

## The Pilgrimage as *Tikkun Olam*

Rivon Krygier

*Translated from the French by Martin S. Cohen*

The pilgrimage to God's sanctuary is an unambiguous commandment of the Torah that requires every male Israelite to present himself three times a year—at the festivals of Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot—"before" God and to commune with that God in that place in some sort of sensory context, to which Scripture alludes but does not precisely explain.<sup>1</sup> What might it mean for contemporary Jews to speak about such a thrice-annual pilgrimage, called in later sources *aliyah la-regel*, to Jerusalem? To answer that question, I do not plan to review all the details found in ancient sources about how the pilgrimage was performed historically or imagined ideally. Instead, I wish to write here about the spiritual meaning—and thus the ultimate goal—of the pilgrimage from a comparative perspective, inspired both by biblical and rabbinic sources.

The Book of Deuteronomy underscores the importance of Israel's covenantal loyalty to God, and insists that cultic worship can only occur at one designated place.<sup>2</sup> Maimonides was certainly right to argue that the point of this requirement was the regular gathering of the Jewish people around the Temple—here understood as the earthly pole of the axis *mundi*<sup>3</sup> around which all creation rotates—in order both to maintain ties of allegiance to the Creator and to ensure the social and religious cohesiveness of the Jewish people.<sup>4</sup> But my examination of the biblical and rabbinic texts regarding this *mitzvah* leads me to consider the concept of pilgrimage in the broader context of itinerancy itself: it may be seen not solely as a goal to be attained

in physical space, but as a type of spiritual journey in time as well. The concept is not simply about the desire to ensure the ongoing divine presence in the Holy City (nor, later, to restore it, once the Temple itself no long stood in Jerusalem). Rather, I believe that *aliyah la-regel* in antiquity was intended to speak to the need to strengthen the relationship between God and the Jewish people in the long term. In this context, it is the journey itself that is the point: the pilgrim makes an *aliyah*, an ascent, to the Land of Israel, to Jerusalem, to the Temple Mount—thus undertaking a journey, through sacred and transcendental topography, toward a peak. And indeed, different sources suggest that this *aliyah* brings in its wake an elevation of the soul, a modification of the consciousness that can give access and exposure to the Divine in the kind of face-to-face meeting to which Scripture alludes.<sup>5</sup>

Psalm 24, for instance, frames the concept of pilgrimage in terms of the moral behavior required of those deemed worthy of visiting the Temple. I would render verses 3–6 of the psalm as follows, with the translation reflecting my sense that this poem is about the pilgrim's moral progress:

Who may participate in an *aliyah* to the Temple Mount?  
 Indeed, who may enter the site of God's holy sanctuary?  
 One who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has never  
     taken a false oath invoking My name or sworn deceitfully.  
 Such a one shall carry away the blessing from the Eternal,  
     a just reward from the God of such a pilgrim's ultimate  
 deliverance.  
 Such would be the generation of Jacob's people who truly  
     seek Your face.

The very concept of making oneself visible to God—a meaningless thought with respect to an all-seeing Deity, if taken solely literally—suggests its own deeper interpretation: to be “seen” by God is to seek

divine approval for attaining a high level of moral rectitude. And this notion is precisely what is suggested by the positioning of the golden cherubs atop the ark in the holy of holies, as stated clearly in an ancient midrash:

How exactly were the cherubs positioned? Rabbi Yoḥanan and Rabbi Eliezer differed in this matter, one imagining them facing each other and the other imagining them facing the front of the Temple...but these positions are not really mutually exclusive and can be reconciled easily: when Israel's actions reflect the will of God the cherubs faced each other, but when Israel's actions did not do so, they [turned away from each other and instead] faced the front of the Temple.<sup>6</sup>

This idea of pilgrimage, of course, is not a purely individual matter; it is also about a collective odyssey—undertaken not only by individuals once or thrice a year, but indeed by the Jewish people throughout our history, even going as far back as Abraham, the earliest of our patriarchs. Indeed, the psalm can be taken as a kind of call to arms challenging the Jewish people, dispersed and exiled, to rededicate itself to the virtues that will lead to the construction of a true “city of God,” one reflective of the ideals of Judaism and its utopian universalism. Jerusalem here is to be understood in its prophetic sense as the place where all the nations will one day converge to worship a God who has become no less universal than unique: “Then, I shall endow the nations with a common language so that I may call to them all in the name of the Eternal, inviting them as one people to the worship of God” (Zephaniah 3:9). Or, resonating even more strongly with the idea of the pilgrimage, consider the following verse from Zechariah: “And it shall come to pass that all those who survive of those nations who array themselves against Jerusalem shall come year after year to prostrate themselves before sovereign God, the Eternal One of Hosts, and [there] to celebrate Sukkot” (Zechariah 14:16).

How could a people be so possessed by a deep respect for its past, yet also fully engaged by the future-oriented desire to bring the nations of the world to Jerusalem, in the specific way the prophet foresaw? And in many ways, this is still a live question for Jews today. Jerusalem is the Gordian knot of the Arab–Israeli conflict, the key to establishing peace for the entire region. Jews in our time are fully aware that, for the first time in modern history, the Temple Mount is under the control of an independent Jewish state; yet, the voltage generated by the issue of Jerusalem somehow also feels at least slightly unnerving. Nor is it at all surprising that the political future of the Temple Mount lies at the crux of any possible peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Middle East. And in addition to the political issues, there is also another set of issues to consider, rooted in the ethnic and religious conscious (or subconscious) of the peoples involved, as they negotiate in terms bordering on the eschatological. It is in this sense that we find ourselves at the heart of *tikkun olam*, the reparation of the world and the edification of a redemptive age to come. It should be noted that the idea of *tikkun olam* also appears in the second paragraph of the *Aleinu*,<sup>7</sup> in the context of a prayer for the establishment of divine sovereignty over the world—which would presumably begin with the locus of the divine presence on earth, Jerusalem...and from there to spread over the entire world. *Aleinu* as such is a prayer for universal, not only national, ultimate redemption.

And it is in this sense that moderns should sing the verse from Psalms, known to most Jewish worshippers from the Hallel liturgy, that predicts that the stone once scorned shall yet become a cornerstone (Psalm 118:22): the *tikkun* will install the cornerstone in its place by establishing peace in the Holy City and the Holy Land. Such a reading, as we shall see, effectively calls upon Jews to undergo a kind of interior moral growth process, which will be outwardly expressed through both the renunciation of the thirst for exclusive political power and also of the mindset that defines security as total hegemony over others.

**“What Happened to Abraham  
Shall Yet Happen to His Descendants”<sup>8</sup>**

To understand and to appreciate the ultimate meaning of, and the challenge inherent in, the commandment to “see” God in a specific place, we must begin with the journey of Abraham, whose own journey may be considered the archetypical precursor of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Indeed, the nature of the underlying enterprise reveals itself in a particularly striking way in the story of the very first—but surely, when the traditions of other monotheistic religions are taken into account, not the only—pilgrim who, prompted only the desire to serve God, sets out for a distant place he himself could never find on his own:

The Eternal said to Abram, “*Go forth on your own* from your country, from your homeland, and from your father’s house to the land that *I shall show you*. I make you into a great nation: I will bless you and make great your name and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who wish you ill, for all the families of the earth shall know blessing through you.” At age seventy-five Abram went forth from Haran just as the Eternal had said he was to do, and Lot went with him. Of course, he didn’t only take his nephew Lot along! He also took his wife Sarai and all the property they had acquired in Haran, including a vast entourage of living souls, and thus did they leave Haran for the land of Canaan and eventually they arrived there. After crossing into the land, Abram continued their journey to the region of Shechem and stopped only when they reached the place called Alon Moreh. (The Canaanite was in the country at that time.) And it was at that spot that the Eternal appeared to Abram and said, “I shall give this land to your progeny.” Hearing those words, Abram promptly constructed an altar that he dedicated to the *Eternal who appeared to him there*.<sup>9</sup>

Everything is already condensed in the initial two words of the call: *lekh l'kha*. Not necessarily just “go forth,” as in our translation, but possibly these words may be translated as “go forth for yourself” or “go forward to yourself,” or even “go forth for your own benefit and advancement,” as Rashi suggests. The Hebrew phrase denotes movement both centripetal (*lekh* is about travelling forward, toward a distant destination) and centrifugal (*l'kha* is about travelling into oneself, toward the core of one’s being). And such a command must surely mean: in order to become oneself (that is, to realize one’s own identity and destiny), one must undertake a journey that is at first one’s own—consisting primarily of the effort to “infuse,” bringing oneself to personal maturity on one’s way, and secondarily to “diffuse,” making oneself a blessing for others.

Far from being the story of a simple migration, the trajectory that Abraham followed from Mesopotamia to Canaan is, at its heart, a story of interior growth and development.<sup>10</sup> And it is significant that God specifically does *not* reveal to Abraham his final destination, preferring to vaguely reference the end of the journey as “the land that I shall show you.” This suggests that completing the journey will require attaining the transcendent, the unforeseeable, perhaps even the unimaginable—something that clearly will never happen without a concomitant experience of profound inner metamorphosis. This notion is suggested almost explicitly when the narrative relates how the names of both of our ancestral pilgrims actually grew along the great journey (as promised literally by God: “I will make great/enlarge your name”), each acquiring the Hebrew letter *hei*—as Abram becomes Abraham and Sarai becomes Sarah.<sup>11</sup>

The duty to pilgrimate—if my readers will permit me my own neologism—was understood by the Jewish tradition to suggest a kind of initiatory journey capable of leading to growth of the identity, to an enlargement of the self. Rabbinic tradition speaks of the “ten tests of Abraham”<sup>12</sup> to which God subjected him on his journey. It is striking to note that the very roadmap of his journey is mentioned in the

above-cited biblical passage (Genesis 12) as consisting of three steps, located in each of the three first verses: (1) first, get out of the place in which you are stuck; (2) then, become a great and blessed nation, both in terms of descendants and territory; (3) and finally, bring blessing to all the families of the earth. Indeed, these three stages are reflected in the three pilgrimage festivals that are rooted formally in the agricultural cycle of ancient Israel, but which more profoundly suggest a nation's growth toward God: (1) first Pesah, celebrating the departure from Egypt as the archetype for any departure from exile and alienation, agriculturally tied to the beginning of the harvest; (2) then Shavuot, celebrating the arrival of the nation at its most sacred Temple bearing the *bikkurim*, the first fruits of the earth, which symbolize national maturity and prosperity; (3) and finally Sukkot, celebrating the end of the harvest and associated with the nation's collective blessing to the peoples of the earth—as symbolized by the sacrifice of seventy bulls, taken from earliest times to represent the seventy nations of the world—and not just to themselves.<sup>13</sup>

Let us go back to the foundational biblical story itself, and note the uncomfortable situation in which God has, from the outset, placed its hero. God promises the land to Abraham's descendants, but he has barely set his feet on its soil when the reader learns with amazement that “the Canaanite was in the country at that time” (Genesis 12:6). Thus, from the very beginning of the saga the reader is alerted to the complexity of the situation into which Abraham has (in this case, literally) wandered: the land to which he has been led is already inhabited, and so this “gift” to Abraham and his descendants comes intrinsically wrapped up in the challenge of *coexistence* with the locals—a challenge that remains even in our day unmet. Surely it would have been simpler and easier for the biblical narrator to take a hand-in-glove approach and describe the gift of a land-without-people to a people-without-a-land! Will Abraham's descendants, the nation-to-be, be able to accept God's gift, without ending up either as an unwelcome guest in someone else's home or as the unfeeling

usurper of another people's property? That is the existential question which haunts all the journeys of Israel, and which presents the real challenge of the pilgrimage throughout subsequent Jewish history.

Abraham's precarious situation was bequeathed to the later generations of Israel, who too became obliged to negotiate the complicated situation of being indigenous neither in a land of their own (toward which they must endlessly migrate after prolonged periods of unwanted exile elsewhere) nor in the lands of their exile (where they must live, if they are to retain their identity). And, indeed, this existentially challenging condition serves as the background to the "apocalyptic"<sup>14</sup> moment when God reveals the reason for Abraham's election: "Because if I have known (*y'datvi*)<sup>15</sup> him [Abraham], that was merely in order that he command to his sons and his house after him to keep to the path of the Eternal, to practice fairness and justice in order that the Eternal might bring to fruition what God has said with respect to Abraham's future" (Genesis 18:19). Such are the ramifications and, indeed, such is the core of the injunction spoken earlier in the text: "Walk before Me and thus become whole" (Genesis 17:1). To become "whole" (*tamim*), Abraham must voluntarily withdraw something of his own power (and it is precisely such willingness that circumcision represents). Circumcision introduces the notion that completeness comes through the exercise of restraint itself, which notion will eventually be applicable to the way we relate to the "other" in our midst as well. This is why Abraham agrees to share the occupation of land with his nephew Lot (Genesis 13:8–11) and why he is welcomed by God in "negotiating" with him about Sodom and Gomorrah, invoking the sense of justice and compassion that he feels (Genesis 18:22–32). In this instance, Abraham is concerned not only with his own people (he could just as easily negotiated to save Lot and his family alone) but also with the fate of two entire pagan cities. And this is surely the ideal narrative against which to read the commandment addressed later on to Israel concerning strangers in general: "The stranger that



sojourns among you shall be for you as the Israelite by birth, and you shall love such a one as yourself, for you yourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Leviticus 19:34).

Reading Abraham’s story in this way suggests at least obliquely that the ultimate goal of the pilgrimage is to effectuate a transfiguration in the relationship of the pious individual to the “other,” allowing one to find the courage to befriend one’s enemies and to treat them with dignity and respect. Surely, the biblical lesson is not to love those who may currently hate us! Rather, treating strangers—even churlish, difficult ones—with a certain respect can become a first step toward co-existing with them. Such a metamorphosis along the journey is the lesson of the beautiful rabbinic adage derived from *Avot D’rabbi Natan*, which teaches that a real hero is “anyone who manages to make an enemy into a friend.”<sup>16</sup> It certainly sounds utopian even to contemplate behaving in this way in our own time, but it would be even worse *not* to feel called upon to undertake the great migration, the great pilgrimage, from where we are now to the unimaginable place that Scripture imagines we might yet reach.

### The Metaphor of the Graft

Indeed, we cannot minimize the importance of this third and final part of the journey laid out in the roadmap revealed to Abraham: the process by means of which his descendants are to become a source of blessing for the nations of the world. The rabbis of the Talmud drew attention to the verb *nivr’khu* in Genesis 12:3—and their reading highlights a second, far less expected meaning:

Rabbi Eleazar taught: What is the [deeper, more subtle] meaning of the verse: “...and all the families of that place shall know blessing by you (*v’nivr’khu v’kha*)”? The blessed Holy One was [in effect] saying to Abraham: “I have two

good blessings to graft onto you (*I'havrikh v'kha*): Ruth the Moabitess and Naamah of Ammon.<sup>17</sup>

This interpretation is based on the dual meaning of the root *bet-resb-kaf* as it was used in mishnaic Hebrew, a usage that permits “shall know blessing” to be read as “shall be grafted.”<sup>18</sup>

This interpretation—which is also found in the commentary of Rashbam—inverts the expected meaning of the verb: it is not that the nations of the world will be *blessed by* Abraham’s progeny, but rather that Abraham’s descendants will profit by *having grafted onto them* individuals from outside the Israelite nation, who are distinguished by their fine moral traits.<sup>19</sup> It is true that the two nations mentioned, Moab and Ammon, are depicted in Scripture as themselves being offshoots cut off from the Abraham’s family—and so this restoration of their earlier status as part of the Abrahamic family is, effectively, a type of *tikkun*.<sup>20</sup> But the more important detail here is that Ruth and Naamah, the paradigmatic characters in this text, provide a meaningful precedent for the notion that this process of “grafting” other nations onto the Israelite root will ultimately be a source of blessing for all involved: both for Israel, who will only become stronger and better as a result of the graft, and also for the other nations, for whom the process of becoming “related” to the Jewish people will be ultimately beneficial and a source of blessing. Moreover, Rashbam also notes that although the *v'nivv'khu* passage appears in a narrative “about” Abraham, the first patriarch of Israel (Genesis 12:3), it is also “about” Jacob/Israel, whose descendants became the Israelites, insofar as the promise is repeated with respect to him personally later in Scripture (at Genesis 28:14).<sup>21</sup>

To emancipate oneself from illusory self-sufficiency, to work up to the level of being capable of piercing the outer bark in order to accept the graft (and this too is what circumcision is ultimately about)—this is the true purpose of the odyssey of Abraham’s descendants. Of course, one cannot attain this level of bi-directionality—encompassing

both an acceptance of an other and a willingness to share with that other (as in the relationship between the tree and its graft)—without successfully facing one’s own anxieties and fears, especially the multifaceted fear of death. Indeed, we realize later in the story that Abraham does not fear that the divine promise of land may be compromised nearly as intently as he fears the potential negation of the divine promise of progeny. And thus it could not possibly be more significant when we hear God’s original, simple *lekh l’kha* call of Genesis 12:1 echoing almost painfully in its subsequent iteration, in the narrative of the *akeidah*, the greatest of all tests: “Take now your son, your only son, the one whom you love, Isaac, and *lekh l’kha* to land of Moriah, and offer him there as a wholly-burnt offering on the mountain that I will show you.”

It is key to note here that God’s first *lekh l’kha* makes a point specifically of omitting mention of a destination; it simply invites Abraham to a place that God will, presumably, designate once it is reached. I propose therefore that we should see the material between the first *lekh l’kha* and the second as a sort of aside; doing so suggests that the end of the journey, the original journey to which Abraham was called, is the land of Moriah—and even more specifically, the unnamed mountain henceforth to be named “God will be seen (*yeira·eh*)” and “God will see (*yireh*).”<sup>22</sup>

This ultimate test imposed on Abraham presumes a kind of almost superhuman selflessness on Abraham’s part—or, at the very least, a willingness to quash his doubts even to the point of risking his own future as the patriarch of a nation. But in the end, what does this test actually prove? Isaac, of course, is not sacrificed. His father passes the test by remaining confident and willing to persevere down a very steep path toward an unknown, potentially disastrous destination. But what does this story imply about Abraham’s relationship to his unsacrificed son, to Isaac? Why was it as necessary for him to bring his son up to the top of the mountain at all? It is critical to understand that the test of Abraham rests on a paradox. On the

one hand, the story is about the confirmation of Isaac as the “only” and beloved son (Genesis 22:2), and thus the legitimate heir to his father’s estate—as opposed to Ishmael, now the disenfranchised child (see Genesis 21). But on the other hand, the story is also about Abraham’s readiness to sacrifice this uniqueness (which the loss of Isaac would inevitably entail), in order successfully to go through his ordeal!<sup>23</sup> Everything seems to point to the goal of guaranteeing that the line Abraham now stands to father through the elected Isaac will be born, so to speak, aware of and awake to this readiness to sacrifice its “unique” status. Indeed, the story of Ishmael’s brutal expulsion from his father’s household may be seen as testifying to how things were at the beginning, when fraternity between Isaac and Ishmael had been impossible. The question that the story will prompt the thoughtful reader to ask, therefore, is whether reconciliation between the brothers will be possible in the future. Will Israel be able to renounce exclusivity in the future,<sup>24</sup> as their progenitor was once able to do in the past? In that case, Israel-to-come might be willing to graft the descendants of Ishmael (and they might be willing to be grafted) on to the spiritual tree of Abraham and Israel.

This idea was expressed by Yehudah Halevi (1075–1140) as follows:

These religions [Christianity and Islam] exist for naught else than to pave the way and prepare the ground for the Messiah, the object of our yearning [no less than theirs]. And, indeed, when they [finally] recognize this truth, then shall the tree again become one. At that time, they shall hold in great esteem the root that they themselves formerly vilified.<sup>25</sup>

And, indeed, a talmudic midrash, in discussing this vision of the future, specifically connects its vision of the future inclusion of the nations to the concept of *aliyah la-regel*:

Rabbah taught a lesson based on the verse from the Song of Songs, “How beautifully shod are your feet, O daughter of nobility” (Song of Songs 7:2). The text can be taken as follows. “How beautifully shod are your feet” can be understood as, “How lovely are your feet, O Israel, when you ascend [to Jerusalem] in pilgrimage.” And the phrase “O daughter of nobility” can be taken as a reference to Israel as the descendant of Father Abraham who is indeed called a noble, as is written in the Psalms: “Therefore do the nobles of the nations gather to ally themselves with the people of the God of Abraham, for the weapons of the world are naught but tools of God Most High” (Psalm 47:9). And why does the verse reference the Eternal as the God of Abraham, rather than as the God of Isaac or of Jacob? Because it was he [i.e., Abraham] who first brought [outsiders to faith in God, through the process of accepting converts to monotheism].<sup>26</sup>

Let us remember, however, that this famous peak will, at least spiritually and certainly literarily, resonate with similar visions in the so-called “daughter religions” of Judaism, even though there will obviously also be sharp differences. Within the context of Islamic tradition, for example, the event at Moriah is celebrated with the well-known Islamic festival called *Eid al-Adha* (“the festival of sacrifice”), also known as *Eid al-Kabir* (“the great festival”), the narrative behind which emphasizes that it was Ishmael, not Isaac, whose life Abraham put in peril. And Christians will see in this episode a kind of foreshadowing of Jesus, here taken as the lamb sacrificed but subsequently resurrected, thus—just like Isaac in earlier times—saved. Other details of the larger passion story—for example, including references to Passover and to Moriah in the narrative, are also suggestive and arresting.<sup>27</sup> In the same vein, we must remember that Palm Sunday certainly has its roots in the Festival of Sukkot, the liturgical context for the rabbis’ most profound eschatological

theorizing. Even the apostle Paul, who claimed to have studied Torah at the feet of Rabban Gamliel, expresses the hope that at the end of time Israel, currently cut off from its own roots, will self-graft back onto the “trunk” of Abraham.<sup>28</sup> The *hadj*,<sup>29</sup> the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, features circumambulatory processions that derive directly from the *hakkafot* undertaken with such fervor in the Temple of Jerusalem on the occasion of the Festival of Sukkot.<sup>30</sup> The Kaaba in Mecca is the Islamic equivalent of the altar of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Despite the emergence of new religious centers, none of the three monotheistic religions has ever forgotten its primary ties with Jerusalem. As is widely known, every synagogue in the world must in principle be oriented toward Jerusalem. Maimonides, relying on a passage in the Targum Onkelos, recalls the rabbinic tradition that it was Abraham who first determined the orientation of the prayer toward Jerusalem:

Abraham served God and prayed in this place, then declared to the Eternal: “Here shall future generations worship God and say, ‘In this day, on this mountain, Abraham served the Eternal.’”<sup>31</sup>

The Western Church kept this orientation of the prayer service toward Jerusalem until the fifteenth century (and it continues to this day to be the tradition maintained in at least some Eastern Churches). Likewise, Jerusalem was the first *kibla* (i.e., direction toward which one should orient oneself in prayer) introduced by Mohammed, before switching to Mecca in 624 C.E.<sup>32</sup> I should also stress that the identification of Mount Moriah and the Temple Mount in Jerusalem find its roots within the biblical tradition itself, since the (only) other biblical reference to that place is at 2 Chronicles 3:1, where we read: “Then Solomon began to build the house of the Eternal *at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah*, where the Eternal had appeared to David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor.”

I am not trying to assert there is any real historicity to the identification of Moriah with the Temple Mount. What I am interested in here is the symbolic importance of the identification of Jerusalem with the place where Abraham achieved the peak of faith in God's saving power, through his readiness to sacrifice that which was to him most dear and important. And the fact that this specific place also features prominently in the ritual and mythology of other monotheistic religions only makes the identification that much more interesting to consider, and that much more significant for the future.

The symbolic identification of Moriah with the Temple Mount is powerfully underscored in 1 Chronicles 21, in the famous episode of the counting of "sword-bearing men" undertaken by King David that so irritated God. As a result of God's pique, a severe sentence is pronounced against the people as a scourge begins to ravage the citizenry. But then, at the very last moment and no doubt in recollection of the *akeidah*, the binding of Isaac, God relents and calls back the destroyer, an angel, with the famous words: "Enough! Withdraw your hand!" (verse 15). At that very moment, the angel has just reached the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. And then, lifting up his eyes, David sees this angel standing between heaven and earth, "the sword unsheathed and pointed toward Jerusalem."<sup>33</sup> It is this blade that symbolizes the self-aggrandizement that then leads the king to place his trust in the power of his army rather than in obedience to God to ensure the salvation of Israel. Such is the Jewish version of the "sword of Damocles" hanging over the Holy City! And yet David learns his lesson as he realizes that military power is not the solution, and he then asks God to forgive him his hubris. By virtue of this act of repentance the scourge is ended, and the prophet Gad then says clearly to David that it is in *this specific place* that he shall establish the altar—that is to say, the future Temple in Jerusalem, whose construction will be completed by Solomon. The lesson is stated explicitly in the text itself, when God says that

David, has “shed much blood and conducted many wars,” and that is for that reason that it will not fall to David to build “a house in [God’s] honor.”<sup>34</sup> Indeed, God states specifically that this task will fall to Solomon, whose name (*Shelomo*) derives from the same root as shalom, the word in Hebrew for “peace.”<sup>35</sup> Solomon’s very name thus points to the fact that he will be a man of peace—the king of peace who establishes peaceful relations with former enemies in all directions.<sup>36</sup> We have here a *topos* in the technical sense of the term, that is: a motif that serves to link disparate ideas within a single narrative setting. In this case, the *topos* includes three concepts: (1) the need to face head-on a menace that threatens to harm the entire people, (2) a salvific act rooted in bravery, in self-abnegation, and in renunciation of strength as the source of ultimate power, and (3) a context symbolically created and justified in advance for peaceful coexistence.<sup>37</sup>

### The Mountain of God

Jerusalem is therefore the place in the world that, more than any other, is redolent of memory and suffused with hope. That the Temple Mount subsequently comes to represent fratricidal rivalry and existential worry is thus a huge and challenging paradox. There is a path toward resolution, however, but one that by its nature requires adopting the same kind of courage and selflessness that the place itself also symbolizes. To rise to such a challenge we must be ready, like Abraham, to wander toward the unimaginable—by renouncing feelings of untoward hegemony toward the place, by renouncing the need to anchor respect for other people’s faiths in the unspoken supposition that one’s own faith is the superior one, and by retaining in this place allegiance only to the one and universal God.

In the story of the binding of Isaac, the *akeidah*, we read that the place at which the drama unfolds is henceforth to be called *Har*



*Adonai (Yeira'eh)*, the Mountain of (the Ever-Visible) God (Genesis 22:14). I propose that this detail in the biblical text not be considered an afterthought, but should instead be taken as a visionary element in the larger importance of the story, as the Torah urges us to consider the site as a place that belongs to God and *solely* to God.

We read in the Psalms that Jerusalem is “built up, as a city knit together” (Psalm 122:3). The poet probably had in mind the fact that ancient Jerusalem was really two towns: the lower town, which contained the city’s homes and shops, and the upper town, in which were located the Temple and the city’s higher institutions. But the concept of pilgrimage is also central to the psalm, as is clear from the poet’s description of the city as a place “to which tribes ascend, the tribes of the Lord—as enjoined upon Israel—to praise the name of the Eternal” (verse 4). The Temple and its mountain epitomize the nerve-center of the just society that the poet hopes to see established, for it was “there that the thrones of justice were set up, the thrones of the house of David” (verse 5). We read then the poet’s injunction to “seek out the peace of Jerusalem” and his prayer that those who love the city themselves be no less at peace (verse 6), and this is followed by three verses that constitute a prayer for serenity that eventually gained a place of importance in Jewish liturgy:

May there be peace on your ramparts, tranquility in your palaces.  
 For the sake of my brethren and my friends, I can only say,  
     “May there be peace in you.”  
 For the sake of the Temple of the Eternal, our God, I shall  
     ask only for good for you, O Jerusalem (verses 7–9).

In short, this psalm can be taken as a prayer that Yerushalem (the original name of the city) become Yerushalayim (the later name, which also appears in the Bible—although only in three passages—and which can be interpreted as a dual form of the first name). It is almost as though the poet imagines the lower part of the city making

some sort of *aliyah* to join the upper city in one united municipality at peace. How odd it is to consider that all these centuries later Jerusalem is still, if not *de jure* then certainly *de facto*, a divided city.

And so it remains relevant to wonder how the poet's vision might yet come to pass. And this brings us to a mystical passage of rabbinic literature that suggests that this conjoining of the city's quarters is also a matter of peace in the heavens:

Rabbi Yoḥanan taught as follows: The blessed Holy One said, "I shall not enter celestial Jerusalem for as long as I cannot enter terrestrial Jerusalem." Is there a Jerusalem on high? Yes, as it is written: "Jerusalem built up, as a city knit together."<sup>38</sup>

What a strange resolution, that places God in a position of dependence! And yet the lesson seems clear: God is somehow unable to complete the divine analogue of the human pilgrimage, with all its eschatological implications, as long as humankind does not make peaceful and perfect the Holy City below. Peace, *shalom*, which is mentioned extensively in the psalm, is therefore not to be understood as a gift from God or even as something that God on high can manufacture and then bestow on humankind below. Rather, it is the essential commandment *from* God *to* humankind. In other words, the peace that God will establish on high will follow, not precede, the peace built below, which will ensue only as a result of humankind's striving to bring it about.

Another rabbinic midrash expresses this idea with special eloquence, focusing on the pilgrims' feet:

Great is the peace that the blessed Holy One grants to Zion, as it is said: "Present your wishes for peace to Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:6)...Great is peace, because God will not announce the final redemption to Jerusalem other than after the establishment of peace in that place, as it is written:

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the one who brings good news, who announces peace, who brings news of happiness, who announces salvation, who says to Zion: Your God reigns!” (Isaiah 52:7).<sup>39</sup>

Anticipating this situation, when King Solomon dedicated the Jerusalem Temple, he invited foreigners to address God in prayer, and requested of God that such prayers by non-Israelites be granted special attention.<sup>40</sup> In the same vein, the prophet Isaiah expressed his hope for the ultimate mission of the Temple and the role its destiny would play in the ultimate mission of all Israel, declaring: “For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations” (Isaiah 56:7). And this same prophet also declared:

For the love of Zion, I will not be silent. For the sake of Jerusalem I shall not remain quiet, for as long as *justice* fails to emanate forth from that place as a ray of light, her salvation like a lighted torch. For then shall the nations see your righteousness, and all sovereigns your glory. And then shall you be called by a new name, one that the mouth of the Eternal will designate. (Isaiah 62:1–2)

What is meant here by *tzedek*, “justice”? I believe that the prophet was thinking about the same idea expressed in the Book of Deuteronomy: “And you must do that which is right and good in the eyes of the Eternal, in order that you may be prosperous and thrive in the good land that the Eternal swore to your ancestors that you would possess” (6:18). Commenting on this verse, Rashi notes: “This verse speaks of the willingness to compromise, even beyond the strict letter of the law.” And what of the prophet’s prediction that someday Jerusalem will have a new name? Perhaps this is the idea mirrored in a passage in which a different prophet, Jeremiah, declared that “in those times shall Jerusalem be called ‘throne of the Eternal,’ and so shall all nations throng to it” (3:17).

**“When We Return to Zion, We Shall Be like Dreamers”<sup>41</sup>**

The violent, wrenching conflict in the Middle East between Israelis and Palestinians has at its epicenter the territorial dispute regarding the site in Jerusalem that Muslims know as the Noble Sanctuary (*Haram al-Sharif*) and that Jews call the Temple Mount (*Har Ha-bayit*). (At the same time, we should remember that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre itself is divided into discrete areas under the control of diverse, contentious groups.) But neither Muslims nor Jews appear to be interested in a political agreement, with each side wishing for the whole pie and not even the larger of two slices. An ancient midrash suggests a rather startling starting-point for compromise regarding this ongoing dialogue of the deaf, one that derives from a peculiar ellipsis in the Hebrew text of Scripture. The text in of Genesis 4:8, depicting the prelude to Cain’s murder of Abel reads: “Cain said to Abel his brother...[and] then, when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel his and slew him” (Genesis 4:8). The midrash attempt to fill in the apparent textual lacuna as follows:

Rabbi Joshua of Sakhnin said in the name of Rabbi Levi: What was the object of their discussion? One said, “The Temple will be built on my territory!” And the other said, “No, the Temple will be on my territory!” This is hinted at by the use of the word “field” in the verse, which is used elsewhere in Scripture to designate the Temple, as in the verse from the prophet Micah, “Zion [i.e., the Temple] will be plowed as a field” (Micah 3:12). And it was then that “Cain rose up against his brother Abel and slew him.”<sup>42</sup>

In recent years, a number of solutions to the problem of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have been proposed—some going to the heart of the matter, and others primarily addressed at ancillary issues. One

proposal that, in my humble opinion, deserves our full attention was penned by Sari Nusseibeh and Ami Ayalon in the fall of 2002.<sup>43</sup> The relevant part reads as follows:

*No party will exercise sovereignty over the holy places. The State of Palestine will be appointed as a guardian of the Haram al-Sharif...on behalf of the Muslims. Israel will be the custodian of the Western Wall on behalf of the Jewish people. The status quo concerning the Christian holy places will be maintained. No excavation will be performed in or under the holy places without a mutual agreement.*

Proposing that the communities involved renounce any national, exclusive claim on the “Mountain of God” would be a very powerful statement, but human beings *need* powerful symbols if they are to find the strength to step away from old paradigms that have locked them in vicious, ongoing cycles of violence and mistrust. The suggestions of some ancient traditions may be taken as the basis for such an agreement. Jerusalem very early on was called the “Mountain of the Eternal,” in which phrase the “Eternal One” is the God common to all involved groups, all of whom self-define as the Abrahamic religions. Moreover, since Jerusalem is considered by our tradition as the great and ultimate goal of pilgrimage, it naturally suggests itself as the one place that should be immune to chauvinism or egotistical claims of superiority. Finally, common sense and common interest endorse the notion that the holy mountain should not (now or ever) be deemed the property of one specific nation or religion, but rather be the exclusive “property” of the one God, the God of all the earth.<sup>44</sup>

A vision for the future along these lines, or at least close to them, was expressed by one of the great rabbinic figures of modern times, Rabbi Ḥayyim Hirschensohn (1857–1935). Considering it impossible to consider the restoration of sacrificial worship in a future Temple without the explicit permission of a *bona fide* national

prophet, Hirschensohn envisioned the future of the place along the following lines:

The Temple site should be a sanctuary devoted to the singing both of [King] David's songs of prayer and praise and also new songs by modern poets capable of composing analogous sacred songs. From this sacred place, our sages should teach righteousness and justice to the people. And in that place should be situated the seat of the High Court of Justice, the specific place from which should go forth Law and Light to the whole world. Such a house should be a house of prayer for all nations (Isaiah 56:7). In that place, therefore, would be no religious symbols that would not be acceptable to all peoples, just as there was nothing in the [ancient] ark [housed in the holy of holies in the ancient Temple] other than the two tablets of stone on which were engraved the Ten Commandments, the foundation of the life of all civilized peoples, so that all nations, together and united, could stream to such a place and there stand before the God of Jacob to learn of the law of God, saying: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Eternal, to the House of the God of Jacob, so that God may instruct us in the ways of the divine that we may walk along God's paths. For surely from Zion shall come forth the law, and from Jerusalem the word of the Eternal" (Isaiah 2:2). This is the character we wish to grant to the House of the Eternal in our new State in the Land of Israel: what we wish for is precisely for Law to go forth from Zion and the word of the Eternal from Jerusalem... This is a vision in which the *Mountain of the Eternal serves as a temple of peace*, and, at that, one with far greater potential than the analogous court in the Hague, a court of all nations in which peoples shall be judged justly, in which national avarice shall be roundly condemned, and in which the reprehensible

notion that noble ends can be achieved on the national level through oppression and wickedness will, once and for all, be set aside...<sup>45</sup>

“If we wish it, it need not be a mere fairytale.” But it will take time and a lot of persuasion. Still, our classical Jewish sources indicate that peace comes to nations from the bottom up and that peoples can influence their governments. Interreligious dialogue can play a major role here. Indeed, all that it will *really* take for this to happen will be for the men and women of the Abrahamic religions to mobilize around a manifesto that enables them to announce in unison—and *because of*, not *despite*, the virtue of interreligious dialogue on the matter—that they formally waive any claim of political or religious sovereignty over the “Mountain of God”...and that no army of theirs shall ever penetrate those sacred precincts...and that the place is instead permanently and effectively to be guarded by a neutral police force whose make-up and character would be acceptable to all sides. By doing so, the religions in question would gain, not lose, stature, and would become more than ongoing contexts for endless fractiousness and querulous, ongoing strife between peoples.

The world seems fixed on the idea that the dispute regarding the ultimate disposition of the holy places in Jerusalem must be left for the very last stage of negotiation, because it is by its very nature the most resistant to compromise. How remarkable, therefore, it would be for religious souls of every suasion to undertake a common pilgrimage to Jerusalem and, in so doing, to set aside vain pretensions and prejudices—in order that Jerusalem be not merely the eventual locale of eschatological peace, but rather the actual setting for peace today between peoples. To proclaim such an event would not even require new language; the call has already been set forth by two of our ancient prophets, both of whom proclaimed the true destination and goal of the pilgrimage:

In the final days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Eternal shall be established atop the mountains and exalted above the hills, and people shall flow to it. And, indeed, many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Eternal and to the house of the God of Jacob, so that God may teach us of God's ways and that we may walk in God's paths, for Torah shall go forth from Zion and the word of the Eternal One from Jerusalem. And God shall judge between many peoples and shall rebuke remote nations, even distant ones, so that, [knowing peace,] they come to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. [As a result,] nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor shall [their citizenry] any longer learn [the practice of] war. Instead, they shall sit, all citizens, beneath their vines and fig trees, and none shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Eternal One of Hosts has spoken. For each people shall walk forward in the name of its own god, and we shall walk forever forward in the name of the Eternal our God. (Micah 4:1–5)

Then I shall endow the nations with a common language so that I may call to them all in the name of the Eternal, inviting them as one people to the worship of God. (Zephaniah 3:9)



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Exodus 23:17 and 34:23, and Deuteronomy 16:16. The precise linguistic formulation differs slightly from verse to verse, but the point seems to be specifically that the pilgrim experiences some sort of visual communion with God.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Deuteronomy 12:14.

<sup>3</sup> Mircea Eliade has convincingly argued that sacred space in many religions (including Judaism) is often conceptualized in terms of a central axis, which is believed to connect heaven and earth; spirituality—and thus the structural organization of a society—rotate around it. See Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (1959; rpt. Orlando, Austin, New York et al.: Harcourt, Inc., 1987), pp. 20–68.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Maimonides' comment in the *Guide for the Perplexed* III 43 that the festivals of the Jewish year are “all for rejoicings and pleasurable gatherings, which in most cases are indispensable for man; they are also useful in the establishment of friendship, which must exist among people living in political societies” (trans. Shlomo Pines [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963], p. 570). And cf. also the comment just two chapters later (*Guide* III 45, *idem.*, pp. 575–581, where he discusses the universal human need to create unique spiritual centers on earth by building temples (or a sole Temple) to the gods (or to God).

<sup>5</sup> See the biblical sources mentioned above in note 1. The pilgrimage may also serve to inspire prayer or prophecy. Concerning prayer, see 1 Samuel 2 (where Hannah prays while on a pilgrimage). Regarding prophetic inspiration, see Y. Suddah 5:1 (55a), which suggests that Jonah was prophetically inspired while en route to Jerusalem; and cf. also Bereshit Rabbah 70:8, associating a prophetic vision of Jacob with a pilgrimage experience.

<sup>6</sup> B. Bava Batra 99b.

<sup>7</sup> In Aleinu, the idea is expression with the verbal phrase *l'takkein olam*.

<sup>8</sup> See the famous formula of Rabbi Joshua of Sikhnin: “God gave a sign to Abraham to the effect that everything that was to happen to him would also befall his descendants” (*Midrash Tanhuma, Lekh L'kha* §9:9, s.v. *va-y'hi bime'i*).

<sup>9</sup> Genesis 12:1–7, my emphasis.

<sup>10</sup> The story of Abraham's call in Genesis 12 is set in Haran, a city in northern Mesopotamia. But Scripture itself later understands the journey to have begun in Ur, the city of Abraham's birth; cf. Genesis 15:7 and also Nehemiah 9:7, both of which should be read in light of the brief note presented in Genesis 11:29–32.

<sup>11</sup> What does the *bei* actually symbolize? Is it meaningful that Abraham's *bei* is a simple addition to his name, whereas Sarah's is a substitution for a different letter? In rabbinic literature, the letter *bei* has the symbolic function of signaling a breakthrough or an opening where things and beings might otherwise be enclosed (cf. B. Menahot 29b). The *bei*, according to an ancient midrash preserved at Bereishit Rabbah 12:10, is a letter “that is not gripped by language” when it is pronounced. It is “breath,” thus no less fluid than the very spirit of

God once breathed into Adam and that hovered over the waters on the first day of creation.

<sup>12</sup> Cf., e.g., Pirkei Avot 5:3.

<sup>13</sup> See the eschatological vision of the prophet Zechariah (14:16) quoted above. Regarding the sacrifice of the seventy bulls offered on behalf of the seventy nations, see Bemidbar Rabbah 9:24 and Shir Hashirim Rabbah 4:2.

<sup>14</sup> In the etymological sense of the term, meaning “revelatory of divine secrets.”

<sup>15</sup> The Hebrew *ydativ* may also have the sense of “elected.”

<sup>16</sup> *Avot D’rabbi Natan*, text A, ch. 23, ed. Solomon Schechter (3rd ed.; New York: Feldheim, 1967), p. 38a, and cf. the parallel sources listed by Schechter there in note 7.

<sup>17</sup> B. Yevamot 63a.

<sup>18</sup> The root *bet-resb-kof* has a primary meaning of “to bless,” with a connotation of addition and juncture. The same root in a different grammatical construction (the Hiphil) was also used in the Mishnah to mean “to graft” (i.e., in the sense of adding something on).

<sup>19</sup> Rabbi Shimon ben Meir (1080–1160), called Rashbam, was the grandson of Rashi.

<sup>20</sup> Recall the incestuous origin of both Moab and Ammon (cf. Genesis 19), as well as the prohibition regarding their subsequent admission to the “assembly of God” because of their hostile behavior to Israel in the wilderness (cf. Deuteronomy 23:4–5). Note that the “excision” mentioned here (*kareit*) is the usual talmudic term derived from Scripture to designate the sanction of exclusion from the community. The concept of being grafted onto the trunk is precisely the opposite idea of this excision.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Rashbam’s commentary to Genesis 12:3 and 28:14.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Genesis 22:14. Scripture itself finds the name of the mountain, *Adonai Yireh*, sufficiently obscure to warrant an on-the-spot gloss, fleshing out its meaning in more detail. Exodus 23:17 and 34:23, and Deuteronomy 16:16 (the verses that command the thrice-annual pilgrimage) all connect the journey with idea of God seeing and being seen by the pilgrim.

<sup>23</sup> Note how the underlying theme of the future blessing for the multitude of nations, which first surfaces in the original *lekh l’kha* of Genesis 12, reaches its natural culmination at the end of the story of Isaac’s ordeal, in God’s blessing to Abraham: “Through your progeny shall the nations of the world be blessed (*v’bitbar’khu*), because you have obeyed Me” (Genesis 22:18).

<sup>24</sup> Abraham separates from Ishmael unwillingly in a kind of first test regarding filial sacrifice: Ishmael is sent into the wilderness where he and his mother would surely have died, had an angel not come to their rescue—much as a different angel materialized to save Isaac’s life later on. The two sons can and must live separately. But the ties with Ishmael are not totally severed. Abraham receives a divine promise that Ishmael’s descendants too shall be considered Abraham’s blessed progeny (Genesis 21:13). Taking the pericope of Genesis 21:9–19 seriously is key to grasping the ultimate meaning of the story of Abraham’s near-sacrifice of Isaac, as told in Genesis 22.

<sup>25</sup> *Kuzari* IV 23, trans. Hartwig Hirschfeld (New York: Schocken, 1964), pp. 226–228.

<sup>26</sup> B. Sukkah 49b.

<sup>27</sup> New Testament passages that see a parallel between the binding of Isaac and the passion of Jesus include Hebrews 11:17–19 and Romans 8:32. According to the Essene calendar that underlies the Book of Jubilees, Abraham's great test at Moriah took place on the date that would later be Passover (cf. Jubilees 17:1), which passage may be compared to the rabbinic midrash preserved at Shemot Rabbah 15:11 where it is specified that Abraham's test took place in the same month as Passover (although the midrash does not give an exact date).

<sup>28</sup> This claim to have studied at the feet of Rabban Gamliel is found at Acts 22:3. The metaphor of the graft back onto the trunk of Abraham is found at Romans 11:16–24.

<sup>29</sup> Note that this word is cognate to Hebrew *hag*.

<sup>30</sup> See 2 Chronicles 5:3 and Nehemiah 8:14, where the Festival of Sukkot is already called *hag*—that is, **the** feast *par excellence*. Later, this became the standard way of referring to the festival in the Mishnah and Tosefta (cf., e.g., M. Megillah 3:5). According to the apocryphal Book of Jubilees, it was Abraham who introduced the Festival of Sukkot, as well as the seven circumambulations around the altar; see Jubilees 16:20–31.

<sup>31</sup> *Guide* III 45, p. 571, citing the Targum Onkelos to Genesis 22:14. Maimonides refers also to a source in the talmudic tractate Yoma, but it has not been clearly identified. (Some think that he was referencing the comment that “the prayer of Abraham is to be recited when the walls begin to grow dark” found at B. Yoma 28b.) See Michael Schwarz's comment in his translation of the *Guide* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2002), vol. 2, p. 601, n. 6, citing the remarks of Solomon Munk in the latter's French translation of the *Guide*.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Koran, Sura 2, 136/142–147/152. According to the Koran (Sura 22, 26/27–27/28), Allah indicated to Abraham the location of the Temple (*al Bayti*) that was to become the goal of an annual pilgrimage and the attendant circumambulations. The place is, however, identified in Muslim tradition as the Kaaba of Mecca (although that is not stated explicitly in the Koranic text).

<sup>33</sup> This is reminiscent of Abraham's lifting up of his own eyes, to take note of an angel in the sky, at the exact moment he was holding a knife to the throat of his own son; cf. Genesis 22:13.

<sup>34</sup> 1 Chronicles 22:8.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. 1 Chronicles 22:9–10.

<sup>36</sup> The theme surfaces in the midrash found at *Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer*, chap. 32.

<sup>37</sup> This is the same theme that surfaces during the tenth plague brought against the firstborn in Egypt, except that there it was necessary to renounce violence directed toward the “other.” The Hebrews' sons were also in danger, which is why danger had to be averted by painting the blood of the paschal lamb on their doorways as a sign of allegiance to God. This gesture is presented by the biblical text (as the rabbinic tradition understands it) as a bold break with the

religion of idolatrous Egyptian. Furthermore, it is the consumption of the lamb in Jerusalem each year during the celebration of Passover that will resacralize the sacred alliance between God and Israel. And it was in Jerusalem as well that the first Christians appended a new meaning to the old story by superimposing the image of Jesus as the *agnus dei*—the paragon of the renunciation of violence—to the paschal lamb. And it was also that very place that Muslim tradition later identified as the “distant mosque,” *al masjid al-aksa*, at Koran 17:1. Mohammed made a nocturnal pilgrimage in that place as well, which was a kind of mystical ascent during the course of which he received decisive revelations regarding the order of the prayer and the demands of mercy.

<sup>38</sup> B. Taanit 5a, quoting Psalm 122:3. Rashi *ad locum* explains that the point is that the poet wrote that Jerusalem (i.e., the earthly city) is “like” a united city of tightly contiguous precincts, which seems to imply that there is another Jerusalem—“and where would such a city be, if not in heaven?”

<sup>39</sup> Devarim Rabbah 5:15.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. 1 Kings 8:4–43. According to 2 Chronicles 5:3, the dedication of the Temple took place during the Festival of Sukkot.

<sup>41</sup> Psalm 126:1.

<sup>42</sup> Bereishit Rabbah 22:7.

<sup>43</sup> Published in the newspaper *Haaretz* as “The Nusseibeh-Ayalon Agreement: Final Draft Cover Letter” on September 3, 2002.

<sup>44</sup> This, moreover, is the explicit proposal put forward by an American association headed by Rabbi Jerome Segal, the name of which, “Sovereignty Belongs to God,” could not possibly be more evocative; see <http://www.pa-il.com/2010/07/jerome-m-segal-sovereignty-belongs-to.html>. But this group seems to me rooted in complete unreality, insofar as it hopes to realize the principle of non-sovereignty over the whole of the territory of Israel and Palestine (and not just the city of Jerusalem).

<sup>45</sup> *Malki Ba-kodesh*, ed. David Zohar (Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University and Jerusalem: Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies and the Shalom Hartman Institute, 2006), pp. 14–16. I have added a few words from the original Hebrew edition, first published in 1919, that were omitted in the translation.