



THE HOLY TEMPLE - ITS HISTORY, IMPORTANCE AND STRUCTURE

HANDOUT

1. And Jacob awakened from his sleep, and he said, "Indeed, the Lord is in this place, and I did not know [it]." And he was frightened, and he said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

Genesis, 28:16-17

2. A person must stand facing Israel...He should have the intention of facing Jerusalem, the Temple, and the Holy of Holies...all Jews direct their prayers to one place Jerusalem and the Holy of Holies, because this is the "gateway to heaven," **since all prayers rise up in this direction.**

Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 18:10

3. It is from the *Shechinah* which is clothed in the shrine of the Holy of Holies...that light and vitality are extended and diffused to the whole world and the creatures contained therein, the souls, angels, and so forth.

Tanya, Chapter 51 & 52

4. Ten miracles were performed for our forefathers in the Holy Temple: ...They stood crowded but had ample space in which to prostrate themselves. Never did a snake or scorpion cause injury in Jerusalem. And no man ever said to his fellow "My lodging in Jerusalem is too cramped for me."

Pirkei Avot 5:5

5. The measure of the Aron HaKodesh was not included in the total measure [of the span of the Kodesh HaKadoshim].

Tractate Yoma, 21:A

6. Rabbi Eliezer said: The Divine Presence never departed from the Temple...Even when [the Temple] is destroyed, it remains in its sanctity... Even when it is destroyed, God does not leave it. Rebbe Acha said: The Shechina (Divine Presence) will never depart from the Western Wall.

Midrash Rabba, Exodus 2:2

7. It is universally accepted that the place on which David and Solomon built the Altar, the threshing floor of Ornan, is the location where Abraham built the Altar on which he prepared Isaac for sacrifice. Noah built [an altar] on that location when he left the ark. It was also [the place] of the Altar on which Cain and Abel brought sacrifices. [Similarly,] Adam, the first man, offered a sacrifice there and was created at that very spot.

Maimonides, Beis Habechirah, 2:2

8. Why was the first Sanctuary destroyed? Because of three [evil] things which prevailed there: idolatry, immorality, bloodshed... But why was the second Sanctuary destroyed, seeing that in its time they were occupying themselves with Torah, [observance of] precepts, and the practice of charity? Because therein prevailed hatred without cause. ***That teaches you that groundless hatred is considered as of even gravity with the three sins of idolatry, immorality, and bloodshed together.***

Tractate Yoma, 9:B

