הרב שלמה רוזנפלד
ראש ישיבת ההסדר שדמות נריה

הרב שלמה ריסקין
רב העיר אפרת

הרב שבתי רמפורט
ראש ישיבת שבות ישראל, אפרת

הרב יהודה שביב
ר"מ בישיבת הר עציון

הרב דניאל שילה
קדומים

הרב יצחק שילת
ר"מ ישיבת מעלה אדומים

הרב יהושע שמדיט
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הרב דב ליאור
ר"מ בישיבת הר עציון

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הרב מנחם מקובר
ראש ארגון "זרחנו בנינינו"

הרב בן ציון עמר
רב הירושלמי שבות רחל

הרב חנן פורת
כפר עציון

הרב יוסף פלאי
אגודת "אל ור המור"

הרב מנחם פליקס
אלון מורה

הרב נדעון פרל
רב הישוב אלון שבות

הרב משה צוריאל
מחבר ספרי אגרות הראי"ה, בני ברק

הרב בנימין קלמנון
ראש ישיבת עתניאל

הרב יגאל קמיניצקי
רב יושבי נוש קטיף תנ"כ"א

הרב יהודה קרויזר
רב הישוב מצפה יריחו

הרב חיים דרוקמן
ראש ישיבות בני"ע, אור עציון

הרב ישראל אריאל
ראש מסנן המקדש, ירושלים ת"ז

הרב בנייה בונר
ראש ישיבת ההסדר צמח

הרב שלום גולד
רב מייסד קהילת זכרון יוסף, הר נוף

הרב נביראל גולדמן
רב הישוב כפר אדומים

הרב אברהם גיסר
רב הישוב שפרה

הרב דוד דוקוביץ'
רב הישוב יצור

הרב רא"ם הכהן
ראש ישיבת עתניאל

הרב אליעזר ולדמן
ראש ישיבת ניר קרית ארבע

הרב אברהם וסרמן
ר"מ בישיבת רמת גן

הרב יוסף טולידאנו
רב העיר נבטת זאב

הרב נחמן כהנא
מחבר ספרי פי מוסות, ראש סלל חזון יחזקאל

הרב דניאל כהן
רב הישוב בת עין

גם מי שמעורר בלב בני אדם אהבה למקום הקדוש הזה האוי לשבר בלא ספק והוא מקרב עת בוא תקוותנו. כמה שנאמר "אתה תקום תהיה ציון כי עת לחננה כי בא מועד פי רצו עפדיך את אבניה ואת עפרה יחננו", זאת אומרת ירושלים לא תבנה כי אם כאשר ישתוקקו אליה בני ישראל תפלית תשוקה עד אשר יחננו את אבניה ואת עפרה.

לידיה: תרגום ספר יחזקאל

אגודת 'אל הר המור' - עליה להר הבית בטהרה ע"פ ההלכה | להכנה והדרכת קבוצות לקראת עליה להר הבית | לתרומות ולפעילות בעז - 052-4767136 elhamor@gmail.com ת.ד. 34562 ירושלים

Poster reads: "Call of rabbis to those who ascend the Temple Mount in purity: On the 40th anniversary of the liberation of the holy city of Jerusalem, the Temple Mount and the site of the Temple, to which we merited return by the grace of God Almighty and his wonders, we must awaken in heart and soul to care for the holy site and learn the affairs of the Temple as preparation for returning the holy presence to Zion.

We call on the whole holy public ascending the Temple Mount in purity to come now and ascend the places where entry is permitted to Temple Mount in purity and awe of the Temple by the guidance of the rabbis - to arouse love for the holy site, by worship of the heart, at the site where prayer is heard the most."

Rabbi Abraham Zuckerman, head of Bnei Akiva Yeshiva, Kfar Haroeh
Rabbi Nachum Eliezer Rabinowitz, head of Birkat Moshe Yeshiva, Ma'ale Adumim
Rabbi Chaim Druckman, head of Bnei Akiva yeshivas, Or Etzion
Rabbi Dov Lior, rabbi of Kiryat Arba, Hebron
Rabbi Zefania Drori, rabbi of city and yeshiva of Kiryat Shmona
Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, head of the Temple Institute, Jerusalem
Rabbi Benayahu Brunner, head of Safed hesder Yeshiva
Rabbi Shalom Gold, rabbi and founder of Kehilat Zichron Yosef, Har Nof
Rabbi Avram Gisser, rabbi of Ofra
Rabbi David Dudkevitz, rabbi of Yitzhar
Rabbi Reem Hacoheh, rabbi of Otniel Yeshiva
Rabbi Eliezer Waldman, rabbi of Yeshivat Nir, Kiryat Arba
Rabbi Avraham Wasserman, teacher at Ramat Gan Yeshiva
Rabbi Yosef Toledano, rabbi of Givat Ze'ev
Rabbi Nachman Kahane, author, head of Chazon Yehezkel Yeshiva (Kolel) Seminary
Rabbi Daniel Cohen, rabbi of Bet Ayin
Rabbi Yitzhak Levy, teacher at Har Etzion Yeshiva
Rabbi Yaacov Meda, head of Har Etzion Yeshiva
Rabbi Menachem Makover, head of Veheranu Beviniano Organization
Rabbi Ben Zion Amar, rabbi of Shvut Rachel
Rabbi Hanan Porat, Kfar Etzion
Rabbi Yosef Peli, El Har Hamor
Rabbi Menachem Felix, Alon Moreh
Rabbi Gideon Perl, rabbi of Alon Shvut
Rabbi Moshe Zuriel, author, Bnei Brak
Rabbi Binyamin Kalmanson, head of Otniel Yeshiva
Rabbi Yigal Kaminsky, rabbi of Gush Katif yeshivas
Rabbi Yehuda Kreuzer, rabbi of Mitzpe Jericho
Rabbi Mordechai Rabinowitz, Kochav Yaacov
Rabbi Yisrael Rosen, head of Tzomet Institute
Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, rabbi of Efrat
Rabbi Shabtai Rappaport, head of Shvut Yisrael Yeshiva, Efrat
Rabbi Yehuda Shaviv, teacher at Har Etzion Yeshiva
Rabbi Daniel Shilo, Kedumim
Rabbi Yitzhak Shilat, teacher at Ma'ale Adumim Yeshiva
Rabbi Yehoshua Schmidt, yeshiva head and rabbi of Shavei Shomron
Rabbi Yehuda Chelouch, Netanya
Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira, head of Od Yosef Chai Yeshiva

[“Signed El Har Hamor Association, Ascending Temple Mount in Purity by Halacha, for preparation and guidance of groups ahead of ascent of Temple Mount. For donations: Boaz, 052-4767136, elhamor@gmail.com, PO Box 34462, Jerusalem”]

איסור העליה להר הבית

נס"ב

אזהרה לרבים

בעה"י אחינו היקרים הבאים לעיר קודשנו ירושלים ת"ו מקרוב ומרחוק השמרו נא

מהאיסור החמור של הכניסה למקום המקדש והר הבית (קריאת הרבנות הראשית ופוסקים אחרונים)

הרב שמואל סלאנט רב העיר ירושלים	הרב אברהם יצחק הכהן קוק ראש רבני ארץ ישראל	הרב אשתורי הפרחי "כפתור ופרח"	הרב ישראל משקלאוו "פאת השולחן"	הרב רפאל אלפאנדרי "דרך הקודש ע"פ חסידים ואנשי מעשה"	הרב חיים נתנזון "עבודה תמה"
הרב יצחק הלוי הרצוג הרב הראשי לישראל "היכל יצחק"	הרב יעקב צבי שפירא "תפארת יעקב"	הרב הלל משה העשיל "משכנות לאביר יעקב"	הרב אליהו דוד ראבינוביץ תאומים האדרית הרב העיר ירושלים	המהר"ל דיסקין הרב מנריסק	הרב מאיר אירבך "אמרי בינה"
הרב יצחק ניסים ראשון לציון, הרב הראשי לישראל ונשיא בית הדין הגדול	הרב יחזקאל אברמסקי נשיא ועד הישיבות, מלפנים רב וגאב"ד לונדון	הרב יחיאל מיכל טוקצינסקי "עיר הקודש והמקדש"	הרב צבי פסח פראנק "מקדש מלך" וכן בשם הרא"י אורלנסקי הי"ד	הרב אליעזר יהודה וולדינברג "ציץ אליעזר"	

לכל אחינו בני ישראל בארץ ובחוץ לארץ הי"ו

אלול תשכ"ו

אנו חוזרים ומזהירים על מה שהוזהרנו מכבר, שכל יהין איש ואשה להיכנס לכל שטח הר הבית, בלי הבדל דרך איזה שער וכנסים בו, ומלבד עצם הזהירות מאיסור חמור זה של פגיעה בטהרת מקום הקודש והמקדש, יש גם מצוה רבה של מורא המקדש ושמירתו.

הרב שלמה זלמן אירבך ראש ישיבת קול תורה	הרב יוסף שלום אלישיב חבר בית הדין הגדול	הרב צבי יהודה הכהן קוק ראש ישיבת מרכז הרב	הרב משה שטרנבוך אב"ד ההעדה החרדית	הרב איסר יהודה אונטרמן הרב הראשי לישראל	הרב חיים דוד הלוי רב ראשון לציון וחבר מועצת הרבנות הראשית לישראל
הרב עובדיה חייא מלפנים חבר בית הדין הגדול ומועצת הרבנות הראשית לישראל	הרב ישראל אליזרע רב העיר אשדוד	הרב מ.י. הלוי אושפיזאי רב העיר רמת גן	הרב יצחק אבוחצירא רב העיר רמלה-לוד (בבא חאקי)	הרב שאול ישראל חבר בית הדין הגדול ומועצת הרבנות הראשית לישראל	הרב שלמה יוסף זיון חבר מועצת הרבנות הראשית לישראל
הרב בצלאל זולטי חבר בית הדין הגדול	הרב אברהם ורנר רב העיר נתניה	הרב יוסף משאש רב העיר לחיפה	הרב יהושע קניאל רבהעיר חיפה וחבר מועצת הרבנות הראשית לישראל	הרב שלמן חוגי עבודי חבר בית הדין הגדול ומועצת הרבנות הראשית לישראל	הרב אפרים סוקולוב רב העיר רעננה
הרב יעקב לנדא רב העיר בני ברק	הרב שמחה הכהן קפלן רב וזאב בית דין האזורי צפת	הרב אליהו קושלבסקי אב בית דין באר שבע	הרב שלמה קרליץ אב בית הדין פתח תקוה	הרב יצחק קוליץ אב בית דין תל אביב	הרב רפאל הכהן קוק רב וזאב בית דין האזורי טבריה

אב תשס"ד

לאור ההזנחה בימינו, הננו לחזור ולהזהיר ששום דבר לא השתנה והאיסור החמור במקומו עומד בכל שטח הר הבית. וד' יראנו ישועתו בקרוב.

הרב עובדיה יוסף שליט"א הראשון לציון	הרב אברהם אלקנה שפירא ראש ישיבת מרכז הרב לפנים הרב הראשי לישראל	הרב מרדכי אליהו הראשון לציון	הרב אליהו בקשי דורון ראש מוסדות "בנין אב" הראשון לציון	הרב שלמה משה עמאר הרב הראשי לישראל הראשון לציון	הרב יונה מצגר הרב הראשי לישראל
הרב אביגדור נבנצאל רב העיר העתיקה	הרב שלמה חיים הכהן אבינר ראש ישיבת "עטרת כהנים"	הרב שלום כהן ראש ישיבת פורת יוסף	הרב יהושע נויבירט "שמירת שבת כהלכתה"	הרב דוד חי הכהן רב שכונה בנת ים וראש ישיבת לנתיבות ישראל	הרב שמחה הכהן קוק רב העיר רחובות וראש אבות בתי הדין

הרב אברהם יצחק הכהן קוק (איגרות ב איגרות תרע"ז) ביחס לעליתו של הברון להר הבית "פגימה אחת בקדושת בית חיינו עולה לנו (מבטלת) על כל מליונים של ישובים מעשיים"

הרב צבי יהודה הכהן קוק (שיחות חוב מס 21)
"יש להיתלהך בחרדה ופחד מסביב להר הבית. כל המחקרים וכול החיטוטים בין אלה המכונים הלכתיים ובין אלה המכונים מדעיים נכללים בכלל רקיקה מקל וחומר"

הרב אברהם אלקנה שפירא בתגובה לכרוז הקורא לעלות להר הבית, ביום ירושלים בשיבה.
"חל איסור על יהודים לעלות להר הבית"

Poster reads:

“Prohibition to ascend Temple Mount

Warning to the public

To our dear brothers coming to our holy city Jerusalem from near and far

Beware

The grave prohibition

To enter the site of the Temple and Temple Mount

(Call of Chief Rabbinate and late interpreters of halachic Judaism)”

[Signed by 17 rabbis]

1967

“To all our fellow Jews in Israel and abroad

We repeat the warning we have recently issued, that no man or woman should dare enter any part of the Temple Mount, regardless of which gate one enters, and beyond the caution against violating the purity of the holy site of the Temple, there is also a preeminent commandment to stand in awe of the Temple and to respect its protection.

Signed by Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, Rabbi Yossef Shalom Elyashuv, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Hacohen Kook and 21 more rabbis]”

2004

“In light of the disregard observed today, we hereby reissue the warning that the grave prohibition still applies to the entire area of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. And may God show us his redemption soon.”

Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, Chief Rabbi, and 11 more rabbis

Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Hacohen Kook, about the Baron ascending Temple Mount:

“One blemish in the sanctity of the Temple costs us (cancels) millions of actual settlements.”

Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Hacohen Kook:

“We must tread in awe and fear around the Temple Mount. All of the research and all of the inquiries, whether they are called halachic or scientific, are just as forbidden as spitting.”

Rabbi Avraham Elkana Shapira in response to a poster calling to ascend the Temple Mount on Jerusalem Day at his yeshiva:

"Jews are forbidden to ascend the Temple Mount."

GOALS OF TEMPLE MOVEMENT ACTIVISTS

The goals and actions of Temple movement activists occupy a broad spectrum, from those advocating use of public, political, cultural and educational actions to enable Jews to pray on the Mount to extremists who call for the destruction of Islamic shrines and construction of the Temple in their places. Some limit themselves to encouraging Jewish ascent of the Mount.

To appreciate the significance of these goals, we must first understand the worldview of Temple movement activists, which can be broken down into four categories: nationalist, halachic, spiritual-romantic and messianic. This is merely a schematic division as these elements combine and reinforce one other across Temple movements' motives and actions. It should be stressed that despite their extensive activity, Temple movement activists are only a small percentage of the national religious public.

NATIONALISM

Nationalism has been a central underpinning of the Temple movement since the time of Brit HaBirionim (The Strongmen Alliance) in the 1920s. Alliance members Abba Ahimeir, Uri Zvi Greenberg and Joshua Heschel Yeivin viewed the resurrection of the Jewish nation and the establishment of a kingdom (rather than a democratic state) as the goal of Zionism. At the center of this kingdom would sit the Third Temple. In 1940, Avraham Stern (Yair) formulated the "Principles of the Resurrection", a document defining the ideological platform of the Lehi movement. The eighteenth and final article of the platform states that it is necessary "to build the Third Temple as a symbol of the era of full redemption." This view was maintained by Yisrael (Sheib) Eldad's Sulam (Ladder) group.

Today the nationalist yearning to build the Third Temple can be seen among Temple movement activists like Gershon Salomon and Arie' Eldad, who do not observe the commandments (at least not in the formal sense). There is no doubt that this nationalistic dimension also fuels more religious activists, driven by their own brand of radical religious nationalism. These Temple movement activists view the Temple as a means for unifying the nation under a single center, a single leadership and a single Jewish ideology. Their desire to rebuild the Temple is deeply tied to Israeli nationhood—first because rebuilding the Temple became a more viable possibility only after the State of Israel was founded and, more emphatically, after the Six-Day War. Second, and more important, the Temple embodies a yearning to unite the whole Jewish people under a single religious leadership, which became a much more realistic goal after the State of Israel was established.

These activists aspire to reconstruct an era in which (officially, mythically) the whole Jewish people had only a single religious center. The nationalistic yearning for the Temple is therefore a yearning for the people, the nation, for national unity. It is a kind of national religious radicalism, which, unlike Haredi society, has no problem reconciling itself with modernity or contact with the industrial and connected world but which nonetheless rejects the values of that world on two grounds: the individualism and demythologization that characterize it.

According to this philosophy, the Temple serves as a vehicle for the creation of order and unity, both by overriding ideological public disputes and uniting the public under a single flag, and by neutralizing individualism and fusing the public into a united organic body.²⁷ The desire to rebuild the Temple is a desire to establish a new national and religious order defined by unity, stability and eternity.

JEWISH HALACHA (JEWISH LAW)

Jewish Halacha provides the primary motive for building the Temple, if only because one third of the commandments detailed in the Torah concern sacrificial rites and the Temple. Existence of a temple (or, at minimum, ascent to its mount) is therefore requisite to fulfillment of as many commandments as possible, synonymous with the fulfillment of God's will.

Rabbi Yisrael Ariel from the Temple Institute frequently addresses this point:

"There is a commandment to ascend the Mount at all hours so that anyone who ascends the Mount is fulfilling a positive precept from the Torah [...] Before you ask a Torah scholar what he thinks about ascending Temple Mount, ask him: What does your honor think about the fact that the perpetual daily sacrifice was not sacrificed in the Temple this morning? [...] Anyone who doesn't care that worship in the Temple is not taking place, and anyone who doesn't care that 200 commandments of the Torah are not being fulfilled, why should he care that Jews are not on Temple Mount? After all, what business do they have there?²⁸

This yearning for the Temple derives from a fundamentalist religious philosophy expressed by the desire to fulfill what is seen as the fullness and completeness of Jewish law or even Judaism itself.

ROMANTIC SPIRITUALITY

The idea that if the Temple were built, Jews could establish a more genuine and intimate connection with God, is an expression of romantic spirituality. Conversely, proponents of this philosophy believe that the absence of a Temple interferes with the cultivation of deep religiosity. This perception is shared by many Temple movement activists. Here, for instance, is Moshe Feiglin's analysis:

"The whole point of the Temple is the direct connection between man and God. The religion was created when the Temple was taken away from us. All the authenticity that is missing from religious ritualism—the shudder that goes through the secular mind when it sees the supposedly meaningless routine within the narrow confines

²⁷ See details in Tomer Persico, "The liberation of Jerusalem and two waves of Jewish fundamentalism", *God's Loop*, June 1, 2011 http://tomerpersico.com/2011/06/01/second_order_jewish_fundamentalism/ (May 5, 2013).

²⁸ Ma'ayanei Hayeshua, Vol. 510, 15.

of Halachah, which is all we have since the Temple was destroyed and which in fact substitutes it— all of that disconnection between religion and life, all are the result of the loss of the Temple."²⁹

In many cases these Temple movement activists seek to ascend the Mount in order to generate powerful religious experiences made possible only through proximity to the holy site. Usually groups of women who ascend the Mount report the unparalleled profoundness of their experiences at the site.³⁰

MESSIANISM

The construction of the Temple is associated with messianism—a particular genre of messianism in this case. There are many among those interested in building the Temple who believe it to be a critical step in inducing redemption, though not everyone compelled by the idea of redemption is invested in building the Temple. If we look at the most important messianic movement in Israel since the state was established, Gush Emunim, we see that most of its members—as well as the mainstream of the movement—were not at all concerned with building the Temple, at least not until recently. Gush Emunim presented a brand of messianism that institutionalized settlement of Judea and Samaria, perceived as progress towards redemption, but did not attempt to upset the status quo on the Mount.

The attempt by the "Jewish Underground" to blow up the Dome of the Rock in the early 1980s was a significant deviation from Gush Emunim's messianism. It was an expression of a private, avant-garde and revolutionary initiative that challenged the existing state of affairs and sought to instantly change the entire nation's consciousness. Its planners intended to generate a massive transformation in the attitude of the Jewish population in Israel towards Jewish tradition—specifically to shake people out of their complacency and acceptance of the present situation and move them to firmly demand concrete and immediate redemption. In this way, members of the Underground viewed themselves as a prophetic avant-garde leading a change in the course of the nation.

Gush Emunim under the leadership of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook was a collective and public movement and always viewed itself as expressing the deep and authentic will of "the Jewish people." The people's will granted legitimacy to the acts of the faithful vanguard, namely settlement in Judea and Samaria. Conversely, the members of the underground did not deny their lack of support from the general public. To the contrary, the underground intended to carry out its mission against the public's will and without its permission in order to realize total redemption.³¹

29 Moshe Feiglin, **Makor Rishon**, June 3, 2011.

30 See for instance the August 5, 2011 issue of the **Nashim** magazine of **Makor Rishon**.

31 Comments by Yehuda Etzion and Menachem Livni, the operation's planners, in Haggai Segal, **Dear Brothers: the West Bank Jewish Underground**, (Jerusalem: Keter, 1987), 62-63, 277-278.

Even in its early days, the underground's platform stood contrary to the Gush Emunim position, which maintains that one must not stray into areas that have no legitimacy with the people. According to Gush Emunim philosophers, a change of the people's consciousness is a prerequisite, not a result, of building the Temple.³² An examination of the philosophical background of Menachem Livni and Yehuda Etzion, the planners of the attack on the Dome of the Rock, reveals that they did not rely on the core ideology of Gush Emunim but rather on the teachings of Shabtai Ben Dov.³³ Ben Dov was a prolific religious Zionist thinker who proposed a Nietzschean messianism³⁴ that relies on the free and rebellious spirit of the individual, who decides for himself and is not dependent on the decisions or opinions of the great decision makers of the nation. The religious authority of the Nietzschean prophetic activist comes from within himself (although by divine inspiration), out of the intuitive voice that whispers to him that he must act for the good of society—even though society may be disinterested in his action. Ben Dov's philosophy is therefore revolutionary with regard to both the role of the Jew in relation to Jewish Halacha and in relation to the Jewish people as a whole.

In the end, the operation's planners retreated from the philosophy, doubting their ability to sway the people's spirit.³⁵ After members of the "Jewish Underground" were arrested, Yehuda Etzion, one of its leaders, an ideologue of the Temple movement and a planner of the explosion of the Dome of the Rock, admitted that "the generation was not ready." Etzion wrote the following while he was serving his prison sentence:

"We must build a new force that grows very slowly, moving its educational and social activity into a new leadership. Of course I cannot predict whether the Dome of the Rock will be removed from the Mount while the new body is developing or after it actually leads the people, but the clear fact is that the Mount will be purified with certainty..."³⁶

Etzion admits that the idea of building the Temple had not yet captured the hearts of the people, and that cultural and religious preparation must be carried out **before** the second and more practical stage of removing the Dome of the Rock. The idea of purifying the Temple Mount from the Islamic shrines is legitimate, he argued; the Jewish Underground simply acted 20 years too early.³⁷ When Etzion got out of prison, he established the Chai Vekayam movement, which follows the idea of molding public opinion in preparation for

32 See for example the comments by Rabbi Moshe Levinger, *ibid.*, 108-109, or the debate between Etzion and Rabbi Yoel Ben Nun, *ibid.*, 113.

33 Ben Dov himself drew inspiration from even more nationalist Temple advocates such as Yisrael Eldad and became religious after absorbing the principles of their philosophy. See more about him and his thought in Motti Inbari, **Jewish fundamentalism and the Temple Mount** (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2007), 56-67.

34 In the words of Shlomo Fisher, who distinguishes between the different kinds of messianism in his unpublished doctoral thesis, **Self-Expression and Democracy in Radical Religious Zionist Ideology**, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, January 2007.

35 Segal, 137.

36 *Ibid.*, 279.

37 *Ibid.*, 278-279.

the purification of the Mount. A call for a gradual shift in public opinion, only after which political power could be amassed to change the status quo on the Mount, was also voiced by the leader of the Movement for Temple Renewal, Yosef Elboim:

"This is the way of revolutions: you seek legitimacy, you fight to increase your share and then you compete for the ascendancy and finally push the stranger outside of the law."³⁸

The Temple Institute and other organizations act according to a similar assumption (for details of the modes of action of these organizations see Part 2 below).

A SUMMARY OF THE GOALS OF TEMPLE MOVEMENT ACTIVISTS: INCREASING BOLDNESS AND DANGER OF OUTBREAK

In the last 30 years, dozens of organizations have sprung up with the goal of promoting Temple awareness in Israel. These organizations are acting with the intention of shaping public opinion to embrace a change in worship arrangements on the Mount and ultimately to advance the construction of the Third Temple.

Amassing of power and expansion of activities focused on building the Temple is therefore considered to be a gradual pursuit. While the final goal Temple movement activists have set for themselves—"to lead the nation," in the words of Yehuda Etzion, and to build the Third Temple—may still be remote, after 30 years of activity, activists have managed to achieve impressive results within the national religious public. They have successfully changed the halachic position concerning ascent to the Mount among the Council of Yesha Rabbis and even to expose rifts within the Haredi public, for which activity promoting the rebuilding of the Temple as a practical program was once entirely insupportable (see comments on the Movement for Temple Renewal below). What began as an idea among a small group of people has—after almost 30 years of educational and political activity—become a legitimate subject of public discourse and even of concrete action plans.

The failure of the Jewish Underground's machinations modified messianic tensions and changed the course of action of the underground and other affinity groups. Instead of immediate, revolutionary action to spur redemption out of crisis, they turned to a long-term action plan incorporating education and preparation of the Jewish public, from which public support and demand for building the Third Temple would eventually arise.

Since the Jewish Underground affair, and especially since the Oslo accords, the strengthening of the Temple movements and increase in Temple awareness—especially within the national religious sector—can be seen as a realization of part of Yehuda Etzion's vision that connects to the official Gush Emunim philosophy emphasizing change "from below" through public opinion. The process of "preparing the hearts" that precedes the practical stage of removing the Dome of the Rock is now underway in full force and has brought discussion about

38 Inbari, 131.

changing arrangements of control on the Mount and building the Temple into the Israeli public and political discourse.

Although the present focus on educational activities signals a temporary postponement of violent attempts to change the status quo on the Mount, the behavior of group members is also dependent on the direction of the national leadership and the status of negotiations with the Palestinians. It is important to remember that the Jewish Underground plan to blow up the Dome of the Rock developed out of Gush Emunim's despair over the signing of the peace agreement with Egypt and preparations for the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai. These developments propelled Yehuda Etzion to design an independent strategy to induce redemption.³⁹ Following the decision on the "Disengagement" from the Gaza Strip, parties in the security establishment assessed the possibility of an attempt to attack the shrines on the Mount, prompting a special Knesset hearing.⁴⁰ The former head of the Shabak, Ami Ayalon, said:

"We [the Shabak] found a direct link between the degree of tolerance and even support that government bodies show towards comments by rabbis and political leaders, as seen in events such as, for example, Zion Square [ahead of the Rabin assassination] and political violence. [...] On the question of uprooting a settlement, for example, that percentage [that views violent action as an option] will grow in accordance with the atmosphere of legitimacy."⁴¹

Scholar Motti Inbari sees the growing increase in interest in the Temple and the change of attitude in religious Zionism from cautious distance to passionate involvement as a "dramatic" development. Inbari believes the change stems from despair over the slow pace of progress toward redemption and an attempt to find a "shortcut" to that end.⁴² One can assume that a political development viewed by Temple movement activists as a reversal of progress toward redemption would catapult the possibility of a unilateral and revolutionary action to achieve redemption back to center stage.

39 Ibid., 43.

40 The Israel Knesset, **Motions for the Agenda: Security Establishment Assessment of Risk of Attack on the Temple Mount and Assassination Attempt on Public Figures following the Decision on the Disengagement**, 16th Knesset, 160th sess., July 28, 2004 (Jerusalem: Knesset, 2004), http://knesset.gov.il/tq1/knesset_new/knesset16_huka/HTML_28_03_2012_04-52-37-PM/FTR_160-04JUL28_SIFRIA-042.html (May 6, 2013).

41 Interview by Yizhar Be'er and Yehudit Oppenheimer with Ami Ayalon, December 13, 2012.

42 From an interview with him on Tomer Persico's blog, "God's Loop": http://tomerpersico.com/2012/10/21/inbari_interview/ (May 6, 2013).

THE MUGHRABI BRIDGE AFFAIR

The Mughrabi Bridge affair involved a number of bodies and interests at an acutely charged juncture in time and elucidates the potential for a political and religious conflagration surrounding the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. According to Muslim tradition, the earth bank under the existing bridge covers the al-Buraq Mosque built on the spot where the Prophet Muhammad tethered his horse of that name.⁴³ The affair involved the governments of Israel, Jordan and Egypt; the Jerusalem Municipality; security forces; and “hilltop youth” (extremist nationalist youth used to establish illegal settlement outposts). Jordan and Egypt warned that the affair could spark riots in their countries. The affair was brought to an end when the Court ordered a stop work order on the bridge and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was forced to halt the works.

The Mughrabi Bridge is the only entrance to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif complex for Jews and tourists and is secured by the Israel Police, responsible for deciding, based on its assessments, who can ascend the Mount and whose entry is barred. The existing bridge is a provisional structure built after the earth bank on which the previous structure stood collapsed in 2004 as a result of rain and a minor earthquake. At the end of 2006, Israel began repair works on the bridge without a building license, under the pretext of conducting maintenance work. The work triggered an immediate diplomatic crisis with the Waqf (Islamic religious endowment) and the Jordanian kingdom. The crisis was brought under control after a request by City Council Member Pepe Alalo of the Meretz party and lawyer Danny Seidemann, on behalf of Ir Amim, forced the Municipality to order the preparation of a proper building plan. The plan, Number 12472, published in October 2010, proposed destroying the existing provisional bridge, expanding the Western Wall prayer plaza and building a new ascent to the gate.⁴⁴

The Municipality’s plan envisioned a large bridge with seven support pillars, “four within

43 See mention in Uri Tal, **Work on the Mughrabi Ascent – Submitted to the Knesset Interior and Environmental Committee**, February 11, 2007, 5.

44 The plan includes: 1. A change of the land designation system as follows: From the Temple Mount and the Western Wall plaza to open public space, from open public space to the Temple Mount and the Western Wall plaza. 2. Canceling the provisions of plan no. 5354 concerning the construction of guard booth c. 3. Establishing development provisions for an open public space. 4. Establishing development provisions for the Temple Mount and the Western Wall plaza. 5. Providing construction for building a pedestrian bridge for ascent to Mughrabi Gate. 6. Establishing building lines for the bridge, for the Western Wall worshippers’ booth. 7. Establishing maximum building areas in the boundaries of the plan. 8. Establishing construction provisions and architectural design provisions. 9. Setting terms for issuing a building permit and completion certificate. The plan can be seen on the Municipality site: <http://www.mmi.gov.il/IturTobot/ta4.asp?MsTochnit=12472&kod=3000&gis=fal>se

the archeological garden and three in the area of the earth bank".⁴⁵ Construction of the new bridge would have replaced the old structure—an anticipated improvement in aesthetics and security—expanded the women's section and provided access to large police forces (as many as 300 at a time), military vehicles and APCs (armored personnel carriers).⁴⁶ There were also plans to build a hanging surface at the end of the bridge and outside the area of the Mount to accommodate the building of a synagogue.⁴⁷ Egypt and Jordan warned that riots would break out in those countries if the plan was advanced. Cabinet secretary Zvi Hauser traveled to Jordan in October 2011 to sign a memorandum of understanding but his request was refused.

On December 8, 2011, the Jerusalem Municipality's engineer, architect Shlomo Eshkol, ordered the provisional bridge to be demolished within one week, threatening to obtain an injunction for its immediate closure if orders were not heeded.⁴⁸ The next day, Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Joudah issued a firm message that "Jordan opposes any Israeli attempt to influence holy sites in Jerusalem, including the Mughrabi Bridge."⁴⁹ "Governmental elements believe that the location of the Mughrabi Ascent in the Western Wall Plaza and the Israeli law that applied Israeli law and jurisdiction to East Jerusalem, suffice to determine that construction at that site is a domestic Israeli affair that does not require approval or coordination. The government of Jordan does not see it this way. It considers the Western Wall Plaza and the whole area surrounding the Mount to be part of al-Haram al-Sharif. The Jordanians claim that Israel has recognized Jordan's rights at this site both in the peace accord between the two countries and by recognizing the Jordanian Waqf's management of the site over the years."⁵⁰

On the morning of December 12, 2011, the Western Wall Heritage Fund closed the Mughrabi Bridge at the instruction of the Jerusalem Municipality.⁵¹ That evening, forty "hilltop youth", most of whom were members of the "Nablus group", breached the border fence between Israel and Jordan near Allenby Bridge and the Christian

45 Tal, 3.

46 Yitzhak Reiter, **The Mughrabi Bridge: a question of political wisdom**, Efsar Lahshov - Can Think, July 19, 2011, <http://canthink.co.il/ישראל/גשר-המוגרב-ים-שאלה-של-תבונה-מדינית.aspx> (May 6, 2013).

47 Nadav Shragai, "Higher than Al-Aqsa," **Haaretz**, October 30, 2006, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/misc/1.1149713> (May 6, 2013).

48 Yossi Eli, "Jerusalem Municipality engineer: Closure order for Mughrabi Bridge," **Maariv Nrg**, December 8, 2011, <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/314/278.html> (May 6, 2013).

49 News agencies, "Jordan warns Israel: do not close the Mughrabi Bridge," **Maariv Nrg**, December 9, 2011, <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/314/658.html> (May 6, 2013).

50 Reiter, "The Mughrabi Bridge: a question of political wisdom," <http://canthink.co.il/ישראל/גשר-המוגרב-ים-שאלה-של-תבונה-מדינית.aspx>.

51 Eli, "Mughrabi Bridge closed; no passage from Western Wall Plaza to the Temple Mount," <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/314/278.html>.

baptismal site of Qasr al-Yahud. The right wing activists took over a building in the no man's land on the border between Jordan and Israel and refused to evacuate it, explaining their actions as a message to the Jordanian government not to meddle in Temple Mount affairs.⁵² This event reveals a clear connection between events on and around the Mount and "price tag" actions—retaliatory warnings made in response to perceived threats to Jewish sovereignty on the Mount—made, in this case, against a foreign government. Inevitably, the plan to build the new bridge was abandoned at the instruction of Prime Minister Netanyahu, out of concern that the work would spark severe reactions from Egypt and Jordan.⁵³

52 "The young people are protesting the Jordanian government's interference in the matter of the bridge, which is part of the Al-Aqsa complex: 'If they have claims to the Temple Mount, they should know we have claims to Jordan,' said their leader, outpost activist Meir Bertler. In response to the Jordanian threats against closing the Mughrabi Bridge, the young settlement activists decided to carry out a protest action that would come to the attention of the Jordanian government. "The Jordanian impertinence in the Temple Mount affair led us to send a message to Jordan," Bertler told nrg Maariv. "They must not interfere in Israel's internal affairs." Bertler, a member of Likud, added: "Every Likud member knows the song 'the Jordan River has two banks, this one is ours and so is the other one.' The Jordanians better know that we do not forget that song." Amichai Atali, "Dozens of youths from the settlements crossed the fence to Jordan and built an outpost," **Maariv Nrg**, December 12, 2011, <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/315/516.html> (May 6, 2013).

53 **Reshet Bet News**, November 29, 2011.

PART 2: ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS FOR THE TEMPLE

The Temple Mount and Temple agenda is being promoted by organizations, bodies and activists who share a common ideology and goals. However, these groups can be distinguished according to their goals:

- The building of the Third Temple by man: The Temple Institute, The Movement for Temple Renewal, The Temple Treasury Trust, Women for the Temple
- Promotion of the Temple or Temple Mount as the cultural center of Israel: The Temple Mount Faithful, El Har Hamor.
- Granting of worship rights to Jews on the Temple Mount: Human Rights on Temple Mount
- “Capturing the Temple Mount from ‘enemy hands’” and “Judaizing” the Temple Mount (usually through the use of blatant incitement and racism): Temple Mount is Ours: The Headquarters for the Rescue of the Nation and the Temple
- Study of the religious laws of the Temple and sacrifice services: The Temple Studies Institute at Mitzpeh Yericho, Yeshivat Torat Habayit, the Temple Mount Yeshiva
- Creation of the sacred vessels for Temple rites: The Temple Institute – Home of the Hebrew Artisan, Machon Maasei Habayit
- Education and dissemination of information about the Temple: The Midrasha, founded by the Temple Institute

Some of these bodies operate on several fronts at the same time. The Temple Institute, for instance, is involved in research, education and reconstruction of ritual vessels. The Institute’s leaders have been unambiguous in declaring their final goal: building the Third Temple in our day and removing the “abomination”.⁵⁴

It is useful to analyze more detailed information about some of the main bodies actively promoting a Temple agenda. The oldest and most active Temple organizations are the Temple Mount Faithful (established in 1982) and the Temple Institute (1984). In the last three decades since the Temple Mount Faithful began operations, almost 20 more organizations concerned with the Temple and the Temple Mount have been registered (see list in Appendix A at the end of this chapter). Additional bodies, not registered as organizations, are also active in this area.

54 This is how Moriah Yosef of the Midrasha, for example, calls the Dome of the Rock. **Tal Shamayim – The Monthly for Religious Youth**, 66, Tammuz 5769, 28.

THE TEMPLE CULTURE IN THE MEDIA

The pro-Temple movements generate extensive media activity, both on websites dedicated to the subject and in the right wing and national religious press. The question of rebuilding the Temple is also widely covered in newspapers, portals and news sites such as Arutz Sheva, Makor Rishon, Kipa, the Jewish Voice and Chabad Info, as well as in some of the Sabbath flyers distributed every Sabbath in synagogues. In 2011, Makor Rishon started running a weekly section about the Temple Mount called “Amud Habayit”, written by journalist Arnon Segal. The page includes a primary article about a current issue related to the Temple Mount, a column called “The Redemption Index: Daily Update from the Temple Mount” and a section called “My House of Dreams”, where well known personalities relate their personal connection to the Temple. Though not all of this discourse concerns practical and action oriented plans to build the Temple, it should be seen as an integral part of the larger Temple discourse.

There are also communication channels devoted solely to the question of the Temple Mount and the Temple. The Movement for Temple Renewal publishes a monthly bulletin called “Yibaneh Hamikdash” (May the Temple Be Rebuilt) in newspaper format, in addition to the movement’s electronic bulletin. There are unique websites on the subject of the Temple, including the Temple Institute’s website, the Temple Institute’s YouTube channel, Yisrael Hamikdashit, Beit Hamikdash TV, the Temple Mount Faithful website and websites that include images of the Temple. The most active site on this subject, which also publishes the most radical and racist statements, is Har Habayit Shelanu (The Temple Mount is Ours).

THE TEMPLE MOUNT FAITHFUL

Start of activity: Registered as an association in 1982

Stated goal: To realize the Jewish people’s belief and historic calling, anchored in the Jewish Torah, that Temple Mount is the religious, national and spiritual center of the Jewish people and the Land of Israel”⁵⁵

Scope of activity: The organization employs one paid employee and operates an English-language website. According to its report to the Registrar of Associations, the movement has 957 volunteers. At a demonstration by the Temple Mount Faithful on Hanukkah of 2011, Keshev researchers observed dozens of participants filling one bus. In 2010, the organization spent NIS 225,000 on activities and information dissemination.

55 According to the goal given to the Registrar of Associations

Main channels of activity: The Temple Mount Faithful is the oldest of the Temple movements. Its supporters are drawn from circles of the Greater Land of Israel's proponents, graduates of the pre-state Etzel and Lehi underground movements and messianic religious circles. Every year members of the movement demonstrate and apply to the police to ascend the Mount and pray on regular occasions: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the eve of Sukkot, Hanukkah, Passover, Shavuot, Independence Day, Jerusalem Day and Tisha B'Av. On these occasions, the Temple Mount Faithful conduct various ceremonies, including laying the cornerstone for the Temple, pouring water at the Spring of Gihon and conducting a Jewish wedding at the Mughrabi Gate.⁵⁶ Gershon Salomon, the movement's chairman, is not religiously observant and according to the typology proposed above, the movement's motivation is more nationalist than religious.

Main figures: Gershon Salomon heads the movement. In the early 1990s, religious members of the movement left to establish the Movement for Temple Renewal. Since then, the movement's influence has begun to wane.

Location: The organization's offices are located on Eliash Street in Jerusalem.

Noteworthy activities: Every year the Temple Mount Faithful conducts demonstrations and marches, mainly around Jewish holidays.⁵⁷ The organization posts signs all over Jerusalem preceding these activities. Organizers are careful to note in their promotional materials that their ascents to the Mount have been coordinated with security forces and approved by the Police. The heads of the Waqf perceive these claims as evidence of secret cooperation between state authorities and the Temple Mount Faithful.⁵⁸

Muslims perceive the movement's public activity as incitement. In October 1990, following an event in which members of the movement planned to lay a "cornerstone" for the Temple, riots broke out on the Mount. As police stormed the complex, they opened fire and killed 17 Palestinians. Palestinians commemorate the incident as "the Al-Aqsa massacre." Following these events, the police issued an order barring Salomon's entry to the Mount, still valid to this day. He appealed the Police decision to the High Court of Justice, which upheld it. Salomon does heed police demands and is careful to coordinate moves with the authorities, in part to avoid gaining a reputation for law breaking or violence.

56 See Ramon.

57 The Temple Mount Faithful's financial reports for 2009-2010 said: "By the board's decision from February 11, 2009, the organization is saving surpluses to build the golden menorah and purchase an exhibit in the Old City" (from the organization's website). The current organization's website (<http://www.templemountfaithful.org>) does not provide information on its financial reports.

58 *ibid.*, 16.



Text of poster:

"The Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful:

Temple Mount, Jerusalem and the Land of Israel are in Danger!

On Sukkot we will ascend the Temple Mount, the heart of the nation.

We will warn Netanyahu: The people demand Jewish sovereignty on the Temple Mount, Judea, Samaria and Gaza

And Jewish prayer on our holy Mount.

Eretz Yisrael was given by the creator of the world

To only one people— the people of Israel.

We will demonstrate in front of the nation's holy sites.

There will never be a Palestinian murderers' state on Temple Mount, in Jerusalem or in the land of our forefathers.

We will call to cancel "the Palestinian Authority" and return it to Tunis.

We will throw citrons at the "two state" plan and the PLO flag.

In front of the holy site we will vow 'if I forget thee Jerusalem' and to build the Temple in our day."



Text of poster:

"The Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful:

On Hanukkah we will raise from Modiin to Temple Mount the heart of the nation.

The Maccabim legacy: Liberate the Mount! Build the Temple! Jerusalem will not fall again!"

[Samples of posters the Temple Mount Faithful posted throughout Jerusalem in 2011 and circulated on the Internet in honor of demonstrations on Sukkot and Hanukkah]

THE TEMPLE INSTITUTE AND ITS EXTENSIONS

Start of activity: Registered as an association in 1984

Stated goal: According to the organization's statutes, its primary goal is "to fulfill the positive precept from the Torah: 'Then have them make a sanctuary for me and I will dwell among.'" The interim goal, according to the statutes, is "to learn the laws of the Temple" and "to marshal religious, scientific, public and financial resources to promote the construction of the Temple."

Scope of activity: The Temple Institute, one of the leading organizations focused on the Temple, is composed of three bodies: 1) The Institute for Study, Research and Construction of the Temple (registered as an association in 1984); 2) The Midrasha (registered in 1993); 3) Home of the Hebrew Artisan (business). In 2011, The Temple Institute employed 17 employees (12 in the general department and five in the overseas fundraising department). The Midrasha employed eight young women from the National Service who guided the Temple instrument exhibit and led educational activities in schools throughout the country. In recent years, the Institute's annual volume of activity has been about NIS 3.5 million. The Institute runs a website in five languages: Hebrew, English, French, Spanish and Hungarian. Some 100,000 people visit The Temple Institute every year, including students and teachers, soldiers and delegations of Evangelical Christians.⁵⁹

Main channels of activity: Various educational activities including hospitality and tours for soldiers, students and youth and a sound and light show; reconstruction and manufacture of sacred Temple vessels; sewing of garments for priests; research and publication of literature on the subject of the Temple; education on Temple worship and construction; creation of a mobile model of the Second Temple; and active participation in Temple conferences. According to the typology presented above, the movement's motivation is primarily halachic.

Central figures: Chairman and Founder, Rabbi Yisrael Ariel; Director, David Schwartz; former directors Rabbi Menachem Makover and Rabbi Yehuda Glick (also head of Human Rights on Temple Mount). Regarding Rabbi Yisrael Ariel's extensive work to promote construction of the Temple, see special sidebar below.

Location: Misgav Ladach Street, Jewish Quarter, Jerusalem. When the Institute moved to a new building in the Jewish Quarter in 1992, Yisrael Ariel thanked "persons in different government ministries" for providing financial assistance to the Institute and helping to cover some of its debts.⁶⁰

Noteworthy activities: Research and renewal of Temple accessories: The Temple Institute has undertaken reconstruction of all sacred vessels related to the Temple (93 in number) and preparation of a full and halachically kosher set which would enable the immediate

59 According to Yehuda Glick, former director of the Temple Institute, in an interview with Yizhar Be'er and press reports.

60 Inbari, 50.

initiation of services once it becomes possible to ascend the Mount. To date, the Institute has prepared dozens of sacred vessels, including the Levites' musical instruments, the high priest's garment (with stone laid breastplate), the table of the showbread and the founts for spraying sacrificial blood on the altar. The newspaper **Makor Rishon** publishes a weekly message conveying that most of the objects required for the renewal of Temple services are prepared (see picture from **Makor Rishon**).

מקור ראשון 22.12.2011 כ"ו בכסלו תשע"ב, www.jtimes.co.il

אפר הפרה האדומה, סכיני שחיטה. כלי נגינה: כ־15 חצוצרות, נבלים, כינורות, שופר מצופה כסף ושופר מצופה זהב.	מזרקים (כלים לזריקת הדם על המזבח), מחתות, כלי ניסוך היין והמים, כלי מדידה, האבוב המיועד לקרבן העומר, בזיכי הלבונה, כלי אבן להכנת	כיור נחושת בגדי הכהן הגדול: ציץ, מעיל, אפוד וחושן, וכן 34 סטים של בגדי כהן הדיוט. מכלי השרת מוכנים	ספירת מלאי מה כבר מוכן? מנורת הזהב שולחן לחם הפנים מזבח הקטורת
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התמונות (והכלים) באדיבות מכון המקדש

From Daf Habayit, a weekly section on the Temple Mount in **Makor Rishon**, December 22, 2011:

INVENTORY: WHAT IS READY?

- The golden menorah
- The golden table of the showbread
- The incense altar
- The copper laver
- The High Priest's sacred uniform
- Tzitz—the High Priest's golden crown, overcoat, robe and breastplate and 34 sets of lay priest garments

Of the sacred vessels there are founts (vessels for spraying blood on the altar), pans, vessels for pouring wine and water, measurement vessels, the tube for the

Omer sacrifice, the vases for the frankincense, the stone vessels for preparing the ashes of the red heifer and butcher knives.

Musical instruments: 15 trumpets, harps, violins, a silver plated shofar and a gold plated shofar

From the December 22, 2011 publication of "Amud Habayit", a weekly section on Temple Mount in **Makor Rishon**, written by journalist Arnon Segal. The inventory, published weekly, creates the impression that some of the practical steps toward building the Third Temple are in advanced stages. For further information, see below.

The most impressive ritual instrument and the one most identified with the Temple is the golden menorah. The Temple Institute completed work on the menorah in 1999 and it is now on display in a plaza in the Jewish Quarter overlooking the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. The menorah is plated with 42.5 kg of gold "in one block", according to halachic requirements. It was designed by artisan Chaim Odem from Ofra and the money required to underwrite production—about NIS 5 million—was donated by businessman Vadim Rabinowitz, Chairman of the Jewish Congress of Ukraine.

Unlike the rest of the ritual objects displayed in The Temple Institute offices on Misgav Ladach Street in the Jewish Quarter, the menorah is publically accessible in a space overlooking the Western Wall and the Mount. For security reasons, it is stored inside a protective transparent cage. In 2008, The Temple Institute invested NIS 160,000 for security and maintenance of the menorah.⁶¹ The risk and high cost of maintaining the menorah in its current location are apparently offset by its educational and publicity value. Virtually everyone who comes to the Western Wall through the Jewish Quarter is exposed to the menorah, elevating the Institute's prestige and, according to its leadership, effectively promoting the idea of building the Temple.⁶²

Another Temple Institute achievement is the construction of the altar, which Jewish law requires be built from whole stones that have not been struck by iron. The altar is to be connected to the earth at the site of the Temple but according to the Institute, "there is presently a temporary prevention against entering the Temple Mount and building the altar in its site." For that reason, a small and mobile altar was built so that it could be moved to its place on Temple Mount "as soon as the gates of Temple Mount open for sacraments"⁶³—

61 According to the verbal report from the Temple Institute submitted to the Registrar of Associations to summarize the year 2008. The aforesaid amount appeared under the section: use of donations.

62 In a video by the Midrasha, "A spark from the Temple – the menorah", the narrator talks about the passersby who see the menorah and ask themselves: "Is the menorah kosher? Can it be taken from here and brought up to the Temple, when the time comes, and used?" The answer of course is positive. The menorah is kosher and "all that remains to do is to take the menorah and bring it up to the Temple, which will be built speedily in our days" (Mordechai Persoff, "A spark from the Temple – the menorah," November 23, 2011, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZcPEe_Q8eg, (May 6, 2013).

63 From the Temple Institute's website, "Background and details of the rising altar", http://www.Temple.org.il/show_shgrir.asp?id=35039, (May 6, 2013).

namely, the sacrifice sacrament. Phrases such as “temporary prevention” and “as soon as the gates of the Temple Mount open” point to the immediate hope of the Temple Institute to formally utilize the sacred vessels they have prepared. As of December 2012, the altar was almost ready and the Temple Institute was preparing to display it to the public in a new exhibit targeted for a February 2013 opening.⁶⁴



[The text reads: This is where it should be placed when permission is given. The site of the altar]

Caption: This illustration was published in Makor Rishon on December 7, 2012, in Arnon Segal's section “Amud Habayit”, under the headline “Inauguration of the Altar.”

Because of the Temple Institute's increasing activities, it is the organization most widely identified by the public as representative of Temple issues. A 1997 report by Amnon Ramon stated that “the group most identified in public awareness with Temple Mount is the Temple Mount Faithful.”⁶⁵ Today it is clear that the Temple Institute has gained supremacy both in terms of its scope of activities and its public image.

64 Arnon Segal, “Dedication of the altar,” **Makor Rishon**, December 7, 2012, http://the--Temple.blogspot.co.il/2012/12/blog-post_2712.html (May 6, 2013).

65 Ramon, 15.

RABBI YISRAEL ARIEL

Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, born in 1939 and a graduate of the Merkaz Harav Yeshiva, is one of the Temple movement's key figures. In June 1967, Ariel participated in capturing the Western Wall and the Mount, which became a formative influence in shaping his messianic worldview.⁶⁶ Ariel's resume is replete with religious activities and radical political activism to realize the dream of the Greater Land of Israel and construction of the Temple.

Political activity and criminal investigations: In 1981, in the elections for the 10th Knesset, Rabbi Ariel was number two on Meir Kahane's Kach list. During the evacuation of the Yamit District stipulated in the peace accords with Egypt, Ariel called on soldiers to refuse orders. In 1983, he was arrested on suspicion of organizing to take over the Mount, including allegations of carving out a tunnel through the wall leading to the Mount plaza.⁶⁷ (Ariel's lawyer at the time was David Rotem, chairman of the Constitution and Law Committee in the 18th Knesset). According to Ariel, attempts to ascend the Mount—then as now—are provocations against Muslims, fulfilling the “commandment to conquer” the Mount from them.⁶⁸ A year after his arrest, he founded the Temple Institute.

Rabbi Ariel was active against the “Disengagement” from the Gaza strip and evacuation of settlements from Judea and Samaria. In 2006, he was investigated on suspicion of incitement and sedition.⁶⁹ In 2007, he was investigated on suspicion of issuing a religious ruling (“Din Moser”) against the Commander of the IDF's Central Command, finding him guilty of informing on other Jews to the authorities.⁷⁰ In 2008, Ariel was convicted of disorderly conduct and insulting a civil servant.⁷¹

Religious activity: Among his various religious roles, Ariel has served as the rabbi of the Yizrael Valley Regional Council, rabbi of the Northern Command in the Yom Kippur War, rabbi of the City of Yamit and founder and head of the Temple Institute. Rabbi Ariel has written numerous books about

66 According to his testimony in different forms, when he reached the Western Wall as a soldier, he heard from soldiers that during the storming they came upon two elderly men. Ariel was sure they were the prophet Elijah and the Messiah. He was disappointed to find out that the elderly men were Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook and Rabbi David Hacohen, known as the Rav Ha-Nazir (Nazirite rabbi).

67 Nadav Shragai describes this incident in detail in his book **Mount of Dispute** (Jerusalem: Keter, 1999), 142-145.

68 Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, **Beit Hashem Nelech** (Jerusalem: The Temple Institute), 2001.

69 Idan Yosef, “Rabbis condemn arrest of rabbis”, **News First Class**, December 7, 2006.

70 Yuval Yoaz, “Criminal investigation against rabbis who ruled ‘din moser’ against OC of Central Command”, **Haaretz**, January 31, 2007.

71 Roi Sharon, “Rabbi Yisrael Ariel will compensate Elazar Stern”, **Maariv Nrg**, November 4, 2008.

the Temple and contributed significantly to the popularization and enhancement of discourse on the subject. He is also recognized as one of the chief activists for the renewal of the Sanhedrin, in which capacity he served as “Chief Justice for the Affairs of the Nation and the State.” In recognition of his contributions to the Temple, in 2008 Rabbi Ariel received the Ministry of Education’s annual award for Jewish culture.⁷²

Selected quotes from Rabbi Yisrael Ariel: In July 2007 Ariel said: “We must rise up and say: The Temple must be built tomorrow morning! Tisha b’Av 5767 (the Jewish fast commemorating the fall of the first and second temples) must change fundamentally: We must repent and tell ourselves we have been shedding fake tears for 40 years! From now on, Tisha B’Av will turn from a day of lamentations to a day of construction! On this day the rabbis of Israel from all circles will sit together—which they have not done until now—and discuss how to build the Temple, and speedily. On this day the rabbis shall meet the heads of government and demand the Temple be built immediately! On this day a collection will begin all over the Jewish world to build the Temple. Committees will be established: a committee for preparing the sacred vessels, a committee for drawing up the building plans, a committee to collect the priests and prepare priestly garments for each one, and so on.”⁷³

On the eve of Passover, 2012, Rabbi Ariel called for the paschal sacrifice on the Mount: “They should open the gates of Temple Mount so that we can sacrifice. Everything is ready. The priests have garments, an altar and vessels. Just open it.”⁷⁴

EL HAR HAMOR

Start of activity: Registered as an association in 1988

Stated goal: “To initiate and encourage any activity that strengthens the deep Jewish connection to the Temple Mount according to Halacha. To encourage, increase and spread Jewish awareness of this subject, to encourage studies and publications on the subject and to act to build a college for deepening the Jewish connection to Temple Mount”.⁷⁵

Scope and main channels of activity: The movement organizes a “circling of the gates” at the start of the Hebrew month, depending on its ability to recruit resources and

72 Yaara Mitlis, "Rabbi Yisrael Ariel – winner of Jewish culture award", **Arutz Sheva**, October 6, 2008.

73 Yisrael Ariel, **Instead of whining, start acting**, Komemiyut newsletter, July 2007, republished on the yeshiva.org.il website on 2 Av, 5767.

74 Benny Tocker, "Rabbi Yisrael Ariel: Open the gates of the Temple Mount", **Arutz Sheva**, April 4, 2012.

75 According to the report to the Registrar of Associations

manpower.⁷⁶ A book called **El Har Hamor**, about the Jewish laws concerning ascent to the mount, was published by the movement's founders. In 2000, the movement created a small "private militia" called the "Temple Guard". As its name suggests, the militia's function is to guard the Temple once it is built; moreover, its very establishment is purported to hasten construction.⁷⁷ According to the typology suggested above, the movement's motivation is halachic and messianic.

Central figures: Founders: Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira and Rabbi Yossi Pelei (currently rabbis in the Od Yosef Chai yeshiva in Yitzhar).

Location: The organization is based in the home of the Ofan family at 5 Breuer Street, Jerusalem.

Noteworthy activities: For the last 10 years, the El Har Hamor organization has organized a monthly "circling of the gates" in which hundreds of people, mainly youth, circle around the Mount.⁷⁸ According to Motti Inbari, the event is most likely funded by the Yesha Council.⁷⁹ The event includes prayer and song and recruits young people from the Ariel and Bnei Akiva youth movements and from girls' high schools beyond the Green Line. As the invitation graphics indicate (see invitation below), the Temple plays a key role in the circling of the gates. The image of the Temple appears in the upper right corner, underneath which is the caption: "May the Temple be built speedily."

The circling of the gates takes place on the first day of the Hebrew month, starting around 7 PM. The procession leaves from the Western Wall plaza and circles the Mount through the Muslim Quarter, with a clear separation between men and women. Prayers, dancing and singing are conducted next to each of the gates to the Mount. During the ceremony, flyers of the El Har Hamor movement are distributed with special prayers for the event: "A prayer for the renewal of the kingdom of the House of David" and "a prayer before the circling of the gates". Following is a brief passage from the "prayer before the circling of the gates":

"Here we come to circle Mount Moriah, the site of our Temple, to fulfill the precept 'circle Zion and surround it...' and to demand the construction of the Temple, as it says in your Torah: 'His habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come.' And may it be Your will, Our Lord and the lord of our fathers, that You shall merit to see speedily the construction of the Temple and there we shall worship You with awe as in the days of yonder and days of antiquity, and You shall merit us to come pray to You in the large and holy Temple that is called by Your name..."

Participants have also been witnessed singing nationalist religious songs such as "Take Revenge on the Gentiles". The song is comprised of two passages from the Bible: "And

76 See for instance report about the circling of the gates in September 2012: <http://www.hakolhayehudi.co.il/?p=42557> (May 6, 2013).

77 Inbari, 183-185.

78 Elhanan Grunner, "Under sweeping rain, hundreds participated in circling of the gates", **Jewish Voice Today**, December 26, 2011.

79 Inbari, 31, 185.

he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he smote the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. To execute vengeance, To execute vengeance, To execute vengeance upon the nations.”⁸⁰ Flyers inviting participants to join the “Temple Guard” are distributed at events.

The circling of the gates, approved by the Police, requires monthly closing of main streets and shops in the Muslim Quarter, along the path of the procession from the Western Wall to the Muslim Quarter, by security forces. Old City merchants interviewed for this report claim that in recent years the police have stepped up shop closings during the circling of the gates and Jerusalem Day march out of fear that Jewish participants will commit acts of violence against Palestinian merchants.

“**Price tag**”: Acts of vandalism against Palestinians and Muslim and Christian religious institutions have been nicknamed “price tag” after the code name given by perpetrators. Price tag attacks may be waged against Islamic holy sites (usually mosques), monasteries or Palestinian property in order to “avenge” incidents ranging from Israeli political conduct perceived to be excessively moderate to Palestinian terrorism.

A connection can be made between certain “price tag” activists and the Od Yosef Chai yeshiva in the settlement of Yitzhar—the yeshiva of rabbis Yitzhak Shapira and Yossi Peli. The yeshiva is recognized by security authorities as an ideological and practical base of “price tag” activists.⁸¹ In January 2010, yeshiva head Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira was arrested on suspicion of involvement in setting fire to a mosque in the village of Yasuf.⁸² The same year the rabbi was re-arrested, this time on suspicion of incitement to racism in his book “The King’s Law”, where he points to cases in which Jewish law purportedly sanctions the killing of gentiles.⁸³

Perpetrators of price tag actions also refer to their operations as “mutual guarantee”⁸⁴, a slogan coined by Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira.⁸⁵ Their assumption is that the Jewish people and the Land of Israel are a single organic entity; an injury to one organ stimulates a reaction in another part of the body. As Shapira explains: “When somebody is hurt in one place there must be a reaction everywhere.”⁸⁶ If that logic continues to be promoted, it may likely legitimize “price tag” vandalizing of the Islamic holy sites on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif (see above for the case of the Mughrabi Bridge).

80 According to the testimony of a Keshev researcher who was present at a circling of the gates

81 According to Shabak chief Yoram Cohen, the “price tag” activists consist of “a few dozen activists who are mainly in Yitzhar”, in Barak Ravid, “Shabak chief on ‘price tag’: the Yitzhar settlers are terrorizing the government,” **Haaretz**, February 3, 2012, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/1.1632993>. Different reports have been published in the past about “price tag” operations by residents of Yitzhar. For example, Amichai Etieli, “Yitzhar residents executed ‘price tag’ in Hawara, nrg, June 30, 2011, <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/255/418.html> (May 6, 2013).

82 Efrat Weiss, “Arson of mosque in Yasuf: Yitzhar yeshiva head arrested”, **Ynet News**, January 26, 2010.

83 Eli Senior, “Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira, who wrote about hurting gentiles, arrested”, **Ynet News**, July 26, 2010.

84 This slogan was sprayed on the walls of the Trappist Monastery in Latrun. See Moshe Nussbaum, “Arson at the Latrun Monastery: Slogans against Christianity sprayed on walls”, **Channel 2 News**, September 4, 2012, <http://www.mako.co.il/news-law/crime/Article-2f22313d1be8931017.htm> (May 6, 2013).

85 Guy Varon, “Head of Yitzhar yeshiva openly supports revenge against Palestinians”, **Army Radio**, May 17, 2010.

86 Ibid.

THE MOVEMENT FOR TEMPLE RENEWAL - HATNUA LEKHINUN HAMIKDASH

Start of activity: Registered as an association in 1991. Registration was revoked in 2002 but the organization continues to conduct public activities.

Stated goal: “The main goal of the Movement for Temple Renewal and the aspiration of its founders and all of its members is to build the Temple and renew worship as in early days.”⁸⁷ On the broader level, the movement seeks to establish a state of Halacha in the area of the Biblical Land of Israel.⁸⁸

Scope of activity: In the 1990s, there were nearly 100 registered members of the movement.⁸⁹ Since the movement is no longer officially registered, there is no certified data about the scope of its financial activities. According to the typology proposed above, the movement's motivation is halachic and messianic.

Main channels of activity: The movement works to disseminate its ideas about the Temple Mount and construction of the Temple and to more vigorously introduce these concepts into the public discourse. The Movement for Temple Renewal calls on every Jew to ascend the Temple Mount according to Halacha and to take an active part in promoting construction of the Temple and reviving worship within it. The movement conducts extensive and comprehensive outreach to raise awareness of the call to ascend the Temple Mount through its monthly publication “Yibaneh Hamikdash” and via its leadership role in organizing the Temple Conference—the premier annual event of the Temple movements. The Movement for Temple Renewal is unique in having been founded by ultra-Orthodox Jews and in encouraging the ascent of the Temple Mount by Haredim.

Central figures: Founders: Yosef Elboim, Yoel Lerner and others. Present chairman: Lawyer Baruch Bar Yosef

Location: Jerusalem

Noteworthy activities: Ascents to the Temple Mount: The movement organizes periodic ascents of the Mount and provides a guide and halachic instructions to anyone requesting them. Members of the movement attach utmost importance to ascending the Mount as a way of taking a stand toward both Jews and Muslims. It is difficult to obtain accurate data about the scope of these ascents. One indication may be found in “Yibaneh Hamikdash”, which releases monthly data about people who have ascended the Mount during that period. Each issue documents hundreds of people who have made the ascent.

The Temple conferences and Temple feasts: Every year the Movement for Temple Renewal produces the Temple Conference, a high visibility event that attracts most of the Temple

87 “The Three Weeks before Tisha B’Av: This is the time to donate to the Temple Mount Movement”, article on the Temple Mount Is Ours site, http://lamikdash.blogspot.co.il/2009/07/blog-post_8852.html (May 6, 2013).

88 Inbari, 126.

89 Ibid.

movements. The conference combines lectures and speeches, films, a display of Temple vessels, Temple songs, ascents to the Mount, a festive feast and sale of model Temples.

The Sixth Temple Conference in 2000 was the stage for the first public display of the golden menorah made by the Temple Institute. In 2005, the Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Yigal Amedi, attended the Temple Conference, where the service of the gift offering was demonstrated. There Rabbi Dov Lior, the Rabbi of Kiryat Arba, declared: "We strive for full sovereignty on the Temple Mount, and first of all must establish a central place of prayer."⁹⁰ The conference was also attended by Yehuda Etzion, head of the Chai Vekayam movement and a member of the Jewish Underground of the 1980s that participated in plans to blow up the Dome of the Rock. Etzion spoke about the Temple Mount as "yearning for a different culture and totality." He added that "striving for the Temple Mount is striving to raise the State of Israel to sanctity, because if it remains in its Uganda, in its secularism, there it will be buried."⁹¹

The 12th Temple Conference convened in September 2011 at the Great Synagogue in Jerusalem was held under the auspices of **Makor Rishon**, the daily newspaper identified with the national religious sector.⁹² According to the Arutz Sheva website, the conference focused on "the conquest, Judaization and purification of the Temple Mount; removing the



The audience at the 12th Temple conference at the Great Synagogue in Jerusalem. Photo: Har Habayit Shelanu website

90 Author unnamed, "The Temple Feast: create a prayer space on the Temple Mount", **Arutz Sheva**, January 25, 2005.

91 Nadav Shragai, "Temple Games", **Haaretz**, January 26, 2005.

92 According to a survey published in **Makor Rishon**, the newspaper has 21,500 readers for its daily edition and 150,000 readers on the weekend.

temporary abominations; the sacrifice service; construction of the Temple; and renewal of the rites."⁹³

CHAI VEKAYAM

Start of activity: The movement was founded in 1991 and is not a registered association

Stated goal: Raising public awareness of the necessity of the Temple and fighting for the right of Jews to pray on the Temple Mount

Scope of activity: In the late 1990s, movement members regularly ascended the Mount without Police coordination and without permission (considering themselves exempt from the yoke of the law on this matter).⁹⁴ Participants were arrested and criminal files opened. The arrests precipitated two changes: a stiffening of Police supervision of the entry of Jews to the Temple Mount and raising of public awareness about prohibitions against Jews praying on the Mount. In recent years, the scope of activities has diminished.

Central channels of activity: Movement members habitually ascend the Mount to pray, aware their ascent will provoke arrest. They also focus on the reconstruction of the paschal sacrifice ceremony, conducted in the neighborhood of Abu Tor, which faces the Mount. Yehuda Etzion initiated the Temple Conference, during the time when the sacred vessels of the Temple Institute were put on display. According to the typology proposed above, this movement's motivation is messianic.

Central figures: The movement was founded by Motti Karpel and Chaim Nativ, who were joined by Yehuda Etzion a few years after he was released from prison for his involvement in the Jewish Underground in the 1980s. Other members of the movement are Yinon Mevorach and Chaim Odem (who designed and built the Temple menorah for the Temple Institute).

Location: The movement was founded in the settlement of Bat Ayin, which serves as its ideological center.

Noteworthy activity: The movement has recently reduced its scope of activities, focusing on Etzion's lectures and theoretical plans for the future Temple.

93 According to a report on the Inn website on September 5, 2011, <http://www.inn.co.il/Forum/Forum.aspx/t381654> (May 6, 2013).

94 Ibid., 80.

HAR HABAYIT SHELANU WEBSITE

“The Headquarters for the Rescue of the People and the Temple—Har Habayit Shelanu” is the most radical active Temple Mount website. The site openly calls for the destruction of Islamic shrines on the Mount and construction of the Temple on the site of their ruins. Police view the site’s publications as dangerously provocative and temporarily banned activity in 2012 after a notice published on the site led to a violent outburst on the Temple Mount.

Goal: The Har Habayit Shelanu site has one purpose: “To Judaize the Temple Mount and build the Third Temple on the Temple Mount, capturing Temple Mount from the evil thieves of the Temple. Temple Mount is home.”⁹⁵

Scope of activity: The site is normally updated every few days.

Central channels of activity: The site channels developing news from the Temple Mount and announces demonstrations and ascents to the Mount.

Central figures: The site lists its main editor as Rabbi Dudu Baharan and its deputy editor as Gershon Caspi. According to the police, Nechemiah Elbom and Rabbi Yehuda Glick are the site’s operators.⁹⁶

Location: <http://hamikdash1.blogspot.co.il>.

Noteworthy activity: Direct and indirect calls to destroy the mosques on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and publication of a poster ahead of Moshe Feiglin’s ascent of the Mount after internal Likud elections in 2012. The ascent fomented great unrest among Muslims and Police closure of the Mount to visitors.

95 From the site http://hamikdash1.blogspot.co.il/2011/06/blog-post_25.html (May 6, 2013).

96 Shalom Yerushalmi, “Temple Mount is in their hands: who is really agitating the atmosphere in Jerusalem?”, **Maariv Nrg**, March 11, 2012.

APPENDIX, PART 2: REGISTERED ASSOCIATIONS (NOT REVIEWED ABOVE) PROMOTING THE TEMPLE AGENDA

Year of registration	Name of association	Association's self-stated goals
1985	El Har Hashem	To stimulate public awareness of the sanctity of Temple Mount as the single, central holy site of the Jewish people
1985	Midreshet Kidmat Yerushalayim, established by Ateret Cohanim	A midrasha (orthodox educational institution) for the study of Jerusalem and the Temple via tours of Jerusalem within the Old City walls and curriculum on Jerusalem, Temple Mount and the Temple
1993	The Midrasha of Temple Knowledge	Educational projects on the subject of Temple awareness in Jerusalem, e.g. textbooks illustrating the Jewish people's historical connection to the Temple and Jerusalem
1994	Tzur Yeshuati	Torah center for sacred and Temple studies; Beit Habechira, a "kolel" (seminary for young married men); publication of the journal "Ma'alim Bakodesh"; publication of books and periodicals about the Temple
1997	Center for the Study of History of the Temple in Jerusalem	Dissemination of historical information in Israel and around the world, including Europe, about the Temple, its function, location and archaeological excavations at the site, based on Jewish sources
1999	Machaneh Shekhina	Construction and maintenance of a luxurious and sophisticated ritual bath for provision of purification services to pilgrims to the Temple Mount; guiding for visitors to the Temple Mount complex
2000	The Center for Temple Studies at Mitzpeh	Establishment of a learning center for priests and Levites; creation of a model of the Temple and its sacred vessels; publishing of halachic and educational materials about the Temple
2001	Temple Awareness – Shalom al Yisrael	Information and intensive education about the Temple, including production and publication of films and written materials; education and activities for the unity of the Jewish people; charitable and anonymous contributions to people in need

Year of registration	Name of association	Association's self-stated goals
2001	Women for the Temple	To unite women from various Jewish groups around the Temple; to fulfill the positive precept to build the Temple; to deepen awareness and knowledge of the meaning and significance of the Temple; to tighten the bond between women and the Temple in thought and action
2003	Lev Ha'uma	To deepen awareness of the Temple as a central site of the Jewish people; to strengthen the connection between the Jewish people, the State of Israel and the Temple Mount in order to realize Israel's full sovereignty on the Temple Mount for the benefit of the Jewish people and the Land of Israel
2004	Sanhedrin—large tribunal of 71	To establish Jewish law among the Jewish people in Israel and the Diaspora
2004	Chen Beit Hamikdash	To promote Temple affairs through study, lectures, books and publications; to illustrate the Temple and tabernacle; to administer seminaries for the study of Temple affairs; to build synagogues; to research the song of the Levites and song in general in Jewish sources
2006	Tzur Yeshurun Yerushalayim	To convey Jewish heritage and culture, especially related to the Temple, throughout the Jewish population via lectures, events, conferences and national and international exhibits, in cooperation with overseas Jewish communities
2010	The Mount Yeshiva	Gathering groups of newly wed yeshiva students to study—with a focus on the laws of sanctity and purity—next to the Temple Mount during hours open to visitors (in observance of law); promotion of public action to build a synagogue, a study house, a yeshiva and a kolel on the Temple Mount
2011	Moses Park	Illustrating the Second Temple for the general public; a research center on Jewish communities abroad; the Temple illustration project

PARTIAL LIST OF BODIES, MOVEMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS NOT REGISTERED AS ASSOCIATIONS

- Friends of the Temple Movement (Prof. Hillel Weiss)
- The Jewish Idea Yeshiva (Rabbi Yehuda Kreuzer)
- Otzar Hamikdash (The Temple Trust), (Architect Gideon Harlap)
- Metzudat Yehuda (Yehuda Citadel), (Lawyer Baruch Ben Yosef)
- The Third Temple (Rabbi David Elboim)
- Yeshivat Torat Habayit (The Temple Torah Yeshiva)
- Kmehei Hamikdash (The Temple Longing)
- Merkaz Har Habayit (Temple Mount Center)
- Merkaz Hakohanim (The Priests' Center)
- Mishmar Hamikdash (Temple Guard)

PART 3: TIES BETWEEN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS AND TEMPLE MOVEMENTS

There is an internal contradiction in the authorities' policy towards the Temple movements. The authorities enable, assist and sometimes even fund the activities of the Temple movements; at the same time, they—especially law enforcement agencies such as the Israel Police, the State's Attorney and the Shabak—attempt to monitor, curb and modify the activity of the Temple movements out of security concerns. The support of state authorities extends to various movements and organizations that openly declare their intention to change the status quo on the Mount, with all the implications such changes might entail.

ROLE OF STATE AUTHORITIES IN ENCOURAGING TEMPLE MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES

A. REGISTRATION OF ASSOCIATIONS AND TRUSTS

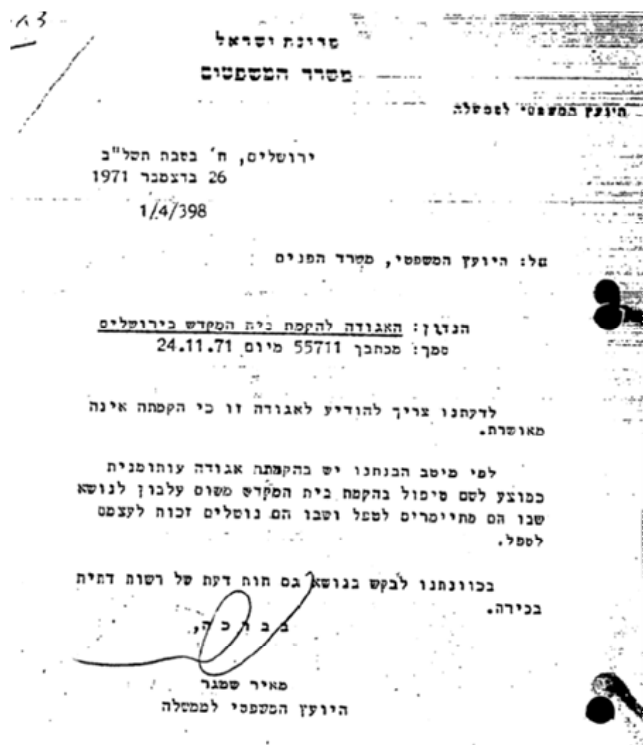
Government institutions facilitate the growth of the Temple movements by registering associations working to change the status quo on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, whether by mass ascent and prayer by Jews or actions toward construction of the Third Temple. There are currently 19 associations with Temple related missions registered with the Registrar of Associations. It goes without saying that a democracy cannot prohibit registration of a public body operating within the confines of the law; the government is required to honor the right of assembly. However, the State's allowance of bodies that openly state the goal of promoting construction of the Third Temple to register as associations has not always been a given. In 1971, then Attorney General Meir Shamgar forbade the establishment of "The Association for the Construction of the Temple in Jerusalem."⁹⁷ Among the reasons he cited were "insult of the subject" and concern of "exploitation of the naïveté of people in Israel and abroad to raise funds for an activity they are neither authorized nor capable of carrying out" (see document below).

Since the Association Law was passed in 1980, 19 different associations promoting a change in the arrangements on the Mount have registered with the Registrar of Associations. The associations' official goals range from public education activities ("raising public opinion", "raising public awareness") to activities on the ground such as the building of a ritual bath for pilgrims ascending the Mount, promoting the construction of a synagogue on the Mount

97 An Ottoman association is the equivalent of an association that existed before the Association Law was passed.

or even advancing construction of the Temple itself. There is a wide spectrum of activities existing between these extremes, including encouraging ascent to the Mount, religious study related to the laws of the Temple, building models of the Temple and associated vessels and training priests and Levites for service in the Temple.

In 2000, Yosef Elboim and architect Gideon Harlap established an organization called “The Temple Trust – a public trust for the construction of the Third Temple.” A public trust is a legal institution that regulates assets dedicated for the realization of public goals, and like an association it is overseen by the Department of the Corporations Authority.⁹⁸ The role of the Temple Trust was to raise funds to build the Temple.



The attorney general's letter refusing to register the Association for the Construction of the Temple

B. PROTECTING TEMPLE MOVEMENT DEMONSTRATIONS

The “circling of the gates” that has been organized for the past decade by the El Har Hamor association is funded by the Yesha Council.⁹⁹ The event is secured by the Israel Police, which orders Arab merchants in the Muslim Quarter to close their shops out of fear of harassment by Temple movement activists participating in the procession.¹⁰⁰ In so doing, the police not only protect the demonstrators (within their purview) but avoid the scenario of confronting them should they break the law, choosing instead to exact a financial toll on market vendors’ businesses.

98 In the last 15 years, Gideon Harlap has been active in matters of the Temple. He publishes booklets on construction of the Temple, operates the website Yisrael Hamikdashit and heads the Temple Trust. In an interview with him for the preparation of this paper (interview with Yizhar Be'er, January 29, 2012), Harlap spoke of the blueprint he made for Temple Mount. He claims there is no halachic obstacle to building the Temple and the main barrier is public opinion in Israel. He is trying to draw public opinion in his direction and to that end he said he approached celebrities (such as Yehoram Gaon and Leonard Cohen) and tried to recruit them to a campaign to build the Temple, so far unsuccessfully.

99 Inbari, 31, 185.

100 According to merchants' testimonies given to Yizhar Be'er

C. DIRECT FUNDING

The State of Israel directly funds various Temple movement activities. In the years 2008-2011, the Ministry of Culture, Science and Sports and the Ministry of Education supported the Temple Institute and the Midrasha at an average rate of NIS 412,000 per year.¹⁰¹ In 2012, the Midrasha, the educational arm of the Temple Institute, received NIS 189,000 from the Ministry of Education.¹⁰²

On December 30, 2010 a highly attended conference took place at Binyanei Ha'uma (The Jerusalem Conference Center). The event, promoted as "Every Jew Has a Part in the Sacred" (the logo on the invitation proclaimed "Something good is happening in Jerusalem!"), drew thousands of attendees, mostly Haredim. The program included a discussion of ritual sacrifice and an exhibit presenting a model of the Temple. It also showcased a virtual presentation illustrating the construction of the Third Temple on the ruins of the Dome of the Rock. The conference was held under the auspices of the Jerusalem Municipality's Department of Religious Culture.¹⁰³

D. INFILTRATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND YOUTH MOVEMENTS

The Temple movements are active in public schools, religious seminaries, colleges, girls' high schools, yeshivas and youth movements. Leading educational institutions in the area of Temple studies are Kolel Beit Ha'bechira in Karmeit Tzur, the Jewish Idea Yeshiva in Jerusalem, Yeshivat Torat Ha'bayit in Jerusalem and the Od Yosef Chai yeshiva in Yitzhar. These educational activities forcefully expose students to the Temple movements' versions of history, ideology and Jewish law regarding the Temple Mount as well as the yearning and capacity to erect the Third Temple upon it.

CONNECTION TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

In 2010, Education Minister Gideon Saar initiated the project "Ascending to Jerusalem", through which the Ministry of Education subsidizes tours to Jerusalem for school children. The goal of the program is to ensure that every student in the Israeli education system

101 According to the information on the government subsidy website www.tmichot.gov.il. From their financial reports (seen on the association website <http://www.guidestar.org.il/>), the Temple Institute and the Midrasha report receiving subsidies in the years 2008-2010. The Institute received NIS 158,046 in 2008, NIS 239,007 in 2009 and NIS 291,465 in 2010.

102 Or Kashti, "Government ministries are donating 'petty cash' to haredi and right-wing institutions", **Haaretz**, November 23, 2012, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/education/1.1871516> (May 6, 2013).

103 See also the Har Habayit Shelanu website, <http://lamikdash.blogspot.co.il/2011/01/blog-post.html> (May 6, 2013).

visits the capital at least three times by the age of 18.¹⁰⁴ In August 2012, the Ministry of Education reported a record number of 550,000 students who toured Jerusalem, of which 31,474 entered the Mount complex.¹⁰⁵ Most of the students who entered the Mount were Muslim but a few thousand were Jewish. Complaints against the Ministry of Education appeared on the Haredi website Behadrei Haredim, where protests were made against allowing Jewish children onto the Mount—a violation of “a ban punishable by extirpation”. In other words, ascent to the ancient holy site in a state of impurity is punishable by death at God's hands.¹⁰⁶

The Religious Education Administration declared “Jerusalem and Zion: From Longing to Realization and from Vision to Reality” as the annual theme for 2009-2010. The Temple factors heavily in its educational content. Moreover, the Religious Education Administration takes an energetic role in designing curriculum, suggesting ways to combine Temple studies with traditional areas of study such as history, geography and Talmud; building models of the Temple Mount and the Temple; and writing prayers, songs and short stories about Jerusalem and the longing to build the Temple. It has also recommended touring the Temple Institute, among other Temple related organizations and sites.¹⁰⁷

Among the Administration's suggested curricular materials is an article entitled “Zion and Jerusalem, From Longing to Fulfillment” by Rabbi Dr. Yochai Rudick. At the end of the article, the rabbi declares that “placing Jerusalem at the center of the annual subject in 5770 (2010) should, God willing, create ideological momentum in the religious education system's concepts and spiritual aspirations both towards construction of the Temple and in its system of values as a whole.”¹⁰⁸ The hope for a swift victory over the “nations” and construction of the Temple is also mentioned in an article by Rabbi Arie Shalom, the deputy inspector for the instruction of Talmud and oral law, who says:

“Even today, like in the days of Ezra, there are nations who besiege us and want to share with us the government and sovereignty over Jerusalem and to divide its unity. The processes may be numerous and complex but with God's help we shall act and succeed. Just like we merited the first redemption so we shall merit the last

104 According to Gideon Saar's personal website (<http://www.gideonsaar.com>), “more than 500,000 students visited Jerusalem as part of the ‘Ascending to Jerusalem’ project initiated by Education Minister Gideon Saar. The purpose of the program is to increase familiarity, sense of belonging and love of Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, in which every student (from all sectors) must visit Jerusalem at least three times during their 12 years of school. To implement the program ‘Ascending to Jerusalem’ the Education Ministry allocated, as part of its list of goals presented to the government and the Knesset six months ago, an overall budget of NIS 15 million, which greatly increases the number of students visiting Jerusalem.”

105 Omri Meniv, “30,000 students tour Temple Mount for the first time”, **Maariv Nrg**, August 29, 2012, <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/399/407.html> (May 6, 2013).

106 Sari Roth, “Shocking: the Education Ministry brought 31,474 children to Temple Mount”, Behadrei Haredim, August 29, 2012, <http://www.bhol.co.il/article.aspx?id=44050> (May 6, 2013).

107 The full memo is on the following website: <http://cms.education.gov.il/NR/rdonlyres/800C2D58-638E-4542-96A2-509388E4BB64/104596/21.pdf> (May 6, 2013). The connection between the Education Ministry and the Temple Institute is not anecdotal. In 2008, the organization's founder Rabbi Yisrael Ariel received the Ministry of Education's Jewish Culture award.

108 Ibid., 13.

redemption, for the building of Jerusalem and the building of the Temple swiftly in our days, amen."¹⁰⁹

The selected bibliography proposed on an Education Ministry memo lists numerous books about the construction of the Temple and the Temple Mount, some of which are written by leading activists in the Temple movement. The influence of the Temple movements can therefore be seen to reach all the way to the administration of the Ministry of Education. Materials manufactured by the movements constitute official educational materials used within the religious education system.

Educational Funds and Informal Education:

The Karev Educational Program (founded by Charles Bronfman) runs joint enrichment programs with the Ministry of Education in schools and kindergartens and supports educational activities in the field of Temple awareness. The article “Parents Are Invited into the Temple”, published on Arutz Sheva,¹¹⁰ documents a project in Safed run by Rabbi Dror Shmullian—a collaboration between the Karev Program and the Temple Institute. At its conclusion, children from all classes in the school built a giant 30 by 17 meter cardboard model of the Temple. At the closing event, parents entered the “Temple” built by their children and listened to students dressed in priestly garments explain the Temple service.¹¹¹



The Midrasha that operates under the supervision of the Education Ministry's Union of Judaism Seminars runs educational programs in schools throughout the country, for which it employs eight young women from the National Service program and receives an annual budget. Activities are conducted in kindergartens, schools, bar and bat mitzvahs and even among adults. The Midrasha's seminar catalog demonstrates a diverse menu of educational components, including a mobile exhibit of Temple vessels, a puppet show about the Temple, construction of Temple models, games like “Dress the Priest” (making a small doll of a High Priest and his garments) and arts and crafts projects such as making mobiles

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 17-18.

¹¹⁰ Shimon Cohen, "The parents are invited into the Temple", *Arutz Sheva*, July 31, 2011.

¹¹¹ The Karev Educational Program responds: "The activity in the Chabad school in Safed was part of the Karev Program's art classes. The teacher was accompanied by an art supervisor, participated in enrichment classes and taught based on a program agreed upon between the school and the art department. In many cases the art classes reinforce the school's study contents. In the Arutz Sheva report, the reconstruction of the Temple is of the historic Temple of the past without reference to the future and without a current political context. It is important to clarify that the choice of contents in haredi schools is, naturally, in accordance with their worldview. Following Ir Amim's inquiry, we will re-examine the study contents."

and refrigerator magnets with Temple elements.¹¹² The catalog also includes a unit on the Tabernacle and its vessels to prepare tenth-graders for matriculation exams in Bible study. According to the catalog, the Temple Institute prepared the study unit at the direct request of the Ministry of Education and it is recommended by the District Bible Inspector, Rabbi Yissachar Goelman.

Extensive Temple activities are also conducted under the auspices of the religious youth movement, Ariel.¹¹³ The movement splintered off from Bnei Akiva in 1980 in order to separate boys and girls and “raise youngsters on values of Torah, sanctity and action”, under the slogan “The Torah of life with spirit”. The movement aims to “strengthen Temple awareness and spiritual and practical action to hasten its rebuilding.”¹¹⁴ According to Ariel’s educational philosophy, there are three primary objectives that should be on the agenda for high school students, one of them being “increasing awareness of the importance of building the Temple among the Jewish people, participation in the circling of the gates, information at schools, modeling the Temple at distribution stands and more”.¹¹⁵

One of the Ariel youth movement’s most highly anticipated annual events is “Temple Week” and the calendar issued for counselors notes the monthly circling of the gates ¹¹⁶ (see Part 2). The movement publishes a monthly magazine called **Tal Shamayim—the Monthly for Religious Youth**. Volume 67 of **Tal Shamayim** was devoted entirely to the Temple and its construction. In that volume, the subtitle of an interview with Rabbi Glick, then director of the Temple Institute, read, “From Air-conditioning to Parking, They are Planning the Temple in Full Detail”.¹¹⁷

The movement declares that it serves 10,000 active students across 75 branches,¹¹⁸ mainly in settlements beyond the Green Line. The movement enjoys significant government support. In the years 2008-2011, Ariel received more than NIS 8 million from the State.

The Special Relationship between the Israeli Establishment and the Temple Institute: Of all the Temple movements, the Temple Institute enjoys the establishment’s most generous support. From its inception, the Temple Institute sought the support of official bodies such as government ministries, the Chief Rabbinate and the Jerusalem Municipality. By presenting itself primarily as an educational body, without emphasizing its ultimate goal of rebuilding the Temple, the Institute has been successful in garnering support. It is recognized

112 Catalog of activities of the Midrasha founded by the Temple Institute, Iyar, 5765.

113 The word "Ariel" itself is a florid expression for the altar of the Temple in Jerusalem.

114 According to the movement's goals, as reported to the Registrar of Associations

115 From the movement's old website, question and answer department.

116 See Ariel movement's calendar for 5772.

117 Yitzhak Lampert, "Preparing the Temple", **Tal Shamayim – The Monthly for Religious Youth 67**, Av 5769.

118 According to the movement's new website, "Who we are".

by the Ministry of Education as an educational body and is regularly visited by groups of schoolchildren and organized groups of soldiers.¹¹⁹

The Midrasha serves as the educational arm of the Temple Institute and in this capacity provides seminars on the Temple and Temple rites to inspectors, principals, teachers and students. Since 1994, the Temple has been included as a subject in some bible studies matriculation exams and the Institute gives lessons on the subject in schools. It also enjoys resources from the National Service Authority, which places young women at the Institute in fulfillment of their national service obligations. In 2011, eight young women from the National Service program served in the Midrasha, guiding visitors and conducting educational activities in schools throughout Israel. In 1995, the Institute reported it had reached 35,000 students that year.¹²⁰ Furthermore, the Institute's newsletter, "What's New in the Temple Institute", was published for many years with the support of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Education Ministry's Department of Religious Culture.¹²¹ In 2008, Rabbi Ariel received the Education Ministry's annual prize for Jewish culture for his work on the subject of the Temple.¹²²

For years the Midrasha has received substantial sums of money from the Ministry of Education. In 2008 it received NIS 341,687; in 2009 it received NIS 218,395; in 2010, NIS 266,465; in 2011, NIS 264,587; and in 2012 the Midrasha received more than NIS 189,000.¹²³ The Temple Institute itself also receives state money directly. In 2008, the Institute received NIS 121,564; in 2009, NIS 154,446; in 2010, NIS 159,454; and in 2011, NIS 121,564. In the years 2008-2011, the Ministry of Culture, Science and Sports and the Ministry of Education supported the Temple Institute and the Midrasha by an average amount of NIS 412,000 a year.¹²⁴

The Midrasha naturally emphasizes its distinctive ideological, historic and halachic narrative concerning the Temple Mount and the Temple. Because there is no other organization representing an alternative viewpoint, students receive a blatantly biased perspective. Funding and manpower resources are provided to the Midrasha legally but there is no stipulation as to either curricular content or supervision of staff; only volume of activity is monitored.¹²⁵ In this way, both secular and religious students under the Education Ministry are exposed to a one-dimensional approach to the subject.

Since the late 1980s, the Temple Institute has participated in organizing the Temple Conference, which is supported by the Chief Rabbinate, the Jerusalem Municipality and the

119 **Arutz Sheva**, October 6, 2008.

120 Inbari, 51.

121 *ibid.*, p. 52.

122 **Arutz Sheva**, October 6, 2008.

123 The figures come from the report of the Registrar of Associations under the item "support of public institutions – Judaism seminars". See also **Haaretz**, November 23, 2012, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/education/1.1871516>.

124 Based on information on the government subsidy website, www.tmichot.gov.il.

125 **Haaretz**, November 23, 2012, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/education/1.1871516>.

Ministry of Religious Affairs.¹²⁶ The conference exemplifies the close cooperation between the Temple Institute and elected and public officials in Israel. On September 15, 1998, the Chairman of the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, Knesset Member Hanan Porat, sent invitations to the event from his office on official Knesset stationery and Deputy Minister of Sports Moshe Peled (Likud-Gesher-Tzomet) promoted it in a broadcast address.¹²⁷ At the event, Rabbi Yisrael Ariel issued a call from the stage to act to remove the Islamic shrines from the Temple Mount and to build the Temple. Ariel declared, "Tomorrow morning, we must put on our working clothes."¹²⁸ In 2011, Arutz Sheva reported that the conference would be attended by rabbis and politicians, including Deputy Prime Minister Silvan Shalom¹²⁹ (who ultimately canceled his attendance). The Har Habayit Shelanu website reported that the event was attended by Knesset members Uri Ariel and Michael Ben Ari.¹³⁰ In the past, it was attended by religious dignitaries holding public office such as Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau and Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi Doron.¹³¹

CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TEMPLE MOVEMENTS AND MEMBERS OF KNESSET

On July 26, 2012, for the first time, the Israeli Knesset hosted a conference about the Temple, Jewish sovereignty in Jerusalem and granting Jews worship rights on the Mount. The conference was initiated by MK Michael Ben Ari and facilitated by MK Arieh Eldad, both from the Temple lobby in the Knesset. Some 100 rabbis attended the conference—addressed by members of the Temple movement—including Yehuda Etzion (see below for letter sent to him by then Opposition Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu), Rabbi Yehuda Kreuzer, Rabbi Yisrael Ariel and Rabbi Yosef Elboim. The conference was also attended by Michael Pua (Director of Jewish Leadership), Baruch Marzel (The Jewish Front and former member of the defunct Kach



¹²⁶ Motti Inbari, **Jewish fundamentalism and the Temple Mount** (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2007), p. 50.

¹²⁷ According to Keshev director Yizhar Be'er, who attended the conference

¹²⁸ According to Keshev director Yizhar Be'er, who attended the conference

¹²⁹ Ben Shaul, "Today: festive gathering of friends of the Temple", **Arutz Sheva**, September 17, 2011.

¹³⁰ According to photographs published on the Har Habayit Shelanu website, Gadi Bahar, "The Twelfth Temple Conference: more than 500 people attended the Temple Conference on Monday at the Great Synagogue."

¹³¹ Motti Inbari, **Jewish fundamentalism and the Temple Mount** (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2007), p. 50.

leadership), Itamar Ben Gvir (who served in the 18th Knesset as an aid to MK Michael Ben Ari) and Dr. Ron Breiman (chairman of the now defunct Professors for a Strong Israel).

Chairman of the Temple Mount Heritage Fund, Rabbi Yehuda Glick, claims that a group of Knesset members regularly ascends the Mount: Danny Danon, Arie' Eldad, Michael Ben Ari, Uri Ariel, Ze'ev Elkin, Otniel Schneller and Yariv Levin. Rabbi Glick claims that MK Nachman Shai has also ascended the Mount several times.¹³² In the past, ministers Hershkowitz and Edelstein also ascended the Mount; today, the government forbids ascents by ministers for security reasons. In August 2012, Arie' Eldad proposed a bill to regulate prayer times for Jews on the Mount.¹³³

Some of the aforementioned Knesset members have been outspoken in declaring their support for building the Third Temple. Yuli Edelstein declared, "My job is to deal with the daily process that connects and builds the Jewish people and leads to construction of the Temple".¹³⁴ Ze'ev Elkin, the coalition chair of the 18th Knesset, has stated that in his opinion, "It is important to extract it [Temple Mount as per Yizhar Be'er] from the purview of religious lunatics. We must explain to broad sections of the public that without this place, our national freedom is not complete."¹³⁵ Tzipi Hotoveli opines that "building the Temple and its place on Temple Mount must symbolize the renewed sovereignty of the Jewish people in its land ... We must deepen our hold on Temple Mount as part of deepening our hold on the entire Land of Israel, as the preparation of a vessel to receive this necessary change of reality."¹³⁶ Zevulun Orlev, a few weeks after losing primary elections in the Jewish Home party to Naftali Bennet, said "the Muslim world will surely start a world war if Israel and the Jewish people remove the mosques from Temple Mount, but history teaches us that we must not give up."¹³⁷ Together with Ze'ev Elkin, Daniel Hershkowitz and Otniel Schneller, Orlev proposed dividing the Mount area by time and place for Jewish and Muslim prayer, similar to the system implemented for the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron.¹³⁸

One of the chief figures representing the connection between the Knesset and the Mount is Moshe Feiglin, who was elected to the 19th Knesset and promised to work extensively on

¹³² Yehuda Glick in an interview with Yizhar Be'er on May 7, 2012. On the other hand, Glick is disappointed by the ineffectiveness of the Temple lobby in the Knesset: "They try to raise the subject in all kinds of forums like the Knesset Committee, but then police representatives come to the Knesset and lie, and nothing happens. Netanyahu is obsessed with the Western Wall Tunnels and he is afraid to take a risk. At every security discussion about it, Bibi takes a hard line. The court is like that, too. When a senior official comes and tells it that if we ascend the Mount, a world war will break out, no Supreme Court judge will take the risk."

¹³³ Arik Bender, "The Temple Mount Law: permanent prayer times for Jews", **Maariv Nrg**, August 9, 2012, <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/393/851.html> (May 6, 2013).

¹³⁴ Arnon Segal, "Daf Habayit", **Makor Rishon**, February 23, 2012.

¹³⁵ Ibid., October 26, 2012.

¹³⁶ Ibid., September 31, 2012.

¹³⁷ Nadav Peri, "An election spin? MK Orlev proposes: Basic Law: The Temple", **Channel 10**, July 30, 2012, <http://news.nana10.co.il/Article/?ArticleID=914979> (May 6, 2013). Orlev was speaking as part of the bill Basic Law: The Temple (see above).

¹³⁸ "Support for the Temple Mount Law", **Temple Mount News**, August 12, 2012, http://the--Temple.blogspot.co.il/2012/08/blog-post_11.html (May 6, 2013).

behalf of the Temple Mount inasmuch as the status and immunity from prosecution granted by his office would allow. Indeed, since being elected to the Knesset, Feiglin has ascended the Mount several times, even attempting to enter the Dome of the Rock. This action precipitated the outbreak of violent riots on the Mount that injured demonstrators, police and journalists and resulted in police storming the Mount with large forces against Muslim stone throwers. The Jerusalem Police warned that Feiglin's provocations on the Mount could lead to an explosion (see below for Channel 2 News' March 4, 2013 review of the violent incident resulting from Feiglin's ascent of the Mount before the elections to the 19th Knesset). The potentially dangerous repercussions of his actions have recently compelled Prime Minister Netanyahu to personally intervene and instruct Police to prevent Feiglin from entering the Mount. After winning a realistic slot in the primary elections for the Likud list, Feiglin said:

"Dear friends, this is not the end. It is just the beginning, until we build the Temple at the top of Temple Mount and fulfill our destiny in this country."¹³⁹

Feiglin is acting on a coherent and systematic worldview that stems from the writings of Shabtai Ben Dov (from whom Yehuda Etzion also derives his messianic philosophy). Following Ben Dov and Etzion, Feiglin distinguishes between "survival laws" and "destiny laws": whereas "survival laws" relate to conditions for basic survival, "destiny laws" are the expression of the nation's essence and fulfillment of its hidden potential. For the Jewish people, Israel is to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, at the center of which the Temple is based. Etzion publicized that ideological division as early as 1985 in the **Nekuda** periodical, in a pair of articles calling to replace democracy in Israel with the Kingdom of the House of David. According to Etzion, only such governmental transformations will enable the fulfillment of the Jewish people's destiny, whereas the changes themselves would be facilitated by the actions of an individual with prophetic intuition and vocation who runs as a vanguard before the nation.¹⁴⁰

Feiglin is also waiting for that prophetic vanguard who will run before the nation and fulfill the will of the Jewish people.¹⁴¹ However, Feiglin believes that most of the Jewish people in Israel today aspire to rebuild the Temple¹⁴² and that construction of the Temple

139 "Likud Primaries and Temple Mount", the **Temple Mount News** website, November 28, 2012, http://the--Temple.blogspot.co.il/2012/11/blog-post_9491.html (May 6, 2013).

140 Tomer Persico, "The messianism that replaced Gush Emunim", July 1, 2012.

141 See Feiglin's article, "From the hills to the Mount", **Makor Rishon**, June 15, 2012.

142 Feiglin bases this faith on various surveys that confirm that. In July 2009, a survey commissioned by the Geshar organization and the Ynet website was published ("Survey: 64% of Israelis want the Temple", **Ynet News**, July 29, 2009), undertaken by the "Panels" research institute. According to the survey of 560 respondents, when participants were asked whether they would like the Temple to be rebuilt, 64% responded in the affirmative, including 33% who want so "very much" and 31% "pretty much," whereas 36% answered in the negative, including 31% who said "not very much" and 5% who said "not at all." According to Feiglin, in another survey "the Knesset Channel asked the same question (albeit not professionally, solely through an Internet survey). 49% of respondents answered that they are interested in building the Temple." (Moshe Feiglin, "Indeed, Temple Mount", **Makor Rishon**, July 13, 2012). It should be mentioned, however, that other surveys provide a different picture. In a survey published under the headline "A majority of the public: allow Jews to pray on Temple Mount" (**Makor Rishon**, July 27, 2012), it turned out that the aforesaid majority was only 52%, including only 39% of the secular respondents. Furthermore, 51% of respondents said that the Ninth of Av "did nothing for them," including 75% of the secular respondents. To the question "should we begin building the Temple now?", 51% of the public answered in the negative, including 91% of secular respondents and 57% of Religious Zionists.

would lead to a fuller cohesion of the Jewish people, sovereign in its land.¹⁴³ Therefore, despite leading authorities on Jewish law objecting to ascending the Mount, they must not be heeded¹⁴⁴; rather, we must act to produce a messianic revolution to fulfill the nation's destiny—namely, through the building of the Temple. Out of this belief, Feiglin concludes:

“The only people who are establishing new points today are those who have freed themselves from the need for additional legitimacy, the hilltop folks...It is precisely those who have less faith in the people, or maybe even in their own ideology, who are afraid to stand up and offer themselves for leadership...The future of settlement today depends on leading the country towards its historic destiny, whose symbol is indeed the Temple Mount.”¹⁴⁵

Feiglin awaits the vanguard marching before the nation, an inner prophetic voice commanding him to renew worship on the Mount as an expression of the overt and covert desires of the majority of the Jewish people in Israel.¹⁴⁶ The construction of the Temple will finally unite the whole nation and launch a new era in the relationship between the people and its God, with ritual becoming direct and dynamic.¹⁴⁷ Whether he sees himself as that vanguard or is waiting for someone else to fill the role, Feiglin is doing everything he can to fulfill that vision.

Feiglin has declared that Israel “must simply throw the Waqf out of there [the Mount] and leave just the Israel Police there,”¹⁴⁸ because “gone are the days of individuals sneaking into the hills on security pretexts, and it is time to say the truth, which leads us to the Temple Mount.”¹⁴⁹

Many of the elected legislators in the Israeli Knesset raise the banner of the Temple Mount. The 19th Knesset includes a not insubstantial group of delegates who have promised to act to promote the interests and agenda of the Temple movements, whether through economic aid, legislative initiatives or ascending the Mount. The Likud platform specifically states that

143 "The Temple is the center of the time axis, the whole life circle. Jewish sovereignty without a Temple is like a state without a capital, without a parliament, without national holidays – like a body without a heart. The Temple was and still is the beating heart of the nation, the purpose of its existence", Moshe Feiglin, "A nation in search of meaning", **Maariv Nrg**, July 29, 2012.

144 *ibid.*

145 Feiglin, "Indeed, Temple Mount".

146 The aspiration to build the Temple presented by Feiglin derives, therefore, from the division we presented above, from a combination of national aspirations and Nietzschean messianism.

147 "The real repentance, the one that moves forward by the tremendous achievement of Zionism, the one that returns us to our meaning, progresses towards a reality and does not retreat towards religion, for us, as Jews, through the practical longing for the Temple", Moshe Feiglin, "A nation in search of meaning", **Maariv Nrg**, July 29, 2012.

148 Amnon Meranda, "The Feiglin plan: to throw the Waqf off Temple Mount", **Ynet News**, December 10, 2008.

149 Feiglin, "Indeed, Temple Mount".

“Likud will act in the next term to find a solution that allows freedom of worship to Jews on the Temple Mount, while of course treating the matter with the necessary sensitivity.”¹⁵⁰

In this context, it is noteworthy that the two events that caused the largest number of casualties in the last 20 years, the Western Wall Tunnel riots (1996) and the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa intifada (2000-2005), were influenced by the actions of politicians—then Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and then opposition leader Ariel Sharon. Though those events are not directly related to aspirations to build the Temple, they indicate the national significance of the Mount for Israeli Jews, Muslims, Christians and Palestinians alike. The Mount complex serves as a geographic point representing the intersection of religious faith and political identity, a focal point with a high potential to upset the existing order and boil over into widespread violence.

ROLE OF STATE AUTHORITIES IN CURBING ACTIVITY OF THE TEMPLE MOVEMENTS

In general, state institutions curb the activity of the Temple movements primarily when they fear a threat to public order or after activities lead to violent outbursts. Most of the prevention and restraining activities therefore take the form of security measures.

A. Forbidding Ascent to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif: At tense times, the police prevent the entry of non-Muslim visitors to the Mount—the situation during the first years of the Al-Aqsa intifada, 2000-2003. This restraining order is still periodically enforced around Muslim holidays or when the authorities assess there is a concern for public order.

In addition to enforcement of a universal ban on ascending at certain times, there are several people on a list to be “denied ascent”. These are key activists in the Temple movements whose presence on the Mount, according to the Police, is deemed to be a potential threat. According to Temple Institute publications, in November 2011 there were some 11 people refused ascent to the Mount, including Gershon Salomon (The Temple Mount Faithful), Yehuda Etzion (Chai Vekayam), Yosef and Nechemiah Elboim (The Movement for Temple Renewal) and Yehuda Glick (Human Rights on Temple Mount). In June 2012, Rabbi Yehuda Ariel (The Temple Institute) was permanently banished from the Mount, though the ban was lifted a few months later.

The Temple movement activists are vigorously acting to cancel restrictions. On the grounds of “Human Rights on the Temple Mount” and “Exclusion of Jews on the Temple Mount”, the activists demand permission for those denied to ascend and cancellation of the remainder of restrictions applying to Jewish visitors. Knesset members who support the Temple movements are active in Knesset committees to reduce police

¹⁵⁰ This article on the platform was written by Yehudah Glick. Source: Netael Bendel, “The small print: What are the parties' positions on the question of Temple Mount?”, *Kipa*, January 7, 2013, <http://www.kipa.co.il/now/50488.html> (May 6, 2013).

supervision and restrictions on Jewish visitors to the Mount, acting primarily through the legal arena. The Temple Mount Faithful and Human Rights on Temple Mount have also used this approach, submitting appeals to the High Court of Justice against police restrictions.

Temple Mount Faithful Chairman Gershon Salomon was denied entry to the Mount after the riots that broke out in 1990 following his attempt to lay “the cornerstone of the Temple”. In response to his petition, the High Court of Justice (HCJ) ruled:

“We were convinced that the assessment by the respondents and the other security officials is worthy and current and indicates that they are not speaking of an abstract or distant threat to public safety but a real and immediate danger; and that if the restrictions and prohibitions that are the subject of this petition were not imposed, there could be a severe violation of public security that could cost lives.”¹⁵¹

Another individual denied access to the Mount is Yehuda Glick, head of Human Rights on Temple Mount.¹⁵² Glick, too, petitioned the High Court. The ruling on his case stated:

“The petitioner admitted in a conversation with a police officer in the David zone that his long-term goal is to change the status quo on the Temple Mount and to that end he places publications in the media that invite the public to participate in mass prayers on Temple Mount. Police believe that the petitioner’s ascent to the Temple Mount under these circumstances could with near certainty lead to a grave violation of public peace and public order.”¹⁵³

The HCJ nonetheless suggested a compromise between Glick and the Police. According to the proposed compromise, the Police would allow Glick to ascend the Mount if he signed a commitment to avoid violating the visitation terms that apply to the Mount and to cease publications Police claim to “mislead the public and cause deep tension among the Muslim public concerning the issue of Jewish visits to the Temple Mount”. Until recently, Police prevented Glick from ascending the Mount.

In an interview given to Yizhar Be’er of Keshev on May 7, 2012 Glick said:

“One of the things I found out is that the Police force is the most powerful body. Nisso Shacham [Commander of the Jerusalem District] told the Knesset speaker that I am the most dangerous man in the Middle East. Yosef Elboim has been banished for a year and a half already. Eighteen members of Knesset said they are willing to sign bail so that he can ascend the Mount with his daughter. He has been

151 Ruling on the petition by the Temple Mount Faithful against the Israel Police, December 11, 2007

152 Shalom Yerushalmi, “Temple Mount is in their hands: who is really agitating the atmosphere in Jerusalem?”, **Maariv Nrg**, March 11, 2012.

153 HCJ Glick v Israel Police, ruling from May 5, 2009

active for 40 years and he hasn't killed a fly. Nisso Shacham answered, 'Over my dead body!'"¹⁵⁴

Before elections for the 19th Knesset, Glick was appointed to write the Likud position on Temple Mount.

B. Enforcing Restrictions on Visitors to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif: When groups of Jews from the Temple movements ascend the Mount, police try to prevent them from performing activities that could be perceived as provocative or as threatening to existing arrangements on the Mount. As part of these arrangements, only Muslims have worship rights at the site and members of other religions do not have permission to perform ritual ceremonies such as prayers, prostrations and sacrificial rites.

To prevent attempts by Temple movement activists to perform religious rites, the Police attach a police detail to every group of activists that ascends the Mount. If the group attempts to violate the rules, the Police remove the suspects from the Mount. In the past, additional restrictions were placed on group size and other criteria. Before 2000, Jewish visitors entered the Mount in pairs or groups of three and until the first group left, the next was not permitted to enter.¹⁵⁵ Today those restrictions no longer apply.

In November 2011, uniformed soldiers were photographed entering the Mount with Police permission. The pictures agitated the Muslim community and were reported by the Palestinian press as an example of Israel violating arrangements on the Mount.¹⁵⁶ In an interview with Yizhar Be'er, Rabbi Yehuda Glick claimed that permission to allow visits by uniformed soldiers was given following political pressure from the Knesset:

"Indeed, some things have changed: for example, until a few years ago, soldiers did not ascend the Mount in uniform and today, since three months ago, soldiers go in in groups, in uniform. We raised it in the Knesset and Knesset members Danny Danon, Tzipi Hotovely, Arie'el Eldad and Ze'ev Elkin pressured the Police and they allowed it."¹⁵⁷

154 In the same interview Glick said: "I do not deny the fact that I am working to change the status quo on the Temple Mount. It is part of democracy. I want instead of the 10,000 who ascend the Mount today for there to be 100,000 or more. I want the Western Wall plaza to be canceled, which somehow became sacred 300 years ago. I want every Jew to ascend the Temple Mount. The Temple Mount complex should reflect freedom of worship and every Jew who does not violate the sanctity of the Islamic sites should receive the freedom of worship he deserves...As for building the Temple, there is a commandment to build the Temple but in my understanding of the commandment, it is not directed to a private individual. Just like the state could not be built by a single person, neither Ben Gurion nor anyone else. Building the Temple is a commandment for the people. We must raise awareness so the people decide to build the Temple and until then it would be wrong for anyone to decide to do it himself, even if his name is Yehuda Etzion."

155 Avi Ruif, Commander of the David region of the Israel Police, in testimony to the Knesset Internal Committee on "police policy concerning Jewish visits to Temple Mount", March 29, 2011.

156 The photograph, by the Al-Aqsa Fund, appeared on the pls48.net website on November 7, 2012, in an article by Mahmoud Abu Ata entitled: "Study: the occupation is trying to force daily Jewish presence as an established fact", <http://www.pls48.net/?mod=articles&ID=1146923> (May 6, 2013).

157 Yizhar Be'er interview with Yehudah Glick, May 7, 2012



Pictures of groups of pilgrims, rabbis and soldiers in uniform, published on Arab websites

In recent years, the Islamic press has frequently reported on groups of uniformed Israeli soldiers entering as tourists and touring the Mount complex. Such acts are seen as an Israeli provocation and an attempt to change the arrangements in force on the Mount, according to which Israeli security forces are allowed to enter the complex only to protect order and security. On August 28, the Al-Aqsa Institute of Waqf and Heritage issued an official statement accusing Israel of violating the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque by allowing the very presence of non-Muslims at the site. According to the statement:

“About 100 soldiers of the occupation army, intelligence and settlers broke into the Al-Aqsa Mosque and polluted it in the morning and afternoon...the mosque was also polluted by a thousand foreign tourists who entered in inappropriate attire and behaved in such a way that violated the sanctity of the site, with the encouragement of the occupation arms and under its protection.”

The statement quoted eyewitnesses who reported that the soldiers were briefed by a police officer and that “settlers” were reading holy books.¹⁵⁸

158 Dalit Halevy, **Arutz Sheva**, August 28, 2012.

C. Intelligence and Prevention: A number of past attempts by groups of Jewish terrorists to carry out attacks on Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif have been thwarted—some by the Police and security forces and others by Muslim Waqf guards. These are the most famous cases:

1970s: The “Gal” underground, a group of 45 activists headed by Yoel Lerner, planned a series of 13 terrorist attacks intended to culminate in explosion of the Islamic shrines on the Mount. Lerner was sentenced to three years in prison and released a year later. Following his release, Lerner became an accomplice in another plot to blow up the mosques.¹⁵⁹

1980s: In April 1982, a new immigrant from the U.S. by the name of Allen Goodman opened fire in the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif complex with an M16, killing one Muslim worshiper and injuring three. During his trial, Goodman informed the Court that he hoped to “liberate” the Mount and become king of the Jews.¹⁶⁰ In 1983, an activist from the “Lifta Gang” who had managed to climb up the wall of the Mount complex with a powerful TNT bomb in his knapsack was captured. Gang members were captured and tried but found not to be responsible for their actions and subsequently hospitalized in psychiatric institutions. They were released several years later.¹⁶¹

The Jewish Underground: The most famous terrorist plot was hatched by members of the “Jewish Underground”: Yehuda Etzion, Menachem Livni and Yeshua Ben Sasson. Their plan—ultimately unfulfilled—was to blow up the Dome of the Rock. Members of the “Jewish Underground” were not merely “bad apples” but the cream of national religious society who had consulted with leading rabbis such as Dov Lior and Moshe Levinger in developing their plan.¹⁶²

1990—Today: Since the 1990s, Temple movements’ activities have ratcheted into high gear though today the focus is more limited to educational activities or group visits to the Mount coordinated with the Police. According to the model used above to outline motives of various Temple movement activists, it is evident that leadership has turned away from radical, violent actions to provoke a sudden reversal of public opinion to embracing a gradual change of public opinion through education. However, ascents to the Mount and attempts to pray on it continue despite the Police ban in effect and are, in fact, increasing.

¹⁵⁹ Shragai, 85-91.

¹⁶⁰ Gorenberg, Temple 128.

¹⁶¹ A series of articles by Yizhar Be'er in **Kol Ha'ir** ("The Messiah from Lifta", March 9, 1984; "The Lifta gang, a profile", March 9, 1984; "The Lifta failure", April 13, 1984; "The Lifta trial", December 28, 1984; "A nest of vipers", January 18, 1985), as well as Shragai, 91-96.

¹⁶² See book by underground member Haggai Segal, 74, 108-109.

In the Jewish Underground sentence delivered in 1985, Judge Zvi Cohen describes the danger to Israel and the region from terror attacks of the nature planned by the Underground: "The plot to destroy the Dome of the Rock out of religious motives means opening a new account with more than 300 million Muslims around the world [today that number is more than 1 billion, Yizhar Be'er], in addition to the bloody account that already exists between the Jewish nation and the Arab nation, and is not too far off from the danger of a worldwide conflagration. This plot forces the Jewish people to pay the price of the longing of those who wish to realize the vision of the Kingdom of Israel and endangers the entire nation."

LAW ENFORCEMENT IN CASES OF INCITEMENT AND RACISM

The Police act vigorously to ensure the maintenance of the existing status quo on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and are aware of the highly explosive potential of the Temple movements' activities. They monitor leading Temple activists and deny their entry to the Mount. In many cases, the Police prevent friction between Temple activists and Muslim worshipers and forbid ritual ceremonies around the Mount complex and Jewish prayer on the Mount. In fact, Temple movement activists often complain about their unfair treatment at the hands of the Police.

One police action that was heavily criticized by the public was an order to forbid girls from the "Lehava" group of the Bnei Akiva movement to wave signs declaring "Temple Mount is in Our Hands." The signs were intended to protest repairs being made by the Muslim Waqf on the Mount.¹⁶³ They were banned by the Police on the grounds that they constituted a potential incitement to violence.

Outside the boundaries of the Mount, the movements are responsible for blatant expressions of incitement, racism and calls for violence that test the limits of what is legally tolerable. One film that can be seen on the Internet shows the Temple Mount erupting in flames after airplanes bomb the Dome of the Rock and the Church of All Nations (on the slopes of Mount of Olives). Out of the fire and smoke appears the Temple. The aforesaid scene, distributed with the claim "The film that has stirred up the Left", has been running for more than a year on the Haredi website Kikar Hashabat and other sites without intervention from authorities.¹⁶⁴

Calls to vandalize Islamic sites on the Mount or to remove them entirely are not unusual.¹⁶⁵ There are even cases of politicians (who enjoy immunity from prosecution) making statements

¹⁶³ Kobi Nachshoni, "Police: 'Temple Mount is in our hands' is incitement", *Ynet News*, August 12, 2012, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4267483,00.html> (May 6, 2013).

¹⁶⁴ *Kikar Hashabat*, <http://www.kikarhashabat.co.il/%D7%94%D7%A8-%D7%94%D7%91%D7%99%D7%AA-4.html> (May 6, 2013).

¹⁶⁵ *The Har Habayit Shelanu*, May 14, 2010.

of this nature. For example, as a member of Knesset, Arieh Eldad stated: "When the time comes to build the Temple, and it will come soon, we will saw down the building standing there today. We will saw it and they can take it wherever they want, because that is where the Third Temple should stand."¹⁶⁶ In the spirit of Eldad's words, the website Temple Mount News displays a visual depiction of the removal of the Dome of the Rock:¹⁶⁷



¹⁶⁶The text in the arrow reads "Saudi Arabia". Source: Temple Mount News website

An announcement of a demonstration by the Temple Mount Faithful states: "A large group of Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful will ascend Temple Mount in holiness and purity by all the rules of Halacha, and swear allegiance to building the Temple on the ruins of the temporary mosques standing on Temple Mount, in the life of this generation."¹⁶⁸

Without addressing the legality of these publications, the picture that emerges is one of increasing radicalization, whether seen in the activities of the Temple movements or in the behavior of the public officials who support them.

¹⁶⁶ Arik Bender, "MK Eldad: We will saw the dome of the rock on Temple Mount", **Maariv Nrg**, July 29, 2012, <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/390/465.html> (May 6, 2013).

¹⁶⁷ Temple Mount News: http://the--Temple.blogspot.co.il/2012/07/blog-post_8655.html (May 6, 2013).

¹⁶⁸ Shlomo Yadid, **Har Habayit Shelanu**, October 13, 2011.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS RELEASED AHEAD OF MOSHE FEIGLIN'S ASCENT OF THE MOUNT: A TEST CASE

The Har Habayit Shelanu website reports on Jewish ascents to the Mount. Below is an example of a publication that contributed to the outbreak of contained violent clashes around the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. The incident in question occurred after elections for Likud leadership in February 2012 when it was announced that Moshe Feiglin, head of the Jewish Leadership faction of Likud, planned to ascend the Mount and celebrate his electoral success.

On February 11, 2012, the Har Habayit Shelanu website published an invitation to the public to join Moshe Feiglin's ascent to the Mount (see photo). The invitation presented Feiglin as "Chairman of the Likud leadership", who would ascend with "thousands of Likud members" in order to "purify the site from Israel's land thieving enemies and build the Temple on the ruins of the mosques."



In response to the notice, the Al-Aqsa Institute for Waqf and Heritage called on the public to defend the holy sites at Al Aqsa and encouraged Muslims around the world to take responsibility in the face of the planned Israeli action. That day, Keshev and Ir Amim sent an urgent appeal to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, calling on him to "stop the attempt to set the Middle East on fire and prevent the ascent of Likud activists to Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif."¹⁶⁹

In the end, Moshe Feiglin came to the Western Wall Plaza with less than 20 supporters. The Israel Police closed off the Mount to visitors, fearing a potential conflagration. Though Feiglin and his supporters were not allowed entrance to the Mount, tensions had already been fanned, ending only with a violent demonstration. The director of Keshev and a researcher who observed from the Western Wall Plaza heard the cries of hundreds of Muslims who gathered on the Mount in anticipation of Feiglin's ascent. In prayers the following Friday, the preacher called on Muslims to ascend the Mount on Sunday morning to demonstrate. On that Sunday morning,

¹⁶⁹The text of the letter appears here: <http://www.keshev.org.il/press-releases/keshev-ir-amim-feiglin-on-Temple-Mount.html> (May 6, 2013).

Palestinian youths attacked police with stones, chairs, dishes and sticks. Police forces stormed the Mount and arrested three Palestinians.¹⁷⁰

A week later, on Friday, February 24, 2012, hundreds of Palestinians barricaded themselves on the Mount and threw stones at police forces. Eleven police were slightly injured by stones and four Palestinians were arrested. The riots spread to other sites, including a demonstration at the Qalandia checkpoint where 25-year-old Palestinian Talat Ramiya was shot in the chest and killed by IDF soldiers claiming he had fired a flare at them. Dozens of Palestinians clashed with IDF soldiers at Ramiya's funeral until they were dispersed with tear gas.¹⁷¹

The commander of the Jerusalem Police District at the time, Commander Nisso Shacham, claimed that the Har Habayit Shelanu website was operated by Yehuda Glick and Nechemia Elboim.¹⁷² Police raided a secret apartment in Ramot and arrested Elboim and his wife Dvora for questioning on suspicion of incitement and sedition. Glick and Elboim denied any connection with the website.¹⁷³ Although no new content was uploaded on the site, the website remained active. The next ascent to the Mount was announced by the Movement for Temple Renewal in flyers distributed throughout Jerusalem that said "We did not publish through the Internet, the media or email because of harassment."¹⁷⁴

Three years before these events, Minister of Domestic Security Yitzhak Aharonovitz said the following in the Knesset:

"On October 22, 2009, right wing websites issued a call for Jews to ascend the Temple Mount on Sunday to commemorate Maimonides' ascent of the Temple Mount. As a result, officials in the Palestinian Authority and the northern faction of the Islamic movement published a response calling on the public to defend the Temple Mount and to stand up to the Jewish storming of the Temple Mount. Over the last weekend, we received intelligence of people collecting stones and iron bars—you saw the pictures on TV—and bringing them into the Al-Aqsa Mosque. In a telephone assessment the chief commissioner held with me and the district commander, we decided to open the Temple Mount the next day to the public and to deploy forces in case riots broke out.

170 Moshe Nussbaum, "Watch: violent clashes on Temple Mount", **Channel 2 News**, February 19, 2012.

171 **Yisrael Hayom**, February 26, 2012.

172 Yerushalmi, "Temple Mount is in their hands: who is really agitating the atmosphere in Jerusalem?"

173 According to the Commander of the Jerusalem District, in an interview with Yizhar Be'er on May 7, 2012. See also Shalom Yerushalmi, "Temple Mount is in their hands: who is really agitating the atmosphere in Jerusalem?", **Maariv Nrg**, March 11, 2012.

174 The Keshev office has a copy of the original poster.

On Sunday at 7:30 AM, when the Mughrabi Gate opened, before the daily entry of visitors, we heard cries of 'Allahu Akbar' from within the Temple Mount and saw many youths standing at the gate and in the Al-Aqsa Mosque plaza, some of them masked. A Temple Mount patrol crew was attacked with stones, bottles and firebombs by dozens of youths. Several police were hurt and in response, orders were given to pour in forces and to stop, push away the rioters. About 100 Muslim youths barricaded themselves inside the Al-Aqsa Mosque, continued to throw stones and threw chairs from inside the mosque at police. During the event, the incitement on the Arab media continued, calling on Muslims to come to the Temple Mount."¹⁷⁵

The Minister of Domestic Security did not specify the "right wing website" to which he was referring but on the date he noted—October 22—the Har Habayit Shelanu website published a call to ascend the Temple Mount to commemorate "Maimonides' ascent."

¹⁷⁵ The Israel Knesset plenary, 64th sess., October 28, 2009.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report does not address the historical and religious ties of Jews to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. Our intention is not to contest them. Neither does the report address the questions of whether from a religiously Jewish vantage point there is a role for the Temple in daily life, or whether Jews are obliged to take action to rebuild it or should hope that it will be reestablished by heavenly forces. Such questions belong in a theological framework.

This report describes the modes of action of the Temple movements, the variety of their activities and the wide cooperation the movement enjoys from the government and the political establishment. Our findings show a dramatic increase in the number and influence of organizations that covers the spectrum from raising contemporary consciousness of the role of the Temple to actively aiming at its reestablishment on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. Twenty years ago these organizations were on the radical fringes of the political and religious map but since 2000 they have attained a respectable position within the mainstream of the political and religious right and have benefited from close ties with the authorities of the State of Israel. There is a correlation between the escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and around it since 2000 and a parallel increase in the activity of Temple organizations. Although the various Temple organizations may have differing goals and varying impacts, a common denominator of religious and nationalist messianism distinguishes the movement as a whole. Religion has become a tool for realizing extreme national goals at a site that is a focal point of political and religious tension.

Though this report does not explore historical and theological issues or Muslim activity on the Mount, it is important to note that in the political sphere there is mutual, reinforcing feedback between the activities of extremists on both sides: the Temple movements empower themselves by quoting Muslims and Palestinians who deny the Jewish connection to the site, while Islamic movements emphasize threats that Temple organizations pose to the mosques in order to mobilize their own support. It is precisely for this reason that the backing the Israeli government provides for Temple organizations seems to corroborate the claim that the State of Israel is planning to harm the Islamic holy sites, thus providing reinforcement for a pan-Islamic component in a conflict that is essentially national.

At the end of March 2013, King Abdullah II and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas signed an agreement that reemphasized the King's role as defender of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem in general and of Haram al-Sharif in particular, and in which the Palestinian Authority recognized the role of Jordan as Custodian of these sites. Jordan took it upon itself to safeguard the religious character and identity of the sites. Imposing changes on the

arrangements for worship or regulations of visits to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif is liable to lead Israel into confrontation with the Kingdom of Jordan and to endanger its peace treaty with it.

Most of the Temple movements operate within the boundaries of the law and their activities cannot be banned so long as they are legal and pose no demonstrable threat to public security. However, more than a few organizations walk the thin line between freedom of speech and incitement. It is imperative to closely monitor any attempt to cross the line that divides legitimate religious yearning and the expression of historic bonds from actions which endanger public safety and explicitly incite against the Islamic holy sites on the Mount. Although freedom of speech may permit Temple organizations and extremist politicians to call on the government to impose by force arrangements of worship favoring Jews on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif—with potentially cataclysmic results for the entire region—the public legitimacy of such demands in a democratic country is doubtful.

Freedom of speech is based on the principle that governments and governmental power may not be used to restrict the exchange of opinions and ideas. But refraining from restrictions on speech does not imply governmental support for such ideas. Governmental support for such opinions and ideas makes them a matter of public policy. Such support can be judged by its broad public consequences, and it can therefore be curtailed. It is the responsibility of the Israeli government to prevent any attempt to change by force the existing arrangements for worship on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and the Moslem shrines. It must do so above all because it has a duty to protect the site and its monuments for its Muslim worshippers, and not merely because it fears a possible violent Arab and Muslim backlash. And above all, the government must unequivocally condemn ideas and proposals that encourage violation of Muslim rights of worship and religious feelings.

This report demonstrates that the Temple movements enjoy widespread institutional and governmental support. Governmental bodies and political figures at Israel's centers of power support the activity of the Temple movements in a variety of ways. Their possible motivations range from whole-hearted identification with the movements' aims to cynical indifference to the dangerous, extremist dimensions of Temple activities in order to garner political support. The political establishment funds—directly and indirectly—some of the Temple organizations' activities. Particularly noteworthy is the role of the Ministry of Education, which not only funds Temple organizations but aids them in disseminating their ideas through the educational system. The report also shows that senior politicians from the heart of the establishment, rabbis who serve in public offices, officials in the Ministry of Education and educators provide sponsorship for the Temple movements and help to promote their message. At times these ideas only test the boundaries of what is democratically tolerable; at others, they constitute undisguised incitement against the Islamic shrines on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. We protest that in these circumstances there is a distinct danger that state bodies and politicians may support illegitimate and even illegal activities of one or the other Temple organizations and may find themselves responsible, indirectly, for the severe ramifications such activities may have on the security of Israel and the lives of Jews and non-Jews in the region and throughout the world.

We recommend that the Israeli establishment take the following measures regarding the Temple organizations:

1. **Equal law enforcement:** Against expressions of incitement and racism the spirit of the law and not only the letter of the law must be enforced. Likewise, the authorities must enforce the Holy Site Law, which protects the religious sentiments of members of all religions towards their holy sites. Appropriate enforcement of the law (especially against ideological crimes) would strengthen and emphasize the sovereignty and legitimacy of the legal system and of equality before it. Educators and rabbis have greater responsibility in this respect as public leaders. Investigative and prosecutorial authorities must treat seriously and take action against rabbis, public leaders and activists of the Temple movements who incite to harm Islamic shrines on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. The political establishment must encourage the vigilance of police and security services charged with monitoring extremist activists. Politicians must give the Police public support and refrain from supporting these organizations by putting political pressure on the Police.
2. **Supervision of educational content:** The Education Ministry, government bodies and non-governmental organizations that transfer funds to Temple organizations should rigorously monitor the educational messages transmitted by these organizations and condition transfer of funds to the organizations on their ability to continue to monitor their messages. It should be ascertained that students will be presented with diverse historical perspectives and halachic positions concerning the possibility of entering the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and the possibility of rebuilding the Temple. The establishment in general—and educational institutions and the IDF in particular—must immediately sever any form of collaboration with Temple organizations which call for unilateral change of the status quo on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and which promote actions to build the Temple on the ruins of Al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock.
3. **Cooperation with international parties in the supervision of Jerusalem's holy sites:** In the absence of a political settlement in the region, the national and interreligious tensions on Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif place a tremendous burden of responsibility on the Israeli government. Any attempt to harm the Islamic shrines on the Mount could deteriorate into regional violence. The responsibility for this will be placed on Israel, which at present has effective control of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. These risks and tensions could be reduced if Israel were to share its responsibility with international bodies. Dialogue initiated by Jordan with the Prime Minister's Office has prevented several entanglements. This relationship should be cultivated and institutionalized. Likewise, dialogue with the Waqf and the Palestinian Authority should be cultivated.
4. **Commitment from Israel's senior leadership and chief rabbis not to impose any change in current worship arrangements on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif:** The call to use governmental power, without consent, to change arrangements of worship or to harm the mosques on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif has no place within a system of democratic government and threatens public peace. Leaders and rabbis

should decline to give public, financial or any other form of support to such demands, directly or indirectly. They must also express their disapproval of them publicly and decisively, and commit themselves to public opposition of such dangerous tendencies.

5. **Precautions required of politicians:** The Temple organizations are likely to interpret the political support they receive as a green light to engage in prohibited activity. Moreover, they may regard such support by the political leadership as sympathy for their worldview and for their plans to impose unilateral change of the prayer arrangements on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif or, even worse, for intentions to harm the Islamic shrines on the Mount. We call on politicians and public figures to condition their support for any of these organizations and the actions of their membership on guarantees that their messages remain both within the framework of the law and also within the spirit of the law and democracy. Moreover, the nation's elected officials and leaders must act against ideas and actions that could undermine democracy, freedom of religion and the safety of all the population. They must not turn a blind eye or fall silent out of fear of political retribution, tacitly allowing extremists to steer them and the country to disaster.

REACTIONS

RESPONSES OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS CITED IN THIS REPORT

INTERIOR MINISTRY

"The Interior Ministry is not responsible for the holy sites and the Temple Mount. We suggest asking the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Jerusalem Municipality and the Prime Minister's Office."

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The Ministry of Education responded: "UNSCO Israel has no direct contact to the issues raised in the report."

THE KAREV EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

"The activity in the Chabad School in Safed was part of the Karev Program's art classes. The teacher was accompanied by an art supervisor, participated in enrichment classes and taught based on a program agreed upon between the school and the art department. In many cases, the art classes reinforce a school's study content. In the Arutz Sheva report, the reconstruction of the Temple relates to the historic Temple of the past, without reference to the future and without a current political context. It is important to clarify that the choice of content in Haredi schools is, naturally, in accordance with their worldview. Following Ir Amim's inquiry, we will re-examine the study content."

The following parties chose not to respond to Ir Amim's and Keshev's request to comment on the contents of this report:

- The Prime Minister's Office
- The Israel Security Agency (Shabak)
- The Defense Ministry
- The Israeli Police
- The Jerusalem Municipality
- The Unit for International Agreements in the Justice Ministry
- The Ministry of Religious Services





Ir Amim (“City of Nations” or “City of Peoples”) focuses on Jerusalem within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Ir Amim seeks to render Jerusalem a more equitable and sustainable city for the Israelis and Palestinians who share it. Ir Amim envisions a city that ensures the dignity and welfare of all its residents and that safeguards their holy places, as well as their historical and cultural heritages—today, as well as in the future. Ir Amim aspires to a sustainable political future for Jerusalem, achievable only through a negotiated process between Israel and the Palestinians.

Ir Amim was founded in 2000, and became active as a non-profit organization in 2004.

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Keshev - The Center for Protection of Democracy in Israel was established by a group of concerned citizens following the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in order to defend and promote democratic values in Israel. Since 2005 Keshev has been carrying out a long-term media monitoring project, which aims to change patterns of discourse and media coverage in the region. Keshev is not affiliated with any political party and is supported by contributions alone.

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