

The Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif: Threats to the Status Quo

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This information page, the second of its format, is designed to serve as a periodic resource for monitoring the ongoing erosion of existing arrangements on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif compound and as a supplement to Ir Amim's 2013 report, *[Dangerous Liaison: The Dynamics of the Rise of the Temple Movements and their Implications](#)*. Public pressure challenging the status quo is rising, not least prominently through Knesset discussion, leading to a growth in the volume of Jews entering the compound and the increasing strength of the campaign fueling this phenomenon. The number of entry restrictions enforced on Muslims seeking to enter the compound is likewise increasing, along with clashes resulting for reasons including but not limited to these factors. The buildup of developments constitutes an alarming change in the existing status quo.

The Tishrei holidays have fostered conditions for the highest levels of violence on the Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif seen in recent years, impelling more parties to enter the discussion: rightwing Knesset members, the prime minister, the Palestinian Authority and the government of Jordan.

Introduction

The issue of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif is one of the most complex and sensitive in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and any deviation from existing arrangements engenders far-reaching political consequences.³ The campaign to promote the ascent of Jews to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif has achieved significant momentum in recent years. Starting in mid-2013, there has been considerable growth in the scale of tours and visits to the Mount organized by Temple activists. Such tours, planned, promoted and led by Temple activists, have become a daily occurrence. Also during this period, the 'Yishai Foundation for the Establishment of a Jewish Temple on the Mountain of Holiness' has been founded; two websites promoting tours have been established⁴; since the beginning of 2014 two special pamphlets dedicated to the issue have been created and are now

About the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif

For 1,300 years, the Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif has been managed under the exclusive rule of Islamic authorities. Since the 16th century, the recognized status quo maintains that the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif compound is a Muslim prayer area, while the Western Wall is designated as a prayer area for Jews. This division was reaffirmed by the Israeli government in June 196 in recognition of the unique sensitivity of the area and in response to international pressure. The Muslim Waqf, responsible for management of the compound, is appointed by the Kingdom of Jordan and its status was recognized in the peace agreement between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom. At the end of March 2013, King Abdullah and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas signed an agreement reaffirming the role of the King of Jordan as protector of the holy places in Jerusalem, with specific reference to the Haram al-Sharif.¹ According to the status quo, the Muslim Waqf is in charge of administering the site and its internal control while the Israeli authorities are responsible for maintaining security of its outer shell. Jews are invariably forbidden from praying on the Mount, as well as from establishing a permanent presence on it, with the exception of a single Police post. Jewish religious activity/worship takes place by the Western Wall.²

¹ http://kingabdullah.io/index.php/en_US/news/view/id/10779.html

² Shiri Spektor-Ben Ari, Jews ascending to the Temple Mount (presented to the Subcommittee on the Issue of Jewish Ascent to the Temple Mount, Knesset Research and Information Center, April 6, 2014)

³ On the issue of Jerusalem as discussed during political negotiation, see the Ir Amim report, "Jerusalem 2014: The Rising Cost of Peace"

⁴ Liba website: <http://li-ba.org/> Har Hakodesh website: <http://harhakodesh.co.il/>

being disseminated in synagogues⁵; the national-religious youth movement Ariel dedicated the Jewish year of 5774 (2014) as “the year of the Temple”; and various actors across the national-religious spectrum are organizing Temple centered events, including visits to the Mount.

Some of the leaders of this campaign, including public figures, see it as a mere stepping stone to realizing their ultimate goal: the establishment of the third Jewish temple; and whether they convey it implicitly or explicitly, constructing it in place of the Muslim holy sites currently situated in the compound.



The intensifying activities of movements striving to change the status quo are supported by a range of public figures, including members of the Knesset, and receive funding from public institutions, including government ministries.

The political and religious sensitivity of the compound is clear, as are the implications of any potential disruptions on a future political agreement. Furthermore, any unilateral changes to the current situation will acutely jeopardize relations between Israel and Jordan.

Further reading

“[Dangerous Liaison: The Dynamics of the Rise of the Temple Movements and Their Implications](#)”, an Ir Amim and Keshev special report (May 2013)

Prof. Menachem Klein, ‘Temple Mount loyalists are not the real thing’, [Ha’aretz Opinions](#) (July 9, 2013) [Heb]

Prof. Menachem Klein, ‘Rights discourse or sovereignty discourse?’ [Makor Rishon](#) (July 5, 2013) [Heb]

Dr. Tomer Persico, “[Organismic Revenge and the Temple Mount](#)” (August 5, 2013) [Heb]

On the Political Level

In recent weeks, **Jordanian officials** have made several public statements addressing the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, the number and content of which is unprecedented in recent years:

- September 28 - The prime minister of Jordan condemns access restrictions imposed on Palestinians during Rosh Hashanah⁶.
- October 8 - Following clashes on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, Jordan releases a statement condemning the entry of police forces to the compound. The Jordanian spokesperson declares police conduct a heinous crime and calls for Arab and international parties to pressure Israel “to lift the siege on the Al-Aqsa Mosque”.⁷
- October 21 -The government of Jordan requests clarifications from Israel regarding a proposed law by MK Miri Regev that would allow Jews to pray on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. The Jordanian ambassador to the Palestinian Authority states that “Israel is trying to void Jordanian custody over the Al Aqsa Mosque by passing bills and plans for taking over

⁵http://the--temple.blogspot.co.il/2014/02/blog-post_3616.html; http://the--temple.blogspot.co.il/2014/03/blog-post_11.html

⁶“Jordan warns against Israeli curbs on Jerusalem “, Business Standard, September 28, 2014, http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-jans/jordan-warns-against-israeli-curbs-on-jerusalem-mosque-114092800707_1.html

⁷ Jordan condemns police entry to the Temple Mount compound, Kol Israel Reshet Bet, October 8, 2014 <http://www.iba.org.il/bet/?type=1&entity=1046335>

the Mosque [...] the Al-Aqsa Mosque is a red line, and Israel's current policy in Jerusalem is unacceptable to the Jordanian people." In addition, the foreign minister of Jordan appealed to the United Nations Security Council on the issue.⁸

Additional statements:

- October 14 - The **Palestinian minister of religious affairs**: "Ascending to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif will turn the political war between the Palestinian people and the Israeli people into a religious war between Muslims and Jews. As long as the occupation continues, Jews ascend to the Mount as occupiers, and not as guests or visitors. In the future, when the occupation ends, and there is a Palestinian state with Al-Quds as its capital, Jews and members of all religions will be able to visit the Al Aqsa Mosque under Palestinian rules and conditions".⁹
- October 17 - After the Sukkot holiday, which was marked by multiple restrictions on Muslim entry to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and recurring clashes in the Old City and on the Mount, **President of the Palestinian Authority**, Mahmoud Abbas, declares: "The settlers have no right to defile Al Aqsa... we should prevent settlers from entering Al Aqsa by any means possible... Al Quds has a special place and status in the heart of every Palestinian and Arab, Muslim and Christian; it is the Crown Jewel, and the eternal capital of the Palestinian people, and without it, there will be no [Palestinian] state".¹⁰

The prime minister of Israel has consistently avoided speaking on the issue of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, and in the past has failed to publicly denounce Jewish forces working to change the status quo. In the last week, the prime minister was compelled to address developments on the Mount three times, each time declaring that the status quo will not be changed:

- October 5 - In an interview with Channel 2, Netanyahu encourages avoidance of a religious war on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif.
- October 13, the week of Sukkot – Against the backdrop of clashes on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, at the start of his meeting with the United Nations Secretary-General, Netanyahu declares: "I am committed, and Israel is committed, to upholding the status quo just as it has been for decades." At the same time, Netanyahu attributes the tension surrounding the Mount exclusively to Palestinian violence: "Palestinian extremists have brought about this violence, through incitement and spreading false, baseless rumors".¹¹
- October 21 - Following an appeal by the government of Jordan regarding MK Regev's legislative proposal to allow Jews to pray on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, Netanyahu announces that the status quo on the Temple Mount will remain in place.¹¹

Conversely, senior members of the coalition continue to routinely announce their intentions to drastically alter arrangements on the Temple Mount. The prime minister refrains from publicly reacting:

- September 24, Eve of Rosh Hashanah - Minister of Construction Uri Ariel visits the Temple Mount, blessing the Mount and publicly declaring his yearning for the construction of the Temple in the coming years.¹²

⁸"When Jerusalem will be the capital of Palestine, Jews will ascend to the Temple Mount as guests", NRG, January 14, 2014 http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/633/174.html?fb_action_ids=4856773594920&fb_action_types=og.comments

⁹"Abbas: settlers have no right to defile Al Aqsa", Haaretz, October 17, 2014 <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/1.2461107>

¹¹"Netanyahu will be clear: the status quo in Jerusalem will not change, First Class News, October 22, 2014 <http://www.news1.co.il/Archive/001-D-355112-00.html>

¹²<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzYq7sUD0I0>

- October 6 - An old letter revealing that the Ministry of Tourism is considering opening an additional gate (the Cotton Merchant's Gate, in the Muslim Quarter) for Jewish access to the Temple Mount resurfaces.¹³ The original letter was published in January 2014.
- October 13, the week of Sukkot - Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs Eli Ben-Dahan announces that he expects the government to discuss the document he issued last November, the goal of which is to regulate Jewish prayer on the Temple Mount: "The fact that a Jew can't enter the Mount and pray is intolerable... The Temple Mount is a place under [Israeli] jurisdiction".¹⁴
- October 14, the week of Sukkot - Following clashes on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif the day before, Yitzhak Aharonovich, Minister of Public Security, declares, "If the Mount is closed for Jews, it will also be closed for Arabs".¹⁵ Temple movements have long demanded that when they are prohibited from entering the Mount for security reasons, the Mount should be closed to all visitors.

The mayor of Jerusalem issued comments:

- October 8, eve of Sukkot: In an extensive interview with *Makor Rishon*, the mayor addressed developments on the Temple Mount, stating "I am not satisfied with the status quo on the Temple Mount...something here is problematic and unreasonable...I expect the State of Israel to bring justice to the status quo".¹⁶
- Two weeks later, on October 22, Barkat states that despite not being pleased with the status quo, "that is precisely the meaning of a status quo", and maintains that the issue should not be changed through legislation but according to the prime minister's discretion.

In the Knesset

The Temple movements have been extremely successful at cultivating allies from within the government coalition—allies with the ability to leverage pressure created by Temple movements to in turn pressure the Police and government officials.

Since May 2013, the current Knesset Interior Committee has held 14 discussions concerning the issue of Jewish entry and prayer on the Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif—a noteworthy increase compared to a total of 4 such discussions in the entire preceding decade. The Interior Committee discussions serve as a central stage for backing extreme right Temple movement activists. They provide a platform for rightwing Knesset Members to level criticism at authorities responsible for security on the Mount and serve as an open forum for Temple activists to give voice to their views.

- August 13 - The Knesset Interior Committee, led by MK Miri Regev, holds a discussion on the issue of Jewish entry to the Mount during the Jewish high holidays (October). As previously, the discussion serves as an open stage for Temple movement activists backed by rightwing MKs. Among demands directed at the Police are banning Muslims from entering within a 100 meter radius of Jewish groups and changing Jewish entry times to hours less frequented by Muslims. Regev ends the discussion stating that a similar arrangement to the one currently in place at the Cave of the Patriarchs (in Hebron) should be applied to the Temple Mount, meaning that separate entry and prayer times for Jews and Muslims should be established. Further, she states her

¹³"Will another gate soon open up for Jews to enter the Temple Mount?" Galatz morning news, October 6, 2014 <http://glz.co.il/1064-51260-HE/Galatz.aspx>

¹⁴"In view of riots, increasing calls from the right to change the status quo on the Temple Mount", Haaretz, October 13, 2014 <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/local/1.2458138>

¹⁵"In view of riots, increasing calls from the right to change the status quo on the Temple Mount", Haaretz, October 13, 2014 <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/local/1.2458138>

¹⁶Sukkot Eve interview with Nir Barkat, Makor Rishon, October 8, 2014 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-Ung9iPsYPeU3g4ZHRQOy1ZbkE/view>

intentions to appeal to the Court on the ban against Jewish prayer and to meet with the Jordanian ambassador to discuss the issue.

- September 22 - Another discussion takes place in the Knesset Interior Committee regarding the upcoming Jewish high holidays. The core of the discussion is a reiteration of the main points raised at the August 13th session. MKs Regev, Feiglin and Struck harshly criticize the commander of the Police Department's David Precinct, responsible for security on the Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif.

Throughout the holiday period, several Knesset members speak out on the issue, some making visits to the Mount. Remarks made by Knesset members reinforce Muslim anxieties that their presence on the Haram al-Sharif is under threat:

- October 12, the week of Sukkot - Following Police closure of the Mount to non-Muslims, MK Moshe Feiglin calls for banning Muslims from entering the Temple Mount throughout the Sukkot holiday, decrying closure of the Mount as a surrender to Hamas and ISIS.¹⁷
- October 13, the week of Sukkot - After having visited the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, and following heavy clashes between Police forces and Palestinians, MK Feiglin declares: "The Temple Mount should be cleared entirely of the wild mob, which should be left without any foothold or 'holy' places of sanctuary...the sole sovereignty on the Temple Mount should be returned to the Jewish people."¹⁸
- October 15 - Arab Knesset members participate in a mass protest outside the Lions' Gate in the Old City.¹⁹

Jewish Entry to the Compound

During the months of June and July, Temple movement activists begin publishing multiple reports regarding prayer sessions on the Mount²⁰ in contradiction of prior claims maintained throughout the preceding year that they are being altogether denied the right to pray on the Mount. This change in propaganda is worthy of attention considering that the claim of "hampered right to worship" has been successful in obtaining support across a wide spectrum of the Israeli public. According to an analysis recently conducted by Ir Amim, the change primarily reflects a shift in PR strategy. The following reports on prayer purportedly conducted on the Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif are not supported by accompanying video footage:

- June 24 - "Friends of the kidnapped teenagers, from Makor Chaim Yeshiva, have ascended to pray for them on the Temple Mount..." While the video accompanying the report clearly shows the group praying before entering the compound, there is no documentation of prayer taking place on the Mount.²¹

¹⁷ MK Feiglin's Facebook profile, October 12, 2014

<https://www.facebook.com/MFeiglin/photos/a.545719195507200.1073741841.230709873674802/731347036944414/?type=1&theater>

¹⁸ MK Feiglin's Facebook profile, October 12, 2014

<https://www.facebook.com/MFeiglin/photos/a.545719195507200.1073741841.230709873674802/732002320212219/?type=1&fref=nf>

¹⁹ Hundreds protest in Jerusalem: "It is our right to enter Al Aqsa", ynet, October 15, 2014 <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4580794,00.html>

²⁰ From the YouTube channel of the Temple Mount News website, July 15 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARlq4oyieHs>; "Watch: ascenders of all shades pray on the Temple Mount for the safety of IDF soldiers", Temple Mount News website, July 17, http://the-temple.blogspot.co.il/2014/07/blog-post_6515.html?spref=bl; Yehuda Glick's Facebook profile,

<https://www.facebook.com/yehudah.glick/posts/10204531942928466>

²⁰ <http://www.worldbulletin.net/todays-news/138926/30-palestinians-injured-by-israel-Police-in-al-aqsa-ngo>

²¹ Yehudah Glick's Facebook profile, and a video published by the Liba Project:

<https://www.facebook.com/yehudah.glick/posts/10204200940493612>

- July 9 - A report headlined “Watch: Praying for IDF soldiers” includes the description: “After peacefully walking on the Temple Mount, the ascenders prayed for the safety of the Jewish people, the success of the IDF soldiers, and the destruction of the enemy”. The enclosed videos show no evidence of such prayer having taken place.²²
- July 10 - A report entitled “Prayers on the Temple Mount for the Safety of IDF Soldiers and the Residents of the South” states that “Jews who ascended today to the Temple Mount have prayed for the safety and success of the armed forces on all fronts, and especially on the Gaza front...” An accompanying video labeled ‘Prayer on the Temple Mount for the Safety of the Soldiers Fighting in Gaza’ does not evidence such prayer having taken place²³.

Later surfacing reports are supported by videos showing Jewish visitors reciting short prayers on the Mount:

- July 14 - In the video entitled “Prayer for the Safety of IDF Soldiers”, Yehudah Glick is seen reciting a short prayer on the Mount²⁴.
- July 17 - The report “Ascenders of all Backgrounds Praying on the Temple Mount for the Safety of IDF Soldiers” includes 3 videos recorded on the Mount documenting prayers being recited for the safety of the soldiers (one of the clips has recently been blocked for viewing).²⁵
- August 5 - A report entitled “Reading the Book of Lamentations on the Temple Mount”, recorded on the morning of Tisha B’Av (a Jewish fast day commemorating the destruction of the first and second Temples), claims that the Jewish visitors audibly read parts of the Book of Lamentations. The report includes photographs of the group sitting on the ground, as is customary when reading the Book²⁶.

Starting in mid-August, publication of such reports ceases. During this time, additional reports surface, claiming an alleged increase in Police support for Temple movement activities:

“...the Temple Mount commander, as well as the rest of the Police officers, fully understand the importance of the Temple Mount for the Jewish people, and it can certainly be said, for all of them, that their personal dispositions toward Jews ascending the Temple Mount are not negative, and on the contrary... As if they want to say, if only we could, if only the government would yield, we would have already done what is necessary. This is not a fantasy or wishful thinking, and you can draw your conclusions...”²⁷

It is worth noting that these “accomplishments”, whether real or feigned, have not diminished Temple activists’ claims; rather, the movements have actually increased pressure via political activities directed at the Police. Thus, after many months during which Jewish visitors complied with Police regulations banning prayer on the Mount, incidents have resumed with increasing frequency:

- August 7 - A woman and two men are removed from the Mount after praying, against Police prohibitions.²⁸
- August 14 - A teenager is removed from the Mount. An “Im Tirtzu” (right wing organization) activist present during the incident reports that the teenager was removed after members of the group “resisted any instruction” throughout their visit²⁹.

²²“Watch: praying for the safety of IDF soldiers, and thanking the Israel Police!”, Temple Mount News website, July http://the--temple.blogspot.co.il/2014/07/blog-post_9.html?pref=bl

²³“Prayers on the Temple Mount for the safety of IDF soldiers and residents of the South”, Temple Mount News website, July 10 http://the--temple.blogspot.co.il/2014/07/blog-post_8682.html?pref=bl

²⁴From the YouTube channel of the Temple Mount News website, July 15 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARlq4oyieHs>

²⁵“Watch: ascenders of all shades pray on the Temple Mount for the safety of IDF soldiers”, Temple Mount News website, July 17, http://the--temple.blogspot.co.il/2014/07/blog-post_6515.html?pref=bl

²⁶Yehudah Glick’s Facebook profile, <https://www.facebook.com/yehudah.glick/posts/10204531942928466>

²⁷“Emergency mobilization!”, Temple Mount News website, July 14, http://the--temple.blogspot.co.il/2014/07/blog-post_13.html?pref=bl

²⁸Arnon Segal’s Facebook profile, <https://www.facebook.com/arnonsegal1/posts/4599121793786>

- August 27 - A man is removed from the Mount after prostrating.³⁰
- September 7 - A man is removed from the Mount after attempting to pray.³¹
- September 24 – A man is removed from the Mount after prostrating.

Leading up to Rosh Hashanah and during the holiday, Jews entered the Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif while the Police implemented harsh restrictions on entry for Muslims (see below). On the morning of September 24, the eve of Rosh Hashanah, Police used major force against Palestinians who had barricaded themselves in the Compound in defiance of entry restrictions in an attempt to prevent Jews from entering. The forces pushed the Palestinians into the Al-Aqsa mosque while Jewish visitors toured the compound to the sounds of shock grenades fired by Police at Palestinians. Throughout the day strong words were exchanged between Waqf personnel and Jewish visitors. Housing Minister Uri Ariel himself ascended the Mount and, against the backdrop of Muslim shouts of disapproval, prayed for the Temple to be built in the coming days.³² On the morning of September 25, during the holiday itself, Police again allowed Jews to enter the Mount while restricting Muslim access.

Increased Restrictions on Muslim Entry to the Compound

During the last year, there has been a steady increase in restrictions imposed on Muslims seeking to pray on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. According to Police data, in 2012-2013 Police restricted Muslim entry on only three and eight occasions, respectively. During 2014, Ir Amim has documented at least 30 cases of restricted access. The reporting period includes the months of July through October, during which men were restricted from entering on seven Fridays, i.e. almost all Fridays in the aforementioned period.

During the Tishrei holidays, restrictions reached their peak, extending outside the perimeter of the Compound itself and extending into different areas of the Muslim Quarter and the Historic Basin:

- On September 23-24, the days leading up to Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year), Police prohibit Muslim women from entering during morning hours and restrict entry to men aged 45 and older. Similar restrictions are imposed during the holiday itself, as well as in the days after.
- September 26, Friday - Despite Fridays being reserved exclusively for Muslims to visit the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, Police restrict access to men aged 50 and older. In addition, checkpoints prevent Palestinians from entering the Old City.
- October 5-7, Eid al-Adha - Most entry gates to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif are closed by Police, impeding access for Muslims seeking to pray during the holiday.
- October 6 - Police restrict Muslim entry to those aged 50 and above.³³
- October 8, eve of Sukkot - Muslims under 50 are prohibited from entering. Students are unable to reach their school inside the Compound. Checkpoints are set up in the Muslim Quarter, blocking residents' passage through the Lions' Gate to their schools and workplaces.³⁴
- October 10, Friday, week of Sukkot – Police again restrict entry to Muslims aged 50 and above and erect roadblocks outside the Old City, preventing Palestinian passage. Mass prayer protests take place outside the Old City.³⁵

²⁹ Arnon Segal's Facebook profile,

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=4622055567116&set=a.3334350735300.1073741828.1764535265&type=1&theater>

³⁰ Arnon Segal's Facebook profile, <https://www.facebook.com/arnonsegal1/posts/4671464922319>

³¹ Arnon Segal's Facebook profile, <https://www.facebook.com/arnonsegal1/posts/4731270377418>

³² www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzYq7sUDOIQ

³³ Conversation of Ir Amim field researcher with praying Muslims

³⁴ Ir Amim field researcher

³⁵ "Thousands Pray in the Streets Due to Al-Aqsa Restrictions", Maan News Agency, October 10, 2014
<http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=732415>

- October 13, week of Sukkot - During morning hours, police prevent entry of Muslims under the age of 50 to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. Students are prohibited from entering their school inside the Compound and Police order them to return home. Police also erect checkpoints in the Muslim Quarter. The passage from Lions' Gate to the Via Dolorosa is blocked, denying residents' access to their schools and workplaces.
- October 15, eve of the second holiday of Sukkot - In the morning, the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif is closed for Muslims while Jews are allowed to enter. After one hour, Police allow Muslims to enter and close the Mount to Jews.
- October 17 - Although the holiday of Sukkot has ended, and despite Friday being reserved for Muslims, Police prohibit Muslims under the age of 50 from entering the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif.

Clashes on the Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif

Rising tension in East Jerusalem, including violent demonstrations, also manifests on the Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif:

- July 5 - Palestinians throw stones on the Mount;⁴²
- October 24, eve of Rosh Hashanah - After two consecutive days of Muslim men and women under the age of 50 being denied entry and in opposition to Jews ascending the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif during Rosh Hashanah Eve, Palestinians clash with Police forces on the Mount. Shock grenades and tear gas explosions can be heard for hours.
- October 7 – Thirty-eight Palestinians are arrested during clashes between Police forces and Muslims after their entry to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif is blocked.
- October 8, eve of Sukkot - Police restrict Muslim access for the second consecutive day. During morning hours, Muslim rioters clash with Police forces employing shock grenades and tear gas. Palestinians throw stones and a Molotov cocktail

“My vision is building the Temple Mount, and we will build it with our own two hands.” –Yehudah Glick, chair of the Temple Mount Heritage Fund³⁶

“This country should take down the mosque. I don’t care whether it’s by blowing it down or not; I want these girls [referring to a group of his students] to order the military to take down the mosque from the Temple Mount... As soon as we have the power as a state, I want the mosque taken down from the Temple Mount.” –Benzi Gopstein, student of Meir Kahane, founder and head of the anti-miscegenation Lehava organization³⁷

“With God’s help, in a decade we will stand in front of the Temple [the physical building] Mount.” –Housing and Construction Minister Uri Ariel, July 2013³⁸

“I hope for myself and my fellow kohanim that we will live to say Birkat Kohanim [the ‘priestly blessing’] in the Temple” –Minister Ariel, at the launch of the website “The Holy Mountain”³⁹

“Here [where the Dome of the Rock is] is where I would like to see the Temple. I hope I will have that privilege.” –Minister Ariel, Israel Channel 2, July 16, 2013⁴⁰

“This is not a religious matter; it’s a matter of sovereignty [...] the Menorah, the symbol of the State of Israel, will, with the help of God, return quickly and in our time give light to our Temple.” –MK Moshe Feiglin, February 19, 2014⁴¹

³⁶ “The Violated/Sacrilegious Mount”, Maayanei Hayeshua, <http://www.myim.co.il/main.php?mod=newsOpen&articleID=1389>

³⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_EvgsY7Kg8&feature=youtube_gdata_player

³⁸ “We Will Celebrate the Next Decade in the Temple”, Makor Rishon, http://the--temple.blogspot.co.il/2013/07/blog-post_30.html

³⁹ “Har Hakodesh” website: <http://harhakodesh.co.il/>

⁴⁰ “Uri Ariel with Channel 2 on the Temple Mount”, Channel 2 News, July 16, 2013, at 0:55:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALHpWXEblQU&feature=player_detailpage

⁴¹ “A moving tour with MK Feiglin on the Temple Mount”, at the beginning of the video and at 10:10. Moshe Feiglin’s Youtube channel, February 23, 2014 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wMoxHFHfMY&feature=youtube_gdata_player

⁴² <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/1.2367901>

in addition to an unknown chemical burn inducing substance.

- Morning of October 13, the week of Sukkot - Police restrict Muslim access to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. Muslims prepare to clash with the Police. Police forces burst into the Compound, deploying shock grenades and tear gas; in return, Palestinians throw stones and erect checkpoints to obstruct Police, who drive the Palestinians into the Al Aqsa Mosque, allowing Jews to enter the Compound.⁴³
- Early afternoon of October 13, the week of Sukkot - Muslims gather outside the Temple Mount, in the Muslim Quarter. Police make the decision to open the Mount to Muslims and prevent non-Muslims from entering, garnering strong criticism from Knesset members as well as Temple movement activists.

Interactions with Police

Temple activists on the ground continue to exert pressure on Police and security personnel on the Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif, personally attacking various individuals. Most of the pressure directed at the Police is imposed through the Knesset Interior Committee. MK Miri Regev, chair of the committee, has initiated multiple discussions on the topic, during which senior Police officers are chastised for allegedly “neglecting Jews on the Temple Mount”. The subcommittee on the Temple Mount, appointed in March 2014, was tasked with investigating Police conduct on the Mount. These actions—and the general support of MKs and ministers—have enabled a public campaign against the Police and security personnel on the Mount that continued throughout the Tishrei holidays:

- October 13 - During morning hours, Police clash with Palestinians on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and permit Jews to enter the Compound. By afternoon, they reverse their decision on Jewish entry in order to de-escalate tensions. In response, MK Regev condemns Police action as “weak”.⁴⁵
- October 22 - Throughout the holidays (Rosh Hashanah Eve, Sukkot Eve, Tishrei 18 - the week of Sukkot, and the eve of the second holiday of Sukkot), Police forces clash with Palestinians barricading themselves inside the Compound. Jews are allowed entry. In some cases, Police halt Jewish access in order to prevent violence from escalating.
- On other days (September 25, October 9, October 12), Police preemptively prevent Jews from entering the Mount, fearing potential violence.

Despite the decisive actions taken by Police and the rise in violence, Temple movements publish a report detailing Police failures during Sukkot. While including some positive remarks, the report concludes by giving the Police a “low grade”.

“The Temple will rise in place of the Mosque, without doubt”; “it is a Mitzvah to build the Temple. If it happens without will, someone will pay the price”; “the Mosque will be deconstructed by us, we will understand what our duty is and will thus act.” –Yehudah Etzion, close partner of Glick, who in the 80s was a member of a Jewish underground militia who himself planned to bomb the Dome of the Rock, Channel 10, January 4, 2014⁴⁴

“The more demand there is, thus the reality changes. Every Jew that rises there takes part in [the] occupation and [the increasing Jewish] presence” –Yehudah Glick, chair of the Temple Mount Heritage Fund, Holy Blood - episode 3 - about the Temple movements, Channel 10 (July 24, 2013)¹

⁴³“Dozens of Palestinians assault police and barricade themselves in the Al Aqsa mosque”, Haaretz, January 13, 2014

<http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/1.2457415>

⁴⁴“The people of the Mount”, Channel 10, January 4, 2014: <http://www.nana10.co.il/video/?videoid=180161&ssv=1>

⁴⁵“In view of riots, increasing calls from the right to change the status quo on the Temple Mount”, Haaretz, October 13, 2014
<http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/local/1.2458138>