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Pilgrimage

J'lem Day eve: Rabbis flock to Temple Mount

Dozens of rabbis from Religious Zionism movement pray at Western Wall, then visit Temple Mount under police protection, worship according to halacha, say 'essence of Jerusalem Day is not Kotel, but what lies beyond it, the site of our Temple'

Kobi Nahshoni

Proximity talks have begun, and the Right to demonstrate its commitment to Jerusalem. On the eve of the 43rd Jerusalem Day, 43 rabbis, mainly from the Religious Zionism movement, visited the Temple Mount on Monday, in the largest group of rabbis to visit the site since 1967. The event was coordinated with the Jerusalem Police and was held under security.

The rabbis to visit the site include Kiryat Arba rabbi and chairman of the Yesha Rabbinical Council Rabbi Dov Lior, head of the Har Etzion Yeshiva Rabbi Yaakov Meidan, Otniel rabbi and head of the community's yeshiva Rabbi Ram Hacoen, Ofra Rabbi Avi Gisser, Yitzhar Rabbi David Dudkevitz, and Knesset members Uri Ariel and Michael Ben-Ari ([National Union](#)).

This is the third time in recent years that a group of rabbis gathers to visit the Temple Mount, and the event has become a tradition since the 40th anniversary of Jerusalem's liberation.



Largest group since 1967 Photo: Yehuda Glick, Temple Mount Heritage Fund

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Rabbis en route to Temple Mount (Photo: Yehuda Glick, Temple Mount Heritage Fund)

The rabbis visited the site after holding morning prayers at the Western Wall. Earlier, the rabbis immersed themselves in a mikveh, and were careful to walk only in areas permitted by halacha on the Temple Mount.

The El Har Hamor organization and the Temple Mount Heritage Fund, which organized the event, explained its purpose: "An expression of the deep bond with the holy site."

The organizers added, "It is also of significance in terms of public awareness. The presence of rabbis visiting the site together shows the students in particular, and the public in general, the

value and importance of visiting the Temple Mount in sanctity and in purity."

MK Uri Ariel, who is active in encouraging Jews to visit the Temple Mount, said, "The rabbis' visit is meant to remind us of the essence of Jerusalem Day: It is not the Western Wall that is our souls' desire, but what lies beyond it – the Temple Mount, the site of our Temple."

Yehuda Glick, chairman of the Temple Mount Heritage Fund, said, "Thank the heavens, the Jews' visit to the sacred Temple Mount is not just for a few Jews, but is a widespread custom among a broad avenue of the religious and ultra-Orthodox public.

"We thank the Israel Police for allowing this visit and securing the rabbis throughout their visit to the site, and hope that this is the start of the fulfillment of the prophets' words: 'In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of G-d shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it... for the law shall go forth from Zion, and the world of G-d from Jerusalem,' and these will be the real proximity talks."

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