

**“We’re sitting right now on the ridge and we’re seeing the Old City. Shortly we’re going to go in to the Old City of Jerusalem, that all generations have dreamed about. We will be the first to enter the Old City.... The Temple Mount is in our hands! I repeat, the Temple Mount is in our hands!”—Lt. General *Mordechai (Motta) Gur*, commander of the first IDF brigade to advance through the Old City of Jerusalem toward the Temple Mount and the Western Wall on June 7, 1967, describing by radio the bringing of Jerusalem’s holiest site under Jewish control for the first time in 2000 years. General Rabbi Shlomo Goren, chief chaplain of the IDF, then sounded the Shofar signify Jerusalem’s liberation. (*CAMERA*, May 31, 2011.)**

**YOM YERUSHALAIM 5771  
Baruch Chohen**

*In loving memory of Malca z'l*

***“I will plant them upon their land, and they shall never again be plucked out of the land which I have given them.” Amos 9:15***

**As we celebrate *Jerusalem Day*, we should recall and be proud of the**

history of our people, Israel. It was King David who captured Jerusalem and completed the unification of the tribes of Israel between 1000-961 B.C.E.

By taking Jerusalem, King David wiped out the last alien enclave in the hills of the Hebrew country and the one hostile fortress that stood between the two portions of the Israelite kingdom. Moreover, the capture of Jerusalem was as necessary to Israel's independence as it was to the unification of the Israeli tribe. These and other reasons were behind David's next spectacular move which was to have a far-reaching and great impact on history, making *Jerusalem the capital of Israel!*

***B'shana habaa B'Yerushalaim Ha'bnuyah!***

### ***Jerusalem The Eternal Capital Of Israel—Selected Quotes***

**"Jerusalem which is bound firmly together binds the Jews to one another." (Psalm 122:3)**

**"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." (Psalm 122:6)**

**"In the din and tumult of the age, the still small value of Jerusalem remains *our own* music."—Israel Zangwill, 1921**

**"No city in the world, not even Athens or Rome, ever played as great a role in the life of a nation for so long a time as Jerusalem has done in the life of the Jewish people."—David ben Gurion, 1947**

***There Stood—by Paul Celan***

*There stood  
A splinter of fig upon your lip,*

*There stood  
Jerusalem around us,*

*There stood  
The bright pine scent  
Above the Danish skiff we thanked*

*I stood  
In you.*

#### **JOGGING MEMORIES OF 1947 AND 1967 ON JERUSALEM DAY**

**Gil Troy**

*Jerusalem Post, May 31, 2011*

I hate disappointing the worrywarts, but today, *Jerusalem Day*, 2011, 44-years after its reunification, Jerusalem is a remarkably functional city, a surprisingly peaceful city, a delightfully magical city. The city I experience daily is not the city described in the headlines. It does not feel like it is in eclipse, nor does it feel like a powder keg. I absorbed New York's fear of crime in the 1970s, Boston's racial tension in the 1980s, and Montreal's linguistic complexity in the 1990s much more intensely. While jogging through the Old City daily, I feel lucky to live in such a livable city.

Jerusalem invites time-traveling in profound ways while doing mundane tasks. Every day, crossing the footbridge over the Cinemateque looking toward Mount Zion, I observe a panorama of peace reinforced by a symphony of silence, with the Tower of David crowned by its Israeli flag and Muslim crescent, church spires and minarets, the new city's modern construction to my left and the older houses abutting the Old City to my right. The sweeping Old City walls dominate front and center.

These days, I confess, I think more about recent history than the walls' ancient history, built by Suleiman the Magnificent 500 years ago but evoking Abraham binding Isaac, King David designating King Solomon, thousands of years earlier. Mahmoud Abbas's rewriting of the history of 1947, which passed the *New York Times*' editorial muster, Barack Obama's obsession with the 1967 lines, have me wishing Jerusalem's stones could talk, confirming what really happened when Zionists founded Israel in 1947-1948, when Israelis liberated Jerusalem in 1967, and during the difficult intervening years.

My daily plunge into this past begins with Jerusalem's 19 years of rupture, as I traverse what was the barbed-wire-and-mine-strewn No-Man's Land. To my right, the Cinemateque looms, a center of Israel's edgy, often critical, vibrant democratic culture, contradicting false cries of McCarthyism. To my left, the red-roofed houses of Yemin Moshe unfold, beside Moses Montefiore's 1857 windmill. I think about the poor people who lived in this, the first neighborhood outside Jerusalem's walls, during the State's first years. And I wince imagining their terror when, periodically, Jordanian snipers would shoot. The Jordanian army always reassured the UN that a soldier had gone crazy—again and again.

Scampering up Mount Zion, holy to us and our Christian brethren, I wonder what the fifty soldiers following Captain Eli Kedar thought while hustling along this alley on June 7, 1967. Did they remember the failure to free the besieged Jewish Quarter from this alley in 1948? Did they know the last Jew to leave the Jewish Quarter, headed to Jordanian prison for nine months, was a 15-year-old, Eli Kedar? Did they appreciate their commanders' genius in mostly attacking from behind, via Lions Gate? Did they know Israel began the war two days earlier with only 71 troops in Jerusalem? Were they aware that, even while the Jordanians shelled Jerusalem, Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol offered peace to Jordan's King Hussein, making the war one of self-defense and any resulting territorial gains not an illegal occupation? Did they sense they were about to correct the historic mistake of the city's division, returning the Holy Temple's remnants to Jewish sovereignty after 2000 years? Did they appreciate their army's sensitivity in deploying archaeologists to try preserving holy sites? Probably, most simply thought about going home—which 759 Israelis after six days never did.

Entering the Jewish quarter I again ponder the nineteen years preceding the Six Day War when Israel—living under Barack Obama’s 1967 borders—were banned from the Old City, although the UN never validated Jordanian control. Those, ahem, illegal occupiers trashed Jerusalem’s synagogues. Contrast that bitter past to the redemptive sights and sounds of kids playing and praying, the burger bars adjoining archaeological museums, the glorious dome of the Hurva synagogue, which means ruins: bombed by Jordan in 1948; rebuilt and rededicated last year.

Crossing the Jewish Quarter, then the Arab market, seamlessly, safely, I exit through Jaffa Gate. Sixty-four years ago, on December 2, 1947, just days after the UN proposed partitioning Palestine on November 29, Arabs shouting “Death to the Jews!” looted the Jewish commercial center across the way, at the entrance to today’s David Village. This was the Palestinian response to the compromise the Jews accepted. Mahmoud Abbas’s recent *New York Times* column lied, claiming the Zionists rejected compromise, then “expelled Palestinian Arabs to ensure a decisive Jewish majority in the future state,” when the Arab rejectionists chose violence—and continue to reject a Jewish state....

In *Six Days of War*, Michael Oren quotes Arik Akhmon one of the first Israelis in 1967 to enter the Western Wall plaza, as bullets whizzed by. Although not religious, Akhmon recalled, “I don’t think there was a man who wasn’t overwhelmed with emotion. Something special had happened.”

Jerusalem is a real city which cannot “overwhelm” residents daily—life intrudes. But every day I note something “special” about the place, its history or mystery, its sights or smells, its old memories or new achievements. Today, Yom Yerushalayim, let’s honor its secret ingredient, the people it attracts, connected to Jerusalem’s lush past, enlivening the city during its complex yet compelling present, and shaping a safe, spiritually-rich, yet charmingly commonplace future keeping the city magical and livable.

*(Gil Troy is Professor of History at McGill University  
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**OBAMA, JERUSALEM DAY IS NO JOKE**

**Yonatan Sredni**

*Arutz Sheva, May 31, 2011*

**Some people rank the importance of the day's events by which stories top the newscasts. For me, I look to see what the American late-night talk-show hosts are joking about. While stories about Israel often hit the front page of US papers, they rarely break into David Letterman's or Conan O'Brien's opening monologues.**

**The exception to the rule occurred last week in the wake of US President Barack Obama's speech on the Middle East which was followed up by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's address to both houses of Congress.**

**The Tonight Show's Jay Leno, and his Jewish joke-writers, pulled no punches attacking the President: "President Obama suggested that Israel should go back to the pre-1967 borders. Native Americans said, "Why stop there? Let's go back to the pre-1492 borders.""**

**Leno followed up that joke with another jab at Obama later in the week: "Obama was also in England, where the Queen suggested that we go back to the pre-1776 borders."**

**But the truth is that 1967 lines are no laughing matter. It's not only about not being able to 'go back' in history, just like one cannot go back to 1492 or 1776. The issue at hand, which Netanyahu strongly stressed in Washington, is security. Netanyahu clearly stated that Israel, "cannot return to indefensible 1967 lines".**

**All the talk about the 1967 lines could not be timelier. This Tuesday night and Wednesday is Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day). Jerusalem Day commemorates the reunification of Jerusalem and the establishment of Israeli control over the Old City (including the Western Wall) during the Six Day War in June 1967. On May 12, 1968, the government proclaimed**

**a new holiday—Jerusalem Day—to be celebrated on the 28th of Iyar, the Hebrew date on which the divided city of Jerusalem became one.**

**The Chief Rabbinate of Israel declared Jerusalem Day a minor religious holiday to thank God for the six-day victory and for answering the 2,000-year-old prayer of “Next Year in Jerusalem”. Religious Zionists gather for special holiday prayers on this day, and some hold special festive meals and wear holiday clothing.**

**On March 23, 1998, the Knesset passed the Jerusalem Day Law, formally making the day a national holiday.**

**But the fact is, Jerusalem Day need not be a holiday just for Jews. Since it affects people of all faiths who now have the ability to worship freely in Jerusalem, people of all faiths should embrace it. As Netanyahu stated in his speech at Congress last week, “And as for Jerusalem, only a democratic Israel has protected the freedom of worship for all faiths in the city. Throughout the millennial history of the Jewish capital, the only time that Jews, Christians, and Moslems could worship freely, could have unfettered access to their holy sites has been during Israel’s sovereignty over Jerusalem. Jerusalem must never again be divided. Jerusalem must remain the united capital of Israel.”**

**I used to get annoyed because as wonderful as Jerusalem Day is, ‘Jerusalem Day’ has become just that—a day for Jerusalem. Unfortunately, outside the capital this important day goes by virtually unnoticed.**

**Jerusalem will have its parades, its 1 a.m. march to the Kotel from the Merkaz HaRav Yeshiva and the afternoon flag march of youth organizations in the streets of the Old City with festive dancing at the Kotel, its Jerusalem flag with the lion on it flapping in the wind. It’s neither Jerusalem nor her residents that I am worried about.**

**Travel outside the capital and you will hardly see any signs of this holiday at all. Sure, many communities across Israel and the Diaspora hold festive prayer services or concerts for Jerusalem Day. Naomi Shemer’s classic ballad “Jerusalem of Gold” is sure to be sung countless times across the nation this week. But ask the average non-Jerusalemite**

**Israeli on the street what's special about this Wednesday and you will likely get a blank stare.**

**Will the Israeli press cover Jerusalem Day at all this year, or will they regulate it to their back pages and end of their newscasts, along with the weather reports? Will there be television programs about Jerusalem on Tuesday night or will they take a backseat to whatever passes as "prime time TV" these days (maybe the Israeli version of Survivor, filmed on the other side of the globe)?**

**Has Jerusalem Day become a sad joke? Overall, there seems to be little awareness of Jerusalem Day outside the capital. The Ministry of Education recently announced that 50% of Israeli students in public schools had never visited Jerusalem at all.**

**So what can be done to raise Jerusalem awareness? Well, efforts are now being made to organize trips to Jerusalem (which will include visits to important sites like the Kotel, Yad Vashem, Ammunition Hill, the Knesset, etc.) for all Israeli schools. This is certainly a step in the right direction.**

**But perhaps we owe a 'debt of gratitude' to President Obama for mentioning the 1967 lines. Had he not said what he said, it is doubtful that Prime Minister Netanyahu would have so strongly defended his own position that returning to the 1967 was not an option. In an unexpected way, Obama and Netanyahu brought about some major awareness about 1967, which is what Jerusalem Day is all about.**

**At every Jewish wedding, just before the groom stomps on the glass, the following verses from Psalms (reminding us in times of gladness that the Temple in Jerusalem has yet to be rebuilt) are said: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither, let my tongue cleave to my palate if I do not remember you...if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy." (137, 5-7)**

**I believe the key to those verses is in the last phrase—"above my highest joy." We need to emphasize that "Jerusalem is number one."**

**Of course we won't forget about Jerusalem. But let's also remember that**



**Jerusalem Day is not a joke, it's important. Jerusalem is no laughing matter.**

**And to all those who still don't know that it's Jerusalem Day, well then, the joke's on you.**

**REJOICE ON JERUSALEM DAY**  
**Isi Leibler**  
*Jerusalem Post, May 11, 2011*

**Jerusalem, referred to over 600 times in the Bible, has represented the cornerstone of our Jewish identity for more than three millennia since it became the capital of King David's Israelite monarchy. It remained at the core of our spiritual longings following the second dispersion when for 2,000 years our forefathers faced Jerusalem in their daily prayers, yearning for a return to their ancestral homeland. Moreover, even throughout their exile, Jews retained a significant presence in their Holy City and since the 1840s have constituted the largest group inhabiting the city.**

**Jerusalem also has major religious significance for Christians and Muslims, both of whom denied freedom of worship to other religions when they ruled over the city. During the Jordanian control of the Old City from 1948 to 1967, in flagrant breach of armistice agreements, Jews were refused all access to holy sites, and synagogues and graveyards were desecrated and destroyed. And the world remained silent.**

**Since the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967, the government of Israel—for the first time—ensured that all faiths could freely worship and maintain their religious institutions. If anything, the Israeli authorities discriminated against Jews, denying them the right to worship on the Temple Mount lest Muslims took offense.**

**Yet to this day many Palestinians deny that there ever was a Jewish presence in the city and make preposterous allegations that the Jewish**

**holy sites, including the Temple, were Zionist fabrications concocted to justify “the Jewish colonialist enterprise.”**

**To this end they have been systematically destroying archeological evidence on the Temple Mount.**

**In addition, we are now faced with a determined campaign in which most of the world, including the Obama administration, is pressuring us to once again divide Jerusalem. Even prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, an architect of the Oslo Accords, on the eve of his assassination warned the Knesset that Jerusalem must remain united. And indeed in this day and age the concept of dividing cities is considered retrograde.**

**We are also painfully aware of the appalling track records of many Islamic states which deny freedom of worship to non-Muslims. The record of the Palestinians in this context is particularly vile, and we should be under no illusions how they would behave if they gained control of the holy sites.**

**But beyond this there is also the question of security. Every Israeli withdrawal in recent years has led to emboldening the jihadists and intensified aggression and terror. A division of Jerusalem would virtually guarantee that a corrupt or impotent Palestinian Authority or a rabid Hamas would be tempted to launch terror actions against neighboring Jewish areas.**

**Jerusalem Day should therefore not merely be a day of celebration. It should also be a day in which we pledge that, irrespective of the creative solutions devised to provide greater autonomy for Arabs in Jerusalem, the city must never be divided and Israel must remain the custodian to guarantee freedom of worship to Jews, Muslims and Christians.**

**Alas, today, many of us tend to overdramatize the challenges confronting us and display a penchant for self criticism which approaches masochism. Jerusalem Day should be a day when we give thanks to the Almighty for His intervention and pay tribute to those who fought against overwhelming odds to reunite the city and establish our national homeland.**

**Despite successive wars, facing ongoing terror and still being surrounded by enemies pledged to destroy us, Israel is here to stay. Seven and half million Israeli citizens, three quarters of whom are Jews, have achieved a demographic critical mass and notwithstanding the many doomsday predictions, the Jewish state can never be undone.**

**And despite an absence of natural resources, we have transformed our country into a veritable economic powerhouse which has achieved miraculous progress in science, technology, industry and agriculture. Tiny Israel has more hi-tech start-ups and companies listed on NASDAQ than any country other than the US. Our arts and cultural development is expanding and we continue producing Nobel Prize winners.**

**We have undergone a religious revival and today there are more Jews in Israel learning Torah than in any age in Jewish history.**

**We have successfully absorbed millions of Jews, the majority being Holocaust survivors and refugees finding haven from oppression. They originate from all four corners of the globe ranging from Western olim to Ethiopians. And while the integration process has still a long way to go, no society in the world has succeeded in absorbing such a mass of immigrants and molding them into a nation.**

**We see the shocking global resurgence of anti-Semitism, mankind's oldest and perennial hatred, throughout the Western world. Many Diaspora Jews, especially in Europe, have reached the obvious conclusion that there is no future for their children in societies that treat them as pariahs. In contrast, our children live without ever experiencing the pain and humiliation of discrimination or being treated as inferior. For them Jewish identity is natural and requires no justification. The world applies double standards against us. With millions of innocent human beings murdered or denied human rights, we Jews remain the people who dwell alone.**

**The bitter lesson of our history has been that while we are obliged to forge alliances, ultimately we must rely on our own resources, rather than the goodwill of others. That is why we should continuously celebrate the fact that after 2,000 years of persecution, degradation and exile, the creation of a Jewish state has now empowered us. We must**

**realize that so long as the majority of our people remain determined, our future rests in our own hands Those who wail about our shortcomings and the corruption within our ranks should realize that it is a mark of a healthy society when it transparently discloses its weaknesses and exacts harsh punishment on leaders who transgress.**

**We failed to achieve peace with our neighbors because we lack a peace partner. For years we deluded ourselves into believing that providing Arabs with land would achieve peace, only to belatedly realize that the Palestinian goal was neither peace, nor an independent state for themselves. Their primary objective was to deny legitimacy to Jewish sovereignty in the region.**

**When in years to come, our neighbors ultimately come to the realization that they can never vanquish us, they will follow the example of Egypt and Jordan—and appoint leaders who will peacefully coexist and enjoy prosperity with us.**

**I often contemplate what our grandparents would have thought during the dark years of the Holocaust had someone predicted to them that the Jewish people would rise like a phoenix from the ashes to resurrect a Jewish homeland which would become the greatest success story of our century. That is the theme that should run through our minds as we celebrate Jerusalem Day. And it should make us smile.**