

HAR SINAI'S BOUNDARIES AND ITS RELEVANCE TODAY

by Community Contributor

"You shall set a boundary for the people around [the mountain], saying 'Guard yourselves from ascending the mountain or touch its edge; anyone who touches the mountain shall surely die.'"

Rashi says, "Moshe was to set fixed limits around the mountain beyond which humans and animals were forbidden to trespass, for if they were to enter into a sphere of holiness too intense for their capacity, they would die."

What else in history had holiness and still retains holiness? The *Beis HaMikdash*. Even the place where it once resided still retains that holiness. What is the *name* of that place? The *Har HaBayis*. There have been and still are stories of *wayward, misguided, fanatic or extremist* Jews, who 'look' very religious, but completely ignore and violate the words of our *Gedolim* not to go on the *Har HaBayis*! For Shlomo HaMelech told us, *"Turn your **ear**; hear the words of the wise..."* Unfortunately, their *emotions* (i.e. heart) have dominated their *intelligence* (i.e. mind). They sincerely 'believe' and 'feel' that the *Gedolim* are 'depriving' them of having a relationship with G-d.

Just like Moshe Rabbeinu made boundaries around *Har Sinai*, our *Gedolim* have made boundaries of how close one is permitted be to the *Har HaBayis*.

What's the cause of their dangerous movement? Shlomo HaMelech states, *"Stolen waters are sweet."* *Rashi* explains this to mean that a man naturally desires and pursues that which is forbidden to him. When our *Gedolim* ban things, people find more of a need to ignore their words and do as they please. Why is that? The *Torah* tells us that we are *"a stiff-necked people."*

Nevertheless, these 'Jews' don't realize that "Our *Gedolim's* words are like **fiery coals**!" To which Rabbeinu Yonah says, *"Do not disagree with them (i.e. our sages) and say, 'I am also intelligent and wise; therefore, I can reason just like them.' You lack their wisdom and your line of reasoning may be incorrect."*

How far back have the *Gedolim* banned going onto the *Har HaBayis*? In 1906, the Chofeitz Chayim wrote, *"Even after the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed; the Mount upon which the Beis HaMikdash stood still retains its special sanctity. Therefore today, while we are still in a state of ritual defilement, it is strictly forbidden for a Jew to enter the Temple Mount."* Rav Avraham Yitzhak HaKohein Kook in the 1920s banned Jews from visiting the site out of a concern that they may inadvertently step into an area which in Jewish law is forbidden to enter unless a specific ritual purification ceremony is performed. On August 23rd, 2008, Rav Kanievsky adds, *"Entrance to the Temple Mount and the*

defilement of the Holy of Holies, is more severe than any of the violations in the Torah."

On January 15th, 2015, Israel Police Chief Yochanan Danino fears the recent upsurge in Jewish identity with the holy site and the yearning to visit and *daven* will lead to catastrophe. Rav Elyashiv zt"l, foresaw Danino's fear. Because on October 8th, 2009, he stated, "*Halacha forbids going onto Har HaBayis but today, it is more than this, it is an act that may lead to a religious war and bloodshed.*"

On October 30th, 2014, a *Har HaBayis* activist used the words of our beloved *Novi* to justify his wrongdoing. He said, "*The Har HaBayis is prophesized to become 'a house of prayer for all nations.'*" That same *Novi* that he quoted also said, "*Incline your ear and come to Me (G-d); hear and your soul shall live.*" Rav Dovid Yosef says, "*Entry to Har HaBayis for tefillah as it were, is prohibited by halacha and one who davens, his tefillos are an **abomination** to Hashem are not welcomed but blasphemous and one who is guilty of this commits a major avreira...*"

This activist doesn't understand that when a *Tzaddik* bans people from going onto the *Har HaBayis*, he will not end up succeeding. As the *Gemara* states, "*The tzaddik decrees and Hashem fulfills (his decree).*" In addition, Shlomo HaMelech says, "*He who breaches a fence will be bitten by a snake.*"

...Rav Dovid Yosef stresses, "*Some may view closing Har HaBayis as relinquishing sovereignty, so it is necessary to state emphatically this is not the case and we are not relinquishing our rights. Quite the contrary, entry to Har HaBayis is prohibited because of its 'awesome kedushah that exceeds the kedushah of all else.'*" As Dovid HaMelech says, "*Who may ascend the mountain of Hashem and who may stand in the place of His sanctity?*"

During a Knesset Committee session on September 17th, 2013, addressing Jews visiting *Har HaBayis* during *Sukkos*, Arab MKs stated, "*Jews have no business there...*" His words are not his words. He is merely being a mouthpiece for what our *Gedolim* have told us. However, one day to our shock and disbelief, he himself along with the rest of the world will also be *conversing* with the same G-d that we do.

In the merit of listening to our leaders, may Hashem soon fulfill, "*For My House will be called a House of Prayer for all the nations.*"

To view this article with footnotes, go to <https://www.sefaria.org/sheets/96956>. For comments or feedback, please email sreviewch@gmail.com.