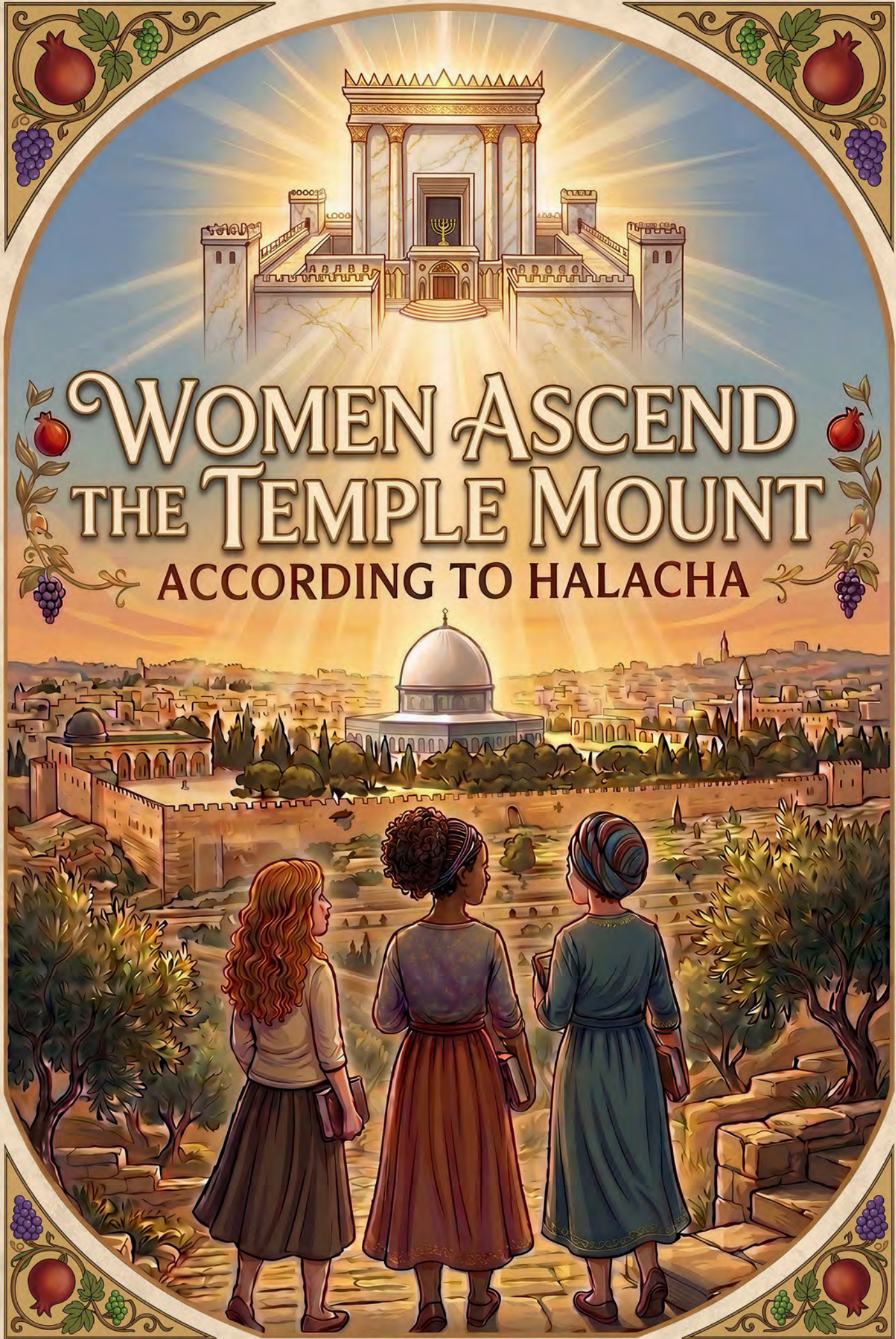




WOMEN ASCEND THE TEMPLE MOUNT

ACCORDING TO HALACHA



Women Ascend the Temple Mount According to *Halacha*

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This booklet is dedicated in loving memory (*Le'iluy Nishmat*) of:

My dear father, Moshe Musai, *zichrono livracha*.

My dear husband's parents, Shalom Kenzin, *zichrono livracha*, and Tsila Kenzin, *zichrona livracha*.

Rabbi Reuven Mann, *zichrono livracha*.

BEFORE ASCENDING THE TEMPLE MOUNT, IT IS IMPORTANT TO THOROUGHLY STUDY THE NECESSARY JEWISH LAWS (*HALACHOT*).

Single and married women who would like to receive *halachic* guidance regarding ritual purity and ascent to the Temple Mount can call:

- ☎ **Yaffa Kenzin – phone: 054-524-5529 (English).**
- ☎ **Rena Ariel – phone: 054-754-3051 (English).**
- ☎ ***Rabbanit* Idit Bartov – phone: 050-366-3101 (Hebrew).**



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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Chapter 1 - Introduction	4
Chapter 2 - The Current Situation on the Temple Mount	6
Chapter 3 - Ascending the Temple Mount According to Jewish Law	9
Chapter 4 - Jewish Laws that Women Can Observe Today on the Temple Mount	12
Chapter 5 - Purification of Women in the Days of the Temple	23
Chapter 6 - Women’s Immersion in the <i>Mikveh</i> nowadays	25
Chapter 7 - Immersion of Single Women for the Sake of <i>Mitzvot</i> and Holiness is Permissible	27
Chapter 8 - The Desire of Women to Ascend to the Temple Mount	29
Chapter 9 - Laws of Purity and Ascent to the Temple Mount	38
Chapter 10 - Conclusion	48
Glossary of Hebrew Words	50



Chapter 1 - Introduction

With many thanks and gratitude to G-d for granting us the privilege to live in a Jewish country, the Land of Israel, and for the great privilege we have been given to ascend the Temple Mount (*Har Habayit*) today, we sensed the need to compose this important booklet about women ascending the Temple Mount, and we are grateful to be able to present this booklet to you.

From the time of the original *Mishkan* (Tabernacle) in the Sinai Desert, women have contributed generously to the construction of Israel's Temples where G-d chose to place His Name in our midst. After leaving Egypt, when the Children of Israel were commanded to contribute to the building of the Sanctuary, the women were the first to donate their jewelry, followed by the men. Many women hastened to weave the curtains for the *Mishkan* and all of them provided their copper mirrors, which were melted down and made into the *kiyyor* (laver) from which the priests purified their hands and feet before performing their Temple service.

A righteous woman named Hannah, who was barren, came to pray and pour out her heart to G-d in front of the entrance to the *Mishkan* when it was located in Shiloh. She requested that *Hashem* (G-d) give her a son whom she could dedicate to His service. G-d answered her prayers and her son, Samuel, became one of the greatest prophets and leaders of the Jewish nation. As soon as he was weaned, she brought him, amidst great celebration, to the Sanctuary where he would remain in order to serve G-d all his life.

Throughout the entire period of the Temple, it was the center of many significant activities. Jews would gather there to pray, both in times of trouble and in times of joy. The entire nation, men, women and children, congregated there when the time came for the *mitzvah of Hakhel* during which the King publicly read the entire *Book of Devarim* (Deuteronomy). Women participated in virtually all the important events that centered around the *Beit HaMikdash* (Holy Temple).

Women are also obligated to bring the Passover offering and the offering brought for rejoicing during the Festivals (*Shalmei Simcha*). In addition, women brought a special offering after childbirth, or as part of the purification process from the ritual impurity of *zava* (flow). If a woman owned land, she was required to travel to Jerusalem to fulfill the *mitzvah of bikkurim* (First Fruits).

The Jerusalem *Talmud* (*Ma'aser Sheni* 5:2) relates that the women of Zippori and Lod would ascend to the Temple in honor of *Shabbat*. The Prophetess Hulda is honored, and the southern gates of the Temple Mount bear her name to this day.



This booklet is intended for any girl or woman who is thinking about ascending the Temple Mount. In it, we will review the *Torah* laws that pertain to the contemporary obligation of women to go to the Temple Mount and study the immersion rituals that have been in effect from ancient times until the present. However, we must point out that, in addition to this booklet, all women, of any age, should also study these laws with a woman who has expertise in these matters. To facilitate that objective, relevant phone numbers are provided on the first page of this publication.

We hope and pray that through the merit of visiting the Temple Mount while it is in a state of destruction, we will merit to participate in its reconstruction. May it happen speedily and in our time.



**The location of the Holy of Holies, beneath the Golden Dome.
Only the High Priest is permitted to enter this sacred place,
and only once a year, on *Yom Kippur*, to offer the incense.**



Chapter 2 - The Current Situation on the Temple Mount

After the destruction of the Second Temple, the Romans issued religious decrees forbidding Jews to enter Jerusalem in general and the Temple Mount in particular. Recognizing the importance of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount to the Jewish nation, the Christians and the Muslims have continued this policy to this day. Their aim, then and now, is to sever the Jewish people from their land and from their desire to rebuild the Temple. Their purpose, then and now, is to promote the assimilation and eventual disappearance of the Jewish people.

For many generations, Jews were allowed access to only a small section of the Western Wall (one of the supporting walls of the Temple Mount), as a place to lament the destruction of the Temple. The Western Wall Plaza, which was sanctified over the centuries, was in fact part of the main street of Jerusalem leading up to the Second Temple. It was a central place of commerce, where people purchased daily necessities (food, household items, etc.) as well as religious items such as animals for sacrifice.

On Wednesday, the 28th of *Iyar* 5727 (June 7th 1967), at 10:00 AM, Motta Gur (who commanded the brigade that liberated the Old City of Jerusalem) announced on the communication network: **“The Temple Mount is in our hands!”** The dream of almost 2000 years, to possess again the site of the Temple, was finally realized. However, the soldiers, who did not fully grasp the magnitude of the event, hurried across the Temple Mount as a shortcut in order to reach the Western Wall. There, at the Western Wall, the soldiers blew the *shofar*, mistakenly treating the wall as if it were the holy site itself.

But the Temple Mount, the place upon which the *Beit HaMikdash* (Temple) stood, where *Hashem* (G-d) said to King Solomon: “I consecrate this House, which you have built, to establish My Name there forever, and My eyes and My heart shall be there perpetually” (*Melachim Alef* 9:3), the holiest place for Jews in the world, was inexplicably transferred to the Jordanian religious authority known as the Waqf. From that time until the present, an unparalleled and unacceptable desecration of *Hashem’s name* has prevailed. The *Talmud* recounts that our Sages wept when they saw a fox emerge from the Holy of Holies, and yet today Arabs urinate in the area where the Temple stood and we do not protest.



**Screenshots from a video taken in 2018:
A Muslim woman brings her young children
to the Temple Mount to train in stabbing and shooting
at police officers. Another child plays soccer.**





The place where it was said, “The stranger who approaches shall be put to death” (*Bamidbar* 18:7) has become a soccer field, a picnic site, and a community center that teaches karate and methods of killing Jews with knives. And on the site of which it was said, “My House shall be called a House of Prayer for all the nations” (*Isaiah* 56:7), Arabs scatter broken glass on the path to injure Jews coming to pray *Shacharit* and *Minchah*. They incite terror and hatred, and engage in archaeological destruction in an attempt to erase Jewish history on the Mount.

Today, every Jew, man or woman, who climbs to the Temple Mount implicitly protests against the terrible desecrations that are perpetrated there and therefore performs a sanctification of G-d’s Name. He or she thereby becomes a righteous soldier, fulfilling the commandment to conquer the Land of Israel and *Mount Moriah*. While very few women came to the Temple Mount a decade ago, today the number of married and single women who ascend the Temple Mount in a state of purity as dictated by Jewish law is growing. Significantly, little boys and girls are following their lead.

In the Song of Ascents (“*Shir Hama’alot*”), we sing: “When the L-rd returns His exiles to Zion, we shall be like dreamers” (*Tehillim* 126:1). The nation of Israel is a nation that knows how to pray and dream. This is what gives us the strength and hope to continue on the path of the *Torah* until the complete redemption when G-d will rule the world. However, throughout history, we see that our nation not only dreamed, but also took action.

The Temple was built by the people and did not descend from the sky. In the Sinai Desert, the people donated and built the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) with their own hands. Later, when the people of Israel entered the Land of Israel, both the land and Jerusalem were conquered by Jewish soldiers, **and the Temple Mount was bought for the full asking price** (*Shmuel Bet* 24:18-25).

The first Temple was built by King Solomon and the Jewish people. We read in the Bible and learn from Ezra and Nehemiah that, during the time of the Second Temple, the Jews who returned to the Land of Israel from the Babylonian exile built the Temple on their own, while fighting politically and physically against various enemies who tried to prevent them. Haggai the prophet wrote the word of G-d: “...Is it time for you to sit under roofs in your homes while this House is lying in ruins?... Consider your ways. Go up to the Mountain and bring wood and build the House and I will look on it with favor and I will be glorified, said the L-rd... My House lies in ruins while you all run to your own houses” (*Haggai* 1:4-9). We have already built our own houses, **but what about the House of G-d that lies in ruins?**



Chapter 3 - Ascending the Temple Mount According to Jewish Law

When the Temple was built, the Temple Mount was divided into various levels of holiness. The closer one got to the Temple, the higher the required standard of purity. The entrance was through the Huldah Gates, in the southern part of the Temple Mount. The Jewish people who entered the Temple Mount included both men and women - married women, single women, divorced women, widows, and little girls.

The Temple Court (*Azarah*), where Jews brought offerings and sacrifices and prayed facing the Sanctuary, was located in the northwestern part of the Temple Mount, not exactly at the center. No one, with any form of impurity, is allowed in the Inner Courtyard of the Temple (*Azarah*). One form of impurity, caused by contact with a human corpse, is known as *tum'at met*. The purification process for *tum'at met* requires the use of the ashes from a *parah adumah* (red heifer), which are inaccessible nowadays. The *Beit HaMikdash* (*Azarah*) was surrounded by a fence called the *soreg*, with warning signs in different languages forbidding Gentiles and impure Jews from entering the Temple Courts.

The “peripheral” area of the Temple Mount, which is called the “Camp of the Levites,” was open to visits from Jews who had immersed in a *mikveh*, as well as to non-Jews (Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Bi'at HaMikdash*, 3:1-6). In this area, certain forms of impurity were actually allowed. Jews who were impure due to contact with a human corpse were permitted to enter, and it was even permitted to bring a corpse itself into this area (Maimonides, *Hilchot Bi'at HaMikdash* 3:4). It must be emphasized, however, that Jews entering any part of the Temple Mount **must meet certain purity requirements. They must immerse themselves in a *mikveh* before entering.**

When the Temple was built, many people went to the Temple Mount's peripheral areas without entering the Temple Court itself. One example is given in a *Brayta* (Tractate *Semachot* 6), which recounts the story of a woman whose daughter was ill. She did not enter the Temple Court, but rather walked around the peripheral area of the Temple Mount asking everyone to pray for her daughter's recovery. She continued doing so until she was informed that her daughter had recovered.

Today, there are different opinions regarding the propriety of ascending the Temple Mount. Maimonides maintains that the site upon which King Solomon built the Temple retains its holiness, even though the Temple itself has been destroyed (*Hilchot Beit Habechira*, 6:16). According to Maimonides, if one desires to ascend



the Temple Mount today (as he himself did), one must observe all of the ritual requirements that were in effect when the *Beit HaMikdash* existed. Therefore, one must first immerse in a *mikveh*, traverse only the peripheral areas of the Temple Mount, and completely avoid the site of the Temple itself.

However, the Raavad (Rabbi Abraham ben David, approx. 1110-1198) maintained that there is no prohibition against entering the actual site of the Temple nowadays. Therefore, according to his opinion, there is no requirement to attain a state of complete ritual purity before visiting all areas of the Temple Mount. However, out of great respect for this holy site, we observe all of Maimonides' strictures when conducting Temple Mount visits.

The Radbaz (Rabbi David ibn Zimra), a great *Talmudic* Authority who lived about 500 years ago, provided a detailed explanation of the precise location of the Temple based on the existing buildings. The Temple Mount is a large area, covering about 35 acres. Today, we are all considered impure due to contact with a human corpse. Attached is a map showing the areas Jews can enter after immersing themselves in a *mikveh* when ascending the Temple Mount today according to Maimonides.

Since some Jewish commandments can be observed on the Temple Mount today, **it is our obligation to ascend the Temple Mount in great numbers, including women of all ages and all backgrounds.**

Map Legend

Purple area: The Western Wall Plaza.

Blue outline: The present-day Temple Mount.

Black outline: The sacred area of the Temple Mount, measuring 500 by 500 cubits.

White rectangle: The location of the Temple (*Beit HaMikdash*). The white diagram shows, among other features, the locations of the Sanctuary, the Altar, and the Women's Court.



Credit: Rabbi Yehuda Levi.



Chapter 4 - Jewish Laws That Women Can Observe Today on the Temple Mount

About **200** of the **613** commandments that we were given on Mount Sinai are related to the Temple. According to that reckoning, we are currently refraining from fulfilling approximately one-third of the *mitzvot* ordained by *Hashem*.

Although the Temple is presently in ruins, there are nevertheless some *Torah* laws that both men and women can perform when they ascend the Mount of G-d. The details of these commandments are presented here.



**Standing on the eastern side of the Temple Mount,
we pray toward the west — facing the entrances to the Temple Courts,
the Sanctuary, and the Holy of Holies.**



1st Law: “*Morah Mikdash*”- Reverence of the Sanctuary

This commandment can be observed **only** on the Temple Mount, and it is one of the few Jewish laws that we can observe today with great ease and splendor when we ascend the Temple Mount. Maimonides, in *Sefer HaMitzvot* (Positive Commandment 21), explains the commandment of “*Morah mikdash*”- Reverence of the Sanctuary: In the *book of Vayikra* (19:30), G-d commands:

“אֶת־שַׁבְּתֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וּמִקְדָּשִׁי תִירָאוּ”

“My Sabbaths you shall keep, and My sanctuary you shall revere”.

The *Sifra* explains that even when the Temple is destroyed, we are obligated to revere the Sanctuary. He derives this from the fact that the commandment to observe the Shabbat and the commandment to revere the Sanctuary appear in the same verse, and writes: “Just as the keeping of *Shabbat* is perpetual, so is reverence of the Sanctuary perpetual”.

How does one revere the Sanctuary? This can be deduced from another verse in the *Torah*, which speaks of the reverence of a father and mother (*Vayikra* 19:3):

“אִישׁ אָמוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ”

“You shall each revere your mother and your father”.

The actual Hebrew word used in this verse and in the previous verse is “*tira’u*” which is a verb of the word “*morah*”. In Hebrew, the word “*morah*” has two meanings: fear or reverence. The way in which we choose to translate this word affects our behavior.

The first meaning is fear. When a person is afraid of his or her parents, he or she will avoid contact with them and try to keep a distance. This is what we do when we keep away from the Temple Mount.

The second meaning is reverence. When a person reveres his or her parents, he or she will stay at their home to help and care for them. We have to do the same thing on the Temple Mount and in the Temple - to revere the L-rd who dwells there.

The *Mishnah* (*Berachot* 9:5) explains how to fulfill this commandment: “One may not enter the Temple Mount with his staff, or with his sandal, or with his belt-pouch, or with dust on his feet, and may not use it as a shortcut to get to other places, and spitting is forbidden, as deducted from (the principle of) lesser to greater”.

So, in fact, as soon as each of us ascends the Temple Mount after immersing in a *mikveh*, in nice clothes, barefoot or with shoes that are not made from leather, without big bags or knapsacks, walking slowly, speaking calmly and behaving in a respectful way, **we already fulfill the Jewish law of “*morah mikdash*”-revering the Sanctuary!**



2nd Law: Conquest

The commandment to take possession of the Land refers to the conquest of all the territories of the Land of Israel and certainly includes the Temple Mount. This commandment appears in the *Torah* many times. For example:

- “Keep, therefore, all the commandments which I command you this day, so that you may have the strength to enter **and take possession of the land** that you are about to cross into and possess” (*Devarim* 11:8).
- “**And you shall take possession of the Land and settle in it**, for I have given you the land to possess it” (*Bamidbar* 33:53).

Nachmanides (*Book of Mitzvoth*, positive commandment 4) explains the commandment: “**We are commanded to take possession of the Land** G-d gave to our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. **We must not to leave it in the hands of one of the other nations or in desolation**”. The commandment is to conquer the entire Land of Israel and to settle there. If the conquest of the entire land is a positive commandment, it is obvious that the conquest of the Temple Mount is also a positive commandment. Therefore, we are obligated to conquer the Temple Mount, which is the center of the Land of Israel, so that we will be able to rebuild the Temple there. Nachmanides continues his explanation and writes that the commandment to conquer the Land is an obligation for all generations, including our own: “We may not relinquish the Land to any nation at any point in time. This is because we were commanded to conquer the Land and live in it - **and this applies throughout the generations**”.

In the current situation, the Muslims are taking more and more control of the Temple Mount, and the government is conceding more and more authority to them. Therefore, it is extremely important for many Jews to be present on the Temple Mount to prevent foreign nations from taking control of it.

Arab news websites portray every Jew (including women and even babies) who ascends the Temple Mount, follows the path defined by Jewish law, and is accompanied by Israeli security forces as a soldier who came to conquer the Temple Mount. **Hence, in the very act of ascending the Temple Mount, we have the privilege of fulfilling the commandment of conquest.**

Today, it is not only soldiers in the army who can fulfill the commandment of conquering the Land. There is an opportunity for every woman, girl, and infant to fulfill this important Jewish commandment. The *Sin of the Spies* was partly their fear of war. Therefore, they preferred to give up the conquest of the Land of Israel, against the will of G-d.



According to *Midrash Tanchuma (Pinchas, siman 7)*, the men sinned and therefore died in the desert, while the women did not sin, and therefore they all entered the Land of Israel.

Today, many Jews are also afraid to ascend the Temple Mount due to the complex security situation, which is very similar to the fears of the ancient spies. However, these fears are unfounded, as we have police escort. By ascending the Temple Mount with the belief that G-d will help us, women can and do show complete faith in G-d and His commandment to conquer the land.

“We can surely go up and take possession of it, for we can indeed overcome it” (*Bamidbar 13:30*).



Striving to strengthen Jewish sovereignty on the Temple Mount and to rebuild the Temple.



3rd Law: Seeking the Temple

Although this Jewish law can be observed in other places, it is obligatory to observe it first and foremost in the Temple. In the book of *Devarim* (12:5) it says: **“But only to the place which the L-rd your G-d shall choose from all your tribes to establish His Name there, you shall inquire after His dwelling and come there”**.

Nachmanides, in his commentary on this verse, explains the words “you shall inquire after His dwelling and come there”: When you come back from the exile, you will ask: “Where is the way to the House of G-d? And each one will say to his fellow: **“Come, let us go up to the Mount of the L-rd, to the House of the G-d of Jacob”** (Isaiah 2:3).

He also quotes from *Sifre* (*Re'eh* 8):

“You shall inquire” - we ourselves need to seek and look for the place of the Temple, and only after we find the place, a prophet will come to confirm it.

“And come there” - we need to come to the site of the Temple to see the presence of the Master, the L-rd, G-d of Israel. Meaning we should show ourselves in the Temple, at the site of the Divine presence.

If so, there is a **special positive commandment to come to the place of the Temple in order to honor G-d**.

Today, we fulfill this commandment when we ascend the Temple Mount in order to rebuild the Temple there and renew the Divine service. Indeed, anyone who has ascended the Temple Mount knows that many of the conversations there concern the precise location of the Temple, including details such as “Where exactly did the altar stand?” “Where was the ‘*chail*’?” “What is the exact location of the Holy of Holies?”

4th Law: Prayers

There is a Biblical *mitzvah* to pray every day. According to the Rambam (Maimonides), this applies at all times, while according to the Ramban (Nachmanides), the *Torah* obligates one to pray only in times of distress. Prayer has great value when performed in the Temple.

In the Book of *Melachim Alef* (First Kings, chapters 8-9), there is a description of the construction of the Temple by King Solomon. King Solomon asked G-d



The red arrow indicates the location of the altar in the Temple. According to the Rambam (Maimonides) (*Hilkhot Beit Ha-Bechira* 2:1), this is the exact place where the *Akeidat Yitzchak* took place (the exact site where Abraham built the altar to bind Isaac).

that whenever the Jewish people or the Gentiles prayed to G-d in the Temple or facing the Sanctuary, G-d would accept their prayers. The command is first and foremost to pray inside the Temple: “And they shall pray and make supplication to You in this House” (*Melachim Alef* 8:33), and only if it's impossible to come to the Temple should we pray in the direction of the Temple: “And they pray to You in the direction of their Land... and the House which I have built for your Name” (*Melachim Alef* 8:48). Later on, G-d tells Solomon that He accepted his request: “I have heard your prayer... I have consecrated this Temple which you have built to set My Name there forever, and My eyes and My heart shall be there at all times” (*Melachim Alef* 9:3).

In the *Torah* there are many verses that command us to serve G-d:

- “And you shall worship the L-rd, your G-d” (*Shemot* 23:25).
- “You shall follow the L-rd, your G-d... and worship Him” (*Devarim* 13:5).
- “You shall revere the L-rd, your G-d, and worship Him” (*Devarim* 6:13).
- “To love the L-rd, your G-d, and to worship Him with all your heart and with all your soul” (*Devarim* 11:13).



Maimonides (Positive Commandment 5) writes that **the worship of G-d is a reference to prayer**. In addition, he quotes the words of Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Rabbi Yossi the Galilean, regarding prayer: “Worship G-d with His *Torah*, **worship Him in His Temple**”. **There is a commandment to pray to G-d specifically on the Temple Mount: “Worship Him in His Temple”**.

Today, more than ever, the Arabs are aware of the power of our prayers on the Temple Mount and fear them. One of the Arab Waqf guards on the Temple Mount said: “As long as you Jews pray down below, at the Western Wall, and we pray up here on the Temple Mount, you will go down and down and we will rise and rise. But as soon as you Jews start praying on the Temple Mount, you will rise and rise and we will fall and fall”. The Arabs’ fear of our prayers shows us how powerful every Jewish man’s and woman’s prayer is, especially on the Temple Mount, the site of the Temple.

Unfortunately, for many years, the police forbade Jews from praying on the Temple Mount under orders of the Waqf. This was difficult, but perhaps this was G-d’s way of teaching us the meaning of prayer. According to Maimonides (*Hilchot Tefilah* 1:2-5) in the past everyone composed their own prayers, which fulfilled the *Torah* obligation. However, when the Jews returned from the Babylonian Exile, they lacked knowledge of the *Torah* and were unable to express themselves coherently in Hebrew. Therefore, Ezra and his court composed a standard prayer for everyone. Today we are accustomed to chanting prayers from the *siddur*, and sadly, not always with meaning. In the Temple, however, we must be honest and not fake it. In the past, every possible device was used to prevent us from praying on the Temple Mount, and it was extremely difficult. Sometimes it was possible to utter only a few sentences of prayer. However, those few entreaties were genuine and came from the heart. They expressed the things that were most important to us and our nation with heartfelt feeling.

About six years ago, as the number of Jews ascending the Temple Mount increased, the police began to allow *Shacharit* and *Minchah* (the morning and afternoon) prayers in a *minyan*, under many restrictions. Initially, they demanded that the prayers be recited in a low voice and mostly while walking. Now, however, the eastern path, facing the Holy of Holies, is the site of loud prayers, with a *chazan* (cantor), and people singing and prostrating themselves. Using a *siddur*, *tallit*, or *tefillin* is forbidden, but praying from a virtual *siddur* on a cell phone is permitted, as well as praying from prayer sheets distributed at the entrance. Women are also permitted to pray under the same conditions. **If more Jews ascend the Temple Mount, we could eventually pray there freely.**

May it be that thanks to our prayers, which truly come from the depths of our souls, the Jews will rise and rise until we will proclaim G-d King over all the earth.



Praying for the rebuilding of the Temple.

5th Law: Prostration

The commandment to bow/prostrate oneself before G-d on the Temple Mount and in the Temple appears in many sources. Here are some examples:

- In the commandment of “*bikkurim*” (bringing the first fruit): “And you shall take of the first of all the fruit of the ground... and go to the place which the L-rd, your G-d, will choose to dwell His Name there... **and bow low before the L-rd your G-d**” (*Devarim* 26:2-10).
- “...**thirteen prostrations took place in the Sanctuary...**” (Tractate *Shekalim* 6a-c).
- “And it was taught in a *Brayta*, regarding the *Torah*’s commandment: “And a pavement stone you shall not place in your land to prostrate yourselves upon it” (*Vayikra* 26:1). This implies: you shall not prostrate in your land upon any type of pavement stone, **but you shall prostrate yourselves upon the stones of the Temple**” (*Megillah* 22b).

The Temple and the Temple Mount are the only places where one can perform the special *mitzvah* of prostrating oneself before G-d on the stone floor. It is prohibited



in other locations. To prostrate means to be stretch out face-down on the ground to demonstrate our submission to our Creator and to acknowledge the magnificence of *Hashem*, the King of Kings.

For many years, the police used threats of arrest and restraining orders in order to prevent us from fulfilling this commandment, following orders from the Jordanian Waqf. **However, an increase in the number of Jews ascending the Temple Mount has made a difference.** When 2,663 Jews ascended the Temple Mount in a single day on *Tisha B'Av* almost two years and ago, something changed. **Since then, everyone has been allowed to prostrate themselves.** Men, women, and children, rabbis and ordinary people, Jews and non-Jews alike, all prostrate themselves before *Hashem*.

We are actually witnessing the beginning of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies that all people on earth, Jews and non-Jews alike, will eventually come to the Temple and prostrate themselves before G-d:

- "And in that day a great *shofar* shall be sounded and those lost in the land of Assyria and those exiled in the land of Egypt shall come and they shall prostrate themselves before the L-rd on the Holy Mount in Jerusalem" (Isaiah 27:13).
- "And it shall be from new moon to new moon, and from Shabbat to Shabbat, all flesh shall come to prostrate themselves before Me, said the L-rd" (Isaiah 66:23).



A woman prostrating to Hashem on the eastern path on the Temple Mount.



6th Law: The Passover Sacrifice

The entire nation of Israel - including women (married and single), is commanded to offer the Passover Sacrifice every year on the 14th day of the month of *Nissan*. The *Torah* writes, “You shall have a male lamb without blemish in its first year, you may take it from the sheep or from the goats... and all the assembled congregation of the Israelites shall slaughter it at twilight.” (*Shemot* 12:5-6) Maimonides, in his Book of Commandments (Positive Commandment 55) explains that this obligation rests on **both women and men**. The *Torah* goes on to say about anyone who is able to bring the Passover Sacrifice but nonetheless intentionally refrains from bringing it: “That soul shall be cut off from among its people” (*Bamidbar* 9:13). According to our Sages, this is one of the most severe punishments in the *Torah*. From the book of Ezra (3:1-6) we see that it is permitted to build an altar on the Temple Mount and to offer sacrifices upon it even while the Temple remains in ruins.

Maimonides (*Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Korban Pesach* 7:1) rules: “Many individuals who were ritually impure due to contact with a human corpse on the first *Pesach* (i.e. the 14th of *Nissan*)- if they were the minority of the Jewish people, their offering is postponed to the second *Pesach* (i.e. the 14th of *Iyar*), like other impure individuals. **If, however, the majority of the Jewish people were impure due to contact with a human corpse** (*tum’at met*) or the priests or the sacred utensils were impure due to contact with a human corpse, their offering is not postponed. Instead, **they should all offer the *Pesach* sacrifice in a state of ritual impurity**, those ritually impure together with those who are pure. As stated, “And there were men who were impure due to contact with a human corpse” (*Bamidbar* 9:6). The offering of individuals is postponed, but that of the community as a whole is not postponed. This concept applies only with regard to impurity caused by contact with a human corpse, as explained in *Hilchot Bi’at HaMikdash*.

From the above sources we see that we can bring the Passover Sacrifice in its proper time even today! Since today we are all considered impure due to contact with a human corpse (either by actually carrying a body or by being in the same building with a Jewish human corpse, such as in a hospital) we are permitted to bring the Passover Sacrifice despite the impurity. Today there are classes and institutes where priests (*kohanim*) are currently studying the practical application of the laws of the Passover Sacrifice. Essentially, the only thing preventing Jews from offering the sacrifice is permission from the government to erect an altar on the Temple Mount on the 14th of *Nissan*. **The possibility that the government will grant such permission increases** as the number of men and women ascending the Temple Mount and demonstrating their readiness to offer the Passover Sacrifice increases.



The Passover Sacrifice, more than any other commandment, symbolizes the beginning of our redemption. The Exodus from Egypt began immediately after eating the Passover Sacrifice, and the first thing that we did upon entering the Land of Israel during the time of Joshua was to offer the *Passover Sacrifice*.

May it be that just as our ancestors did, so too we will be privileged to initiate the complete redemption soon by offering the Passover Sacrifice on the Temple Mount at its appointed time.

7th Law: Building the Temple

The *Torah* tells us: “And they shall make Me a Sanctuary that I may dwell among them.” (*Shemot* 25:8). Maimonides, in his Book of Commandments (Positive Commandment 20), writes that we are commanded to build a Temple in order to serve G-d there, and that **the obligation to build a Temple applies in every generation**. In the *Mishneh Torah* (*Hilchot Beit HaBechira* chapter 1), Maimonides details the various laws applicable to the building of the Temple:

Halacha # 1: “It is a positive commandment to construct a Temple for G-d [that is] equipped to offer sacrifices, where we must celebrate three times a year, as it is written, “And they shall make Me a Sanctuary” (*Shemot* 25:8).”

Halacha # 12: “Everyone is obligated to build and to assist, both personally and financially – both men **and women** just as in the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) in the desert.”

Thus, **women too are obligated to build the Temple, and this obligation is incumbent upon us even today.**

As mentioned in the introduction, women led the construction of the Tabernacle by being the first to contribute. Today should be no different. Women should lead the construction of the Temple. **By ascending the Temple Mount, we demonstrate our readiness to rebuild the Temple.** As the number of Jewish men and women ascending the Temple Mount increases, this may well influence the government to begin construction.



**Awaiting the complete redemption and the rebuilding
of the Temple in Jerusalem.**

Chapter 5 - Purification of Women in the Days of the Temple

Purity was a routine part of everyday life for Jews in the Land of Israel during the time of the Temple. We wrote a short story to illustrate this:

The story takes place more than 2,000 years ago. Shlomtzion and Yehudit skip happily along the road to Jerusalem. Their father carries a basket full of *ma'aser sheni* (Second Tithe) apples and plums from their orchard. Shlomtzion points to a stone lying on the ground and says to her sister: "Look! I can kick this stone really far!" She kicks the stone. Five-year-old Yehudit is excited by the game and says: "I can kick it far too!" She kicks another stone and immediately screams: "Ugh! It wasn't a stone. It was a dead lizard!" Her mother looks at the dead lizard and asks Yehudit: "Did the lizard touch your foot?" "Yes", Yehudit replies. Her mother explains: "Now you are impure because you touched a dead *sheretz* (crawling creature). When we reach Jerusalem, you will have to immerse yourself in the *mikveh*." Fourteen-year-old Shlomtzion joins the conversation. "Mom, I have to immerse in the *mikveh* too. I'm ritually impure because of *niddah* (menstruation). We can go together." "Yes", Yehudit exclaims. "We will go together to the *mikveh*! Then we will all be ritually pure, and we can eat together from the *ma'aser sheni*!"



Today, the subject of ritual purity has become limited and relates only to family life, namely, marital relations between husband and wife. Over the course of exile, it became customary for women to begin immersing in the *mikveh* before marriage so that marital intimacy would be permitted.

However, the laws of purity and impurity were originally much broader and more complex. There are various commandments, observed only in the Land of Israel, that require ritual immersion. Jewish women, whether single or married, must be ritually pure in order to observe these commandments.

The first and foremost is purifying for the purpose of ascending to the Temple and the Temple Mount, which was done for various reasons: pilgrimage on holidays, offering and eating sacrifices, personal prayers, public repentance and prayer gatherings, and “*Hakhel*” gatherings.

Another Jewish law applied to farmers and to anyone who owned fruit trees and vegetables. Specific portions of these fruit and vegetables had to be eaten while ritually pure. Farmers and their families, including married and single women ate in purity the fruits of *ma’aser sheni* (Second Tithe) and *neta revai* (fourth-year fruits) in Jerusalem. The *kohanim* (priests) and their families, including married and single women, ate the fruits of the priestly gifts in ritual purity: *bikkurim*, *terumah gedolah* and *terumat hamaaser*.

Another commandment, that applies especially to women, is the Dough Offering (*hafrashat challa*). Whenever bread is baked, a portion should be given to the priests. The woman setting aside the dough, and also the priests, their wives, and their single sons and daughters eating the bread must be ritually pure.

Since the commandments of ritual purity played a significant role in the daily lives of Jews in the Land of Israel, women (including single women), men, children, and girls of all ages frequently immersed in the *mikveh*. Wealthy families, as well as many families of priests in Jerusalem, even had private *mikvaot* inside their homes.

Today, we are fortunate to be able to observe the *mitzvah* of ascending the Temple Mount in a state of ritual purity. Therefore, we strive to restore all the laws of ritual purity to the People of Israel. This includes the immersion of **married and single women and girls who are in a state of *niddah*, as well as married women who have been intimate with their husbands**, in the *mikveh*, for the purpose of ascending to the Temple Mount. Thus, we shall restore purity to its original splendor.



An ancient *mikveh* excavated outside the southern wall of the Temple Mount, used by the Jews ascending to the Second Temple. There is a partition on the stairs dividing between the ritually pure and impure.

Chapter 6 - Women's Immersion in the *Mikveh* Nowadays

The question of whether unmarried women may immerse in the *mikveh* has recently become important. Some fear that allowing unmarried women to use the *mikveh* will lead to an increase in sexual relations between men and women outside of marriage. This belief is partly based on the misconception that the only problem with premarital sex is the woman's failure to immerse herself in the *mikveh*. However, that is clearly not the case as all authorities prohibit a single woman from purifying herself for the purpose of forbidden carnal relations. In fact, premarital relations invoke two distinct prohibitions derived from the *Torah*:

“And to a woman during her period of impurity, you shall not come near to uncover her nakedness” (*Vayikra* 18:19). This prohibition does not distinguish between married and single women. In both cases the punishment is “*kareth*” (spiritual excision).



Additionally, there is a prohibition to have sexual relations with an unmarried woman even if she is pure: “There shall not be a prostitute of the daughters of Israel, and there shall not be a prostitute of the sons of Israel” (*Devarim* 23:18).

If a man seduces a woman into sexual relations, he is commanded to marry her (provided, of course, that she agrees to become his wife):

“If a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed and lies with her, he shall make her his wife by payment of a bride-price (*Shemot* 22:15).

Maimonides, in the Book of Commandments (Negative Commandment 355), rules that based on this verse, a man may not have a sexual relationship with a woman unless he marries her in an Orthodox Jewish marriage ceremony.

Hence, according to all opinions, the prohibition of having sexual relations with an **impure** single woman is from the *Torah*, and the punishment is “*kareth*”—that their souls will be cut off from among their people.

According to all opinions, there is also a severe prohibition of sexual relationship with a single woman even if she has immersed herself in the *mikveh*. According to Maimonides this is a Biblical prohibition. Many other opinions hold it as a Rabbinical one. Our Sages ruled that the punishment for having a sexual relationship with an unmarried woman who has immersed herself in the *mikveh* is whipping.

As part of an attempt to educate the people to maintain the sanctity of the camp, The Chief Rabbinate of Israel and a number of other rabbis forbade the immersion of single women in the *mikveh*. They believe that preventing women from purifying themselves from the status of *niddah* would serve to discourage and reduce intimate activity among Jewish singles.

The main source, on which those who prohibit the immersion of unmarried women rely on, is in the Responsa of the Ribash (*siman* 425). The Ribash, Rabbi Issac bar Sheshet, (1326-1408) lived during the period of the *Rishonim* (Early Authorities) and was one of Spain’s greatest Rabbis. We have a book containing his responses to 517 *Torah* questions. In this query, the Ribash is asked concerning the immersion of unmarried women in the *mikveh* for the purpose of sexual relations without marriage. The Ribash completely forbids it. However, in his response to the question, there is no prohibition for an unmarried Jewish female to immerse herself when it is completely unconnected to intimacy. The Ribash was only concerned about preventing behavior that he regarded as prostitution. Throughout the entire response, the Ribash emphasizes, repeatedly, the prohibition of having a sexual relationship with a single woman, regardless of whether she has immersed in the *mikveh* or not.



A modern *mikveh*.

Chapter 7 - Immersion of Single Women for the Sake of *Mitzvot* and Holiness is Permissible

From the time of the Temple's destruction to the present day, various *halachic authorities* have mentioned the immersion of unmarried women in the *mikveh* for the purpose of fulfilling certain *mitzvot* as well as for spirituality and holiness.

In his response, the Ribash mentions the fact that in the past, the young daughters of the priests immersed in the *mikveh* so that they could eat the *terumah* (the priestly tithe) of the Land of Israel.

Another example is the ancient *minhag* (practice) of the entire congregation, including married and unmarried women to immerse themselves in the *mikveh* on the eve of *Yom Kippur* for the purpose of sanctity and spiritual purity. The



Kitzur Shulchan Aruch by Rabbi Shlomo Ganzfried (131:6) states: “It is a *mitzvah* for every person to immerse in the *mikveh* on the eve of *Yom Kippur* to purify themselves from *tum’at keri* (impurity of a man after emitting seed), and also for repentance, like a convert who needs immersion, therefore teenage boys **and virgin girls should immerse themselves**”.

This custom appears in other *halachic rulings* of great and important rabbis, both *Ashkenazi* and *Sephardic*. Among them: the *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* (*Orach Chaim* 606:12), *Ben Ish Chai* (First year *Parashat Nitzavim*, paragraph 3), *Mateh Ephraim* (*siman* 606), *Kaf HaChayim* (606:8), *Mishnah Berurah* (606:17), *Responsa Rav Pe’alim* (Volume IV, *siman* 15), *Responsa Bnei Banim* (Vol. 3, *Responsa* 4-5), and the *Magen Avraham* (606:8).

The current prohibition against the immersion of unmarried women in the *mikveh*, established by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, causes several problems.

The first problem stems from the fact that today it is possible to observe the positive *Torah* commandment to revere the Sanctuary (*morah mikdash*). Preventing unmarried women from immersing themselves- a restriction that has no foundation in the *Torah* or from our Sages- actually prevents observant single women who wish to perform a *mitzvah* from the *Torah* from doing so.

Secondly, this prohibition does not achieve its goal. Unfortunately, sexual relationships outside of marriage are common in our generation, even among some of the people committed to *Torah* and *mitzvot*. A more suitable solution for our generation would be better education. Instead of emphasizing that unmarried women are prohibited from immersing themselves in the *mikveh*, it is important to emphasize that having sexual relationship outside of marriage is severely prohibited regardless of whether the woman is pure or not (as it appears in Maimonides and in the Ribash). This message should be emphasized everywhere: in schools, *yeshivas*, *midrashot*, at the entrance to the *mikveh*, in leaflets distributed at synagogues, on the internet, etc.

Today there are rabbis who support the ascension of single women to the Temple Mount, and there are many single women of all ages: girls, youth, young and elderly women, who immerse themselves in the *mikveh* and go up to the Temple Mount. Religious women, both married and single, who immerse in the *mikveh* and ascend to the Temple Mount are not prostitutes. On the contrary, they strive to get closer to G-d and keep the commandments of the *Torah*.

We invite single women who wish to ascend the Temple Mount to call us. Our phone numbers are on the first page of this booklet. We will be happy to teach you the laws of purity and help you find a suitable *mikveh*.



Chapter 8 - The Desire of Women to Ascend to the Temple Mount

In recent years, a growing number of women, married, divorced, widowed, single, and even young girls and teenagers, have begun ascending to the Temple Mount while ritually pure. Twelve-year-old girls, on their own initiative, are ascending to the Temple Mount with their families as a part of their *Bat Mitzvah* celebration. Fourteen-year-old girls are eager to learn the laws of purity, to immerse in a *mikveh*, and to ascend to the Temple Mount. It is amazing that instead of pursuing meaningless things that many teenagers engage in, these girls are pursuing purity and the Temple. It is important to support and encourage them to continue in this direction. In this chapter, women who have ascended to the Temple Mount describe and share their experiences.





Noam Menahem- A *Bat Mitzvah* Ascent

I merited to ascend the Temple Mount six years ago, before my *Bat Mitzvah*. I still remember the experience and the emotions to this day.

All the preparations beforehand filled me with excitement! There is truly no way to describe that feeling. Holiness seemed to fill the air. I simply could not speak! (It was the first and last time that this ever happened to me...)

I truly believe that a *Bat Mitzvah* is a very special and moving age, when a girl formally enters the Jewish people as an adult. What a privilege it is to be a Jewish girl in the Land of Israel during these years of redemption. Until one comes and sees the site of the Holy Temple with one's own eyes, it is impossible to fully understand.

There is nothing more special than officially entering our nation at one's *Bat Mitzvah* and experiencing the power and holiness of this place. And when the *Beit HaMikdash* is rebuilt, may it be very soon, to already know, understand, and be familiar with the place itself.



The arches are located at the site of the Nicanor Gate. The Nicanor Gate was in the center of the wall that separated the Women's Court from the Israelites' Court in the Temple.



Yaffa Kenzin- Ascended as Single, Continues as Married

I come from a family of *Kohanim*. At my third birthday party, a friend blessed me that I should merit seeing the *Beit HaMikdash* (Temple) rebuilt, and since then it has been a central part of my life. For years, I wanted to ascend the Temple Mount, but I thought it was closed to Jews, until I discovered that it is open and that one must immerse in a *mikveh* before ascending.

Twenty years ago, no one was willing to teach the laws of ritual purity to an unmarried woman who wished to ascend the Temple Mount, and the idea of immersion felt daunting. I had no idea what a *mikveh* even looked like. But my desire was strong. After a long search I found Yael, who guided me with the blessing and approval of Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, who emphasized that ascending the Temple Mount is a great *mitzvah*. I learned the *halachot* and quickly began preparing for my first ascent.

The immersion gave me a deep sense of connection to holiness, as I thought about our forefathers and foremothers, who also immersed before ascending to the Temple.

On *Hanukkah*, I entered the Temple Mount for the first time and felt as though I had stepped into a new world: the palace of the King of kings. It was overwhelming and powerful, and unlike anything I had ever known. So many righteous Jews dreamed of coming to this place yet were unable to do so - and I did. I stood in awe before the remaining ruins of the Temple: The Chuldah Gates, the top of the Western Wall of the Temple Mount from the *Hasmonean* period, camouflaged in the modern pavement, and a pile of wood, cypress of Lebanon, three thousand years old, used by King Solomon in the construction of the First Temple. All over the Temple Mount, mixed in the soil, are large quantities of gray ashes — a silent testimony to our Temple burned by the Romans two thousand years ago.

For fifteen years, while single, I immersed and ascended the Temple Mount almost every month, and taught the *halachot* to other single women. Ascending is easier for a single woman, as married women have additional *halachic* requirements. When I later prepared for my wedding, I was grateful that I was already familiar with immersion.

I celebrated my engagement to Shlomo on the Temple Mount. While many commemorate the destruction by breaking a plate, we chose to begin building our home beside the ruins of the Temple, with the awareness that we must also continue working toward rebuilding the House of G-d. We celebrated with Jews we had never met before, who rejoiced with us as one family — the family of *Am Yisrael*.



The day before our wedding, Shlomo and I ascended the Temple Mount together to begin our married life with holiness and to enter our marriage with G-d's blessing from the place He chose. We continue to ascend the Temple Mount together.

It pains me to see the desecration of the Temple Mount by Arabs, and that although, *B"H*, more Jews are ascending, many still hesitate. Yet I am grateful to be among the pioneers of this generation of *geula* (redemption), and I pray that soon all of *Am Yisrael* will ascend the Temple Mount with joy and proper *halachic* observance, and that we will merit to rebuild the Temple and to have *Hashem* dwell among us once again: "And they shall make Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell in their midst" (*Shemot* 25:8).



"Zion shall be plowed as a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins. And the Temple Mount a shrine in the woods" (Micah 3:12). The red arrow points to soil that is gray because it is mixed with large amounts of ashes from the destruction of the Second Temple.



Esther Zemel- A Single Young Woman

My journey going up to *Har Habayit* was laden with dilemmas, and simultaneously a relentless thought that didn't allow me to give up. That thought was: '*Hashem* is homeless.'

It came for the first time on *Tisha B'Av* about 3 years ago when I heard in a *Torah* class that *Yerushalaim* is in constant spiritual distress, no matter how built up and impressive it looks. It changed my point of view. I couldn't enjoy davening at the *Kotel* without the thoughts of *Hashem* not having a place of his own and *Yerushalaim* being in ruins still. And that there is a dire need for *Am Yisrael* to connect to *Hashem* from the holiest and closest place it can.

I then went on to asking *Hashem* for signs and help along the way, to understand if I should go up or not. *B"H* I was answered shortly after and the response was clear. I should go up.

B"H I've been going up as a single young woman in purity for the past two years and I thank *Hashem* for the opportunity.

Being up on the Temple Mount forces you to face two contrasting facts. The first, that I am standing in the holiest place in the entire world. It's humbling, exciting and it's infused so much light and meaning into my life that it's hard for me not to share the experience with others at any given opportunity.

And secondly, Al Aqsa is seen as the center of the storm we call the Middle East. People come here to pray and to incite violence on the Jews and anyone they consider an Infidel. Knowing all this makes me understand that me, being who I am, standing tall and acting fearless on *Har Habayit* creates waves around the world. It's a powerful experience and it's the most truly Jewish experience one can have.

Fayga Tavens - An Ascender For Over 45 Years

Va'anachnu Kor'im u'Mishtachavim. (And we bow down and prostrate ourselves.) After many decades of saying these words as part of the *Aleinu LeShabei'ach* prayer, *B"H* I was finally able to **do the prayer!**

For close to two millennia Jews have been praying all over the world using words, instead of bringing sacrifices on the Temple Mount. It is important to note that during practically that entire period, Jews were prohibited from praying on the Temple Mount by whichever ruler ruled over the Land of Israel. Slowly but surely, this is changing for the better.



When I started ascending the Temple Mount, over 45 years ago, only one religious Jew was allowed to be on the Temple Mount at any given moment. This single Jew was kept under heavy guard throughout the entire ascension, to make sure that he or she did not move their lips in any way that might be interpreted as prayer. Years passed, and eventually small groups of religious Jews were allowed to ascend, but praying was still actively prohibited.

Thank G-d, more and more Jews ascended, and with the larger numbers, positive changes occurred, including more religious freedom. At first, we were allowed to pray quietly, individually. Ultimately, we were allowed to pray with a quorum of ten men, as long as the prayers were in hushed voices. With tremendous thanks to the Almighty, Jewish prayers are now allowed on the Temple Mount, with strong voices, with singing and with dancing!!!

So how does one “do” a prayer? This privilege started last year, on *Tisha B’Av* 5784 (2024). On that day, in addition to praying with words, we were allowed to prostrate – *hishtachavaya (mishtachavim)* – ourselves to G-d on the only location on earth that Jewish law permits doing so. This change enabled me and hundreds of other ascending Jews to recite the *Shehecheyanu* blessing on *Tisha B’Av*, the day that is perceived as a day of immeasurable mourning! I said the blessing as I prepared to lower myself to the ground in prostration to G-d. By saying that blessing, I expressed my gratitude to G-d for His granting me the possibility of prostrating myself to Him. **I was finally able to do** the *kor'im and mishtachavim of Aleinu LeShabei'ach* (as compared to making a token bending of the knees and bowing of the head)! Prostration on the Temple Mount is, by the way, a positive *Torah* level commandment.

And it has only gotten better since then! It is now accepted practice on the Temple Mount to sing and dance the beginning of *Aleinu LeShabei'ach*, stopping the dance at the appropriate moment in order to prostrate oneself. Anywhere from twenty to two hundred people simultaneously prostrating themselves to the Almighty! *Baruch Shehecheyanu vKiyimanu vHigianu Lazman Hazeh* (Blessed is He that we have lived and survived and reached this moment)! Stay tuned for further advances in worshiping G-d according to His original instructions...

Ophrah Zelmati - A Married Woman

I first ascended the *Har Habayit* (Temple Mount) in 2009, without police protection, accompanied by a guide who explained: “If we do not ascend there, how will we tell *Hashem* that we love Him, and that we have not abandoned His courtyards to others?”



Later, I discovered that it is taught in the Babylonian *Talmud* (*Sanhedrin* 20b) that Israel was commanded three *mitzvot* upon entering the Land of Israel: to appoint a king, to eradicate Amalek, and to build the Temple.

Israel has officially returned to its land since 1948.

The Temple Mount has been in its hands since 1967, following the Six-Day War.

In 2026, it has therefore been more than 40 years that this *mitzvah* of rebuilding the Temple has been delayed and has not yet been fulfilled. And how could it be fulfilled if one does not ascend there?

This is how I stopped praying “facing a wall,” and how the major milestones of my life now take place on the *Har Habayit*, “beneath the gates of Heaven.”

Year after year, the *Har Habayit* has been opened to Jews, who have fought to be officially allowed to ascend it, and then to pray there, in increasing numbers — today with rabbis, and under the protection of the army.

I have received many blessings there, great support, and it is this *mitzvah* that led me to devote myself entirely to the service of *Hashem* and His *Torah*.



The Golden Gate (*Shaar HaRachamim*). There is a tradition amongst the Jews that the Divine Glory exiled through this gate, and that through it it would return.



Bat-Chen Grossman- A Married Woman

I started going up around eight years ago. My husband had been going up for many years and I was always torn between his “new” approach and my father’s very solid, serious and grounded way that we aren’t allowed to go.

The thing that tipped the scale for me was a class by *Rabbanit* Idit Bartov. She came to our town and gave a whole class about the *halachot* and how to prepare. A couple of weeks later I was up on *Har Habayit*. It was the power of taking responsibility for my own knowledge.

Soon after I took my daughter during her *Bat Mitzvah* year (11) and by the summer we were up with all the kids as a family.

I can speak about a lot of aspects of going up, but I think the beauty of going up with the kids is the most inspiring.

Back then, all my kids were young so it was simple. It was also back when you weren’t allowed to do much. But this year was absolutely beautiful. Some of my teenage daughters went to *mikveh* with me the night before. We packed up food for breakfast and got on our way.

Going up is easy with a stroller and overall pleasant even as a large family.

My kids look forward to bowing down, singing, praying, and the family picture at the end.

It’s beautiful to see all the kids there taking this miraculous reality for granted. They are growing up into the next level of *geula*.

Serach - A Ten-Year-Old Girl

I live in Jerusalem. When I was little, my parents went to the Temple Mount in the morning while I stayed with friends. Or sometimes one of my parents went up, and the other stayed with me at home.

On my 8th birthday, I wanted so much to ascend, so my parents brought me up to the Temple Mount for the first time. I was so excited.

I did not know where each place was, so they explained to me. Now, when I ascend, I know and love the place.

I was really happy to be there and waited to come back again. I have gone up three or four times so far.



I wanted to go up because people talked to me a lot about it. Everyone hears about the Temple. I really wanted to see where the Temple was built. But it is not like the real Temple.

I am interested in the Foundation Rock (*Even HaShtiya*), which we cannot see now. The place that I love most on the Temple Mount is looking in the direction of the Foundation Rock, where the location of the Foundation Rock can be seen. And I also love the real Western Wall, which is more ancient than Herod's, which I call "the Wall of King David."

I feel on the mountain that half is really beautiful and half is really sad, because it is sad to see something that is not the Temple.

It is not true that it is forbidden to ascend the Temple Mount, because saying that is like saying that it is forbidden to become closer to G-d and to build the Temple.

I recommend that other children go up to The Mountain. It gives a lot of energy. For those who are really close to the Temple and want the Temple, it will do them good.



The lower step appears to be the remains of an ancient wall concealed within the pavement. According to Leen Ritmeyer, it appears to be the pre-Herodian Western Wall of the Temple Mount.



Chapter 9 - Laws of Ritual Purity and Ascent to the Temple Mount

In the book of *Bereshit*, there is a description of the creation of the world. The *Torah* states: “And the spirit of G-d hovers upon the face of the water” (*Bereshit* 1:2). Each of us has the opportunity to reconnect with the waters of creation by immersing ourselves in a *mikveh*. Purifying ourselves and ascending the Temple Mount renews our connection to G-d. This provides us with an opportunity to repent for our sins, start over, and grow closer to the *Torah*, its laws, and the Divine service.

First *Halacha*: Ritual purity

The Temple Mount is the most sacred place for the Jewish people. **According to *halacha* (Jewish law) a certain level of ritual purity is required** to enter.

There are three things that make a woman impure:

- Menstruation (*nidah/zava*).
- Giving birth.
- A sexual relationship.

Purification is achieved by immersing oneself in a *mikveh*.

There are many laws regarding the preparations needed before going to the *mikveh*, and they must be followed precisely. It is mandatory to learn these laws with a knowledgeable guide. However, learning these laws is not difficult. Married women will need a brief explanation, which takes a few minutes. Unmarried women will need one lesson that takes about one to two hours. Contact information for such guides is provided at the end of this chapter and on the first page of the booklet.

Below are a few brief points to note regarding ritual purity:

Preadolescent girls: girls under the age of 12 who have never had a period do not need to immerse themselves in the *mikveh* (if it is known that the girl has had any menstrual bleeding, even as a baby, a rabbi should be consulted).

A woman in the state of a *niddah* (or *zava*), including a woman who gave birth is prohibited from entering the Temple Mount. She must follow all the laws that permit her to cohabit with her spouse, i.e., counting seven clean days, *mikveh*, etc. before ascending to the Temple Mount.



A married woman: In addition to the regular laws of *niddah*, a woman who has had sexual relations with her spouse must go to the *mikveh* before entering the Temple Mount (her status is similar to that of a *ba'al kerī*). Ask a rabbi about the specific laws regarding the immersion after a sexual relationship.

Single woman: A single woman must follow all the laws observed by married women. It is necessary to thoroughly learn these laws with the help of a knowledgeable guide.

Even if a single woman has already gone through menopause and no longer menstruates, she is still in a state of *niddah* until she immerses herself in a *mikveh* according to all the aforementioned laws.

It is important to emphasize that this immersion is only for the purpose of ascending to the Temple Mount and does not permit sexual relations.

Divorcees and widows: If she immersed herself after her last menstrual period and was sexually intimate afterwards, she must immerse herself again without counting seven clean days. Otherwise, she does not need to be immersed. If a woman was divorced or widowed before menopause, and continued to menstruate after her divorce or widowhood, she should immerse as any *niddah*, even if she no longer menstruates.



A modern *mikveh*.



Second *Halacha*: *Halachic Path*

Since we are all considered ritually impure due to contact with a human corpse (*tum'at met*), we must adhere to the specific areas we are permitted to enter after immersing in the *mikveh*. We must be careful to enter only the peripheral areas of the Temple Mount. We may not enter the area of the Temple Court (*Azarah*), because it requires additional purity laws, including purity from *tum'at met*, which we cannot achieve today. For this reason, one should only go up with groups that walk on the “*Halachic Path*”. Many observant Jews ascend the Temple Mount. You can ask the policeman at the entrance to join a religious Jewish group, which will ensure that you are walking on the “*Halachic Path*”.



**The eastern path on the Temple Mount.
It is located within the sacred area of 500 by 500 cubits.**



Third *Halacha*: Reverence of the Temple

One may not wear leather shoes when entering the Temple Mount. Footwear that is permitted to wear on *Yom Kippur* may be worn on the Temple Mount. Some Jews ascend barefoot or wearing socks.

Dress modestly, appropriately and respectably.

Walk unhurriedly; do not run or misbehave.

Only if it is necessary, you may bring a small respectable bag containing essential items. There are lockers at the entrance to the Temple Mount where you can leave your bags and belongings. However, the lockers are not supervised, so it is not advisable to leave valuables in them.

It is permissible to bring a bottle of water.

It is permissible to use an umbrella when it rains.

It is permissible to bring a cell phone to the Temple Mount. You may use the internet or apps such as *siddur* or Psalms for prayers. You may take pictures or videos but ensure that they are respectful and suitable for a holy place. Do not make phone calls on the Temple Mount.

Maimonides (*Hilcot Beit HaBechira* 7:4) rules that when leaving the *Azarah* (Temple Court) one should walk backward as part of the *mitzvah* of revering the Temple. Although this is not required when leaving the Temple Mount, many people walk a few steps backward out of respect for this holy place.

Fourth *Halacha*: Prostration

There are several *halachot* (laws) regarding prostration:

Prostration on the Temple Mount has two parts:

Kneeling: Go down until your knees are on the floor.

Prostration: Lie face-down on the floor, your arms stretched forward and your legs straight.

Usually, when prostrating to *Hashem*, it is necessary to place a cloth between the floor and one's head and the floor to serve as a *chatzitza* (interposition). On the Temple Mount, however, prostration is done directly on the floor (without a *chatzitza*).

According to Jewish law, prostration without a *chatzitza* is permitted only within the sanctified area of the Temple Mount. Today the Temple Mount exceeds the



500 cubits by 500 cubits defined in the *Mishnah* as the sanctified area. Of the path we walk on today, the only section that we know is definitely in the sanctified area is a section of the path on the eastern side: from the steps to the end of the *Beit Midrash* (*Shaar HaRachamim* / the Golden Gate).

When prostrating, it is very important to focus one's thoughts on the fact that we are bowing to *Hashem* (G-d).

We prostrate in the direction of the Holy of Holies, which is located under the Golden Dome.

You should remain on the floor for at least four to eight seconds before getting up.

It is recommended that you think in advance about suitable clothing in which you can easily and modestly prostrate. For example, make sure that your skirt covers you well; consider wearing tights or long pants under it; and make sure that your shirt is long enough so that it doesn't rise to the middle of your back when you raise your hands. A skirt that is too narrow makes kneeling and getting up difficult.

When prostrating it is appropriate to keep some distance from men or to let men prostrate first. When they finish and move on, women can prostrate.



Part of the Women's Court area in the Temple.



Prayers on the Temple Mount

Shacharit with a *minyan* is at 6:30 a.m. and *Minchah* with a *minyan* is in the early afternoon. Several changes to the *Chazarat HaShatz* (the repetition of the *Amidah* prayer) are specific to the Temple Mount and the Temple. These changes are mentioned in various sources, including the *Mishnah*, the *Gemarah*, and some Jewish Authorities.

ברוך ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן-הָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם

At the end of each blessing in the *Amidah* prayer, the *chazan* (cantor) adds the verse: “*Baruch Hashem Elo-key Yisrael Min Ha’olam Ve’ad Ha’olam*” (Blessed is the L-rd, G-d of Israel, from eternity to eternity) and only then does the blessing end as written in the *siddur*.

For example: “*Baruch Hashem Elo-key Yisrael Min Ha’olam Ve’ad Ha’olam, Baruch Ata Hashem Magen Avraham.*” There is a dispute as to whether a single person praying the *Amidah* alone on the Temple Mount ends the blessings this way or the usual way.

At the end of each blessing in the *Amidah* prayer, we do not say *Amen*. Instead, everyone says aloud: “*Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuto Le’olam Va’ed*” (Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom forever and all time).

“בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד”

Birkat Kohanim is said in sequence (there is no break between verses). At the end, we do not say *Amen*. There are several opinions in Jewish law regarding the verse that is recited instead. Currently, the accepted practice on the Temple Mount is to follow *Rashi*’s opinion, and everyone responds aloud: “*Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuto Le’olam Va’ed.*”

It is customary for the *Amidah* prayer, when said by one person, to end with the verse: “May it be Your will, *Hashem*, that the Temple be rebuilt... and that we worship You there as in the days of old” (the exact wording varies by *siddur*). It is worth noting that on the Temple Mount we do not say “There we will serve”. Instead, we say: “**Here** we will serve”, because the Temple Mount is the place of G-d’s worship.

It is customary to pray on the eastern side of the Temple Mount, facing the entrance to the Temple, the Sanctuary, and the Holy of Holies.



The *Shehecheyanu* Blessing or the Tearing of the Garment

When ascending the Temple Mount for the first time:

Some Jewish Authorities rule that you should tear a garment (in mourning), because we see the Temple in its ruins.

Some Jewish Authorities rule that you should recite the *Shehecheyanu* blessing because you are performing new *mitzvot* for the first time, such as reverence of the Temple, prostration, and conquering the Temple Mount. Today, since many Jews ascend the Temple Mount with joy and excitement, most people recite the *Shehecheyanu* blessing when they go up for the first time. The decision depends on the individual's feelings or the rabbi whom you follow. It is also possible to do both things.

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם שְׁהַחֵינּוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעַנוּ לַזְמַן הַזֶּה



Hallel Gate: The entrance leading to the Temple Mount.



Additional Instructions

The police

Currently, religious Jews (those who ascend according to *halacha*) are required to be accompanied by police when ascending the Temple Mount. The police escort is intended to ensure the security and safety of the Jews. Unfortunately, the officers accompanying us are also required to restrict Jews in many ways, based on decisions made by the police, the government, and the Jordanian Waqf.

The police do not permit anyone to bring religious articles such as *siddur*, a *tallit*, *tefillin*, the four species, a *shofar*, etc. up to the Temple Mount. They also forbid Israeli flags, wine, or alcoholic beverages. Sometimes, depending on the decisions of the police or the government, there are other restrictions.

The police allow the use of a *siddur* on a cell phone (prayers can be found online and in various apps). They also permit the use of specific printed prayer sheets containing selected portions of the prayers, which are available at the entrance. However, on holidays (*Yom Tov*), since *halachah* prohibits the use of a cell phone, the prayers must be learned by heart.

Bathrooms

There are no toilets on the Temple Mount. It is recommended that you use the restroom (and change your baby's diaper) before ascending the Temple Mount. Toilets are available in the Western Wall Plaza, and near the entrance to the Davidson Center.

Opening hours for Jews on the Temple Mount

Currently, Jews can only enter the Temple Mount from the "*Hallel Gate*" (formerly the Mugrabim Gate). If you arrive from the Dung Gate, where all the bus stops are, you will find an entrance to the Western Wall Plaza. The entrance to the Temple Mount is on the right.

Currently, the Temple Mount is open to Jews only from Sunday to Thursday

During standard (winter) time:

6:30-11:00

12:30-14:00

During Daylight Savings Time:

6:30-11:30

13:30-15:00



It is advisable to confirm, in advance, with Jews who regularly ascend the Temple Mount, that it will be open (sometimes it is closed to Jews), as well as the exact opening hours. This will help you avoid the heartache and disappointment of arriving at the Temple Mount after much effort and preparation, only to find out that it is closed to Jews.

Guidance

On days when the Temple Mount is open to Jews, there are usually guides in the Jewish groups. You can approach them and ask them to guide you, explain things and answer your questions. You can also ask the other Jews in the group if anyone would be willing to guide you. There are often people who frequently ascend the Temple Mount and they will be happy to guide you and explain things. Additionally, you can contact us in advance, and we will arrange for a woman to accompany and guide you on your first ascent to the Temple Mount.

Phone numbers for inquiries

**PLEASE CONTACT US FOR GUIDANCE ON THE LAWS OF RITUAL
PURITY, ASSISTANCE IN FINDING A MIKVEH,
AND FOR ANY OTHER QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS.**

You can also contact us if you would like us to find a woman to accompany you on the Temple Mount, or if you would like to join our activities for the Temple and Temple Mount.

- ☎ **Yaffa Kenzin: 054-524-5529 (English and Hebrew).**
- ☎ **Rena Ariel: 054-754-3051 (English and Hebrew).**
- ☎ **Rabbanit Idit Bartov: 050-366-3101 (Hebrew).**



The two Hulda Gates were the main entrances to the Temple Mount during the Second Temple period. The gate structure included a tunnel and stairs leading up to the Temple Mount.





Chapter 10 - Conclusion

The Temple Mount is the center of the world. It is the place where G-d initially created the world, and the place where we can become closer to G-d and start anew.

From the time that the Jewish people became a nation, at times when men were intimidated by the difficulties and gave up, women used their ability to hope, to foresee the redemption and to promote it. In the *Talmud* (*Sotah* 12a) we are told that in the land of Egypt, when Pharaoh decreed, "Every son who is born you shall throw into the Nile" (*Shemot* 1:22), Amram and other men, out of desperation, divorced their wives, so that no babies would be born. But Miriam saw hope and did not give up. She demanded that her parents, Amram and Yocheved, reunite. Thanks to Miriam, Moses, who led the Jewish nation out of Egypt, was born. Even after it was necessary to put Moses in a wicker basket on the bank of the Nile, Miriam did not give up. She continued to look after him and make sure that he would live. She very cleverly obtained the approval from Pharaoh's daughter that allowed Moses to remain in his mother's care during his early years.

Another righteous woman related to the redemption of Egypt is Serah, the daughter of Asher. According to the *Midrashim*, Serah had a very long life. She went to Egypt with Jacob's children and was privileged to enter the Land of Israel after the exodus from Egypt. According to tradition, she was the only one who had received the secret of redemption and knew who would be the person to save the Jewish people from Egypt.

When the Children of Israel were busy asking for vessels and clothes in preparation for the Exodus from Egypt, the women rushed to get tambourines. They were certain that G-d would save them and wanted to be prepared to celebrate, dance and sing a song of thanks to G-d for redeeming them from Egypt. And when the men transgressed in the Sin of the Spies by refusing to enter the land of Israel, the daughters of Zelophehad hurriedly approached Moses and asked for a hereditary holding in the Land of Israel.

In recent generations, there are also those who reject the cherished Land and make similar arguments regarding the Temple Mount and our Temple. Women today, like the righteous women who accompanied us throughout history, strive not only to prepare the hearts, but also to engage in practical action toward its rebuilding - by learning the laws of ritual purity, ascending the Temple Mount, and taking part in concrete preparations for the Temple. May we be privileged to soon rebuild the Temple and worship G-d in His Holy abode in total purity of body and spirit. May it come to be in our lifetime.



**In the merit of the righteous women
that were in that generation,
the Jewish people were redeemed from Egypt**
(Talmud, Sotah 11b)

**And in the merit of the righteous women
of our generation,
may we be worthy
to be redeemed once again.**



**The Third Temple, inspired by the description
in the Book of Ezekiel.**



Glossary of Hebrew Words

Aleinu LeShabei'ach - a prayer said at the end of the service. The prayer includes a praise to G-d for teaching us to worship and prostrate only to Him, and a hope for the future when all the nations should leave their idols and pray and prostrate only to G-d

Am Yisrael - the Jewish People

Amen - A declaration of affirmation used to respond to blessings and prayers in praise of G-d.

Amidah prayer - a silent prayer at the center of the Jewish daily prayers

Ashkenazi - Jews of Germanic or European descent

Azarah - the Temple Court

Ba'al kerí - a man who has had a seminal emission

Bat Mitzvah - a Jewish girl of age 12 or more. According to *halacha*, she has all the rights and obligations of a Jewish adult. Also refers to the celebration when a girl turns 12

Beit HaMikdash - Temple

Beit Midrash on the Temple Mount - an area on the eastern path in the Temple Mount, just before the Golden Gate. It has become customary to stop there for a few minutes to study *Torah*

B"H (Baruch Hashem) - Thank G-d

Bikkurim - bringing the first fruit

Birkat Kohanim - The *kohanim's* (priests') blessing to the congregation

Book of Devarim - Deuteronomy

Book of Shemot - Exodus

Book of Vayikra - Leviticus

Brayta - a passage of Jewish law which was transferred orally

Chail - a narrow area between the walls of the Temple's courts and the *soreg*

Chatzitza - intervening substance

Chazan - cantor

Geula - redemption

Chazarat HaShatz - the repetition of the *Amidah* prayer

Even Hashtiya - Foundation Rock

Hafrashat challa - dough offering when baking bread

Halacha, halachic, halachot - Jewish ritual laws

Halachic authorities - Rabbis

Hallel Gate - Gate of Praise. (Formerly called the Mugrabim Gate). Currently, it is the only gate through which Jews are permitted to enter the Temple Mount. The gate is named in memory of Hallel Yaffa Ariel, a 13-year-old girl who was



murdered in her bed by an Arab terrorist in 2016. "*Hallel*" also means "praise", and we enter the Temple Mount through this gate to praise G-d

Hanukkah - An 8-day Jewish holiday in the winter months, commemorating the victory of the Jewish army over the Greeks in the land of Judea

Har Habayit - the Temple Mount

Hashem - G-d

Hasmonean - refers to the period 167-37 BCE, when Judea was ruled by the Hasmonean dynasty.

Hishtachavaya - prostration

Iyar - The second month of the Jewish calendar, occurs in late spring or early summer

Kareth - spiritual excision

Kiyyor - laver

Kohanim - priests

Kor'im and Mishtachavim - we bow down and prostrate ourselves

Kotel - Western Wall

Ma'aser sheni - second tithe

Melachim Alef - Book of Kings I

Midrash, Midrashim - a genre of Jewish literature that interprets and elaborates upon Biblical texts

Midrashot - an institute of *Torah* study for women

Mikveh, pl. *Mikvaot* - bath(s) used for ritual immersion

Minchah - Afternoon prayer

Minhag - practice

Minyan - Quorum of 10 Jewish males (over the age of 13)

Mishkan - Tabernacle

Mishnah - the first written collection of the Jewish oral traditions

Mishtachavim - prostrating

Mitzvah, pl. *Mitzvot* - Jewish law(s)

Mount Moriah - the Biblical name of the Temple Mount

Morah Mikdash - Reverence of the Temple

Morah - reverence / fear

Neta revai - fourth year fruits

Niddah - menstruation

Nissan - The first month of the Jewish religious calendar, occurs in the spring

Parah adumah - red heifer

Pesach - Passover

Rabbanit - an Orthodox woman who has achieved a high level of Jewish learning, both informally and formally through ordination



Sefer - book

Sephardic - Jews of Babylonian, Oriental, or Spanish descent

Shaar HaRachamim - the Golden Gate

Shabbat - the Sabbath (From Friday evening until Saturday evening)

Shehecheyanu - a blessing recited to celebrate special occasions. It expresses gratitude to G-d for new and unusual experiences or possessions

Shacharit - morning prayer

Sheretz - eight creeping animals described in Leviticus which have special laws in regard to ritual impurity

Shir Hama'alot - a song of praise to G-d (refers to Psalms chapter 126).

Shofar - Ram's horn

Siddur - a Jewish prayer book

Sifra - a portion of the Midrash

Sin of the Spies - the Jewish people's rebellion in the Sinai desert against G-d's command to enter the Promised Land

Soreg - a fence surrounding the *chail* in the Temple which had warning signs in different languages that forbade the entry of ritually impure Jews as well as gentiles into the Temple

Tallit - a fringed garment worn as a prayer shawl by religious men

Talmud (Gemarah) - the central text of Rabbinic Judaism and the primary source of Jewish religious law

Tehillim - Book of Psalms

Tefillin - black leather boxes with Hebrew parchment scrolls, worn by men during the morning prayer

Terumah Gedolah - great heave offering

Terumah of the Land of Israel - a sacred gift of agricultural produce given to *kohanim* (priests)

Terumat Hamaaser - tithe of the heave offering

Tira'u - revere / fear

Tisha B'Av - a fast day which commemorates the destruction of the Temples

Torah - the Five Books of Moses

Tum'at ker - impurity of a man after emitting seed

Tum'at met - impurity due to contact with a human corpse

Va'anachnu Kor'im U'mishtachavim - And we bow down and prostrate ourselves

Yeshiva - an institute of *Torah* study for men

Yom Kippur - Day of Atonement

Yom Tov - Jewish holiday

Zav - a man who has had abnormal seminal discharge

Zava - a woman who has had vaginal blood discharges not during the usually anticipated menstrual cycle



**"Go up to the Mountain...
and build the House..."**

(Haggai 1:8)

