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"The Meaning of the Wailing Wall." 18 October 1967.

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Written by HAF for visit of mission to Wall
18 Oct 67

The Meaning of the Wailing Wall

Certain fixed places serve as permanent anchors in the continuously changing ebb and flow of history. The golden city of Jerusalem has been that one fixed place in the historic memory of the Jewish people. And the heart of Jerusalem was always the Kotel Hama'aravi, the Wailing Wall, the western wall of Solomon's Temple, whose massive stones are 3000 years old

Prayers and memories have spanned thousands of years of time and thousands of miles of space to leap forward and across to that one spot so central to Jewish experience and tradition. If we, the world-scattered people, have a focus anywhere it is this city and this wall.

Proof of this was given in the Six Day War when the passionate surge of emotion at the liberation of the wall exceeded any other aspect of the victory. Fantastic things were accomplished - enemy armies were destroyed with incredible speed - the borders were enlarged and their ancient limits - settlements were freed from the punishment of constant shelling - a truly great victory was won - yet the central symbol of all of this was the wall to which the people streamed in the ecstasy of their joy. There were no victory parades in the streets - there was a pilgrimage to the wall. The one photograph symbolizing the victory showed the Prime Minister and the Chief of Staff standing in front of the ancient stones. The reuniting of the Jewish people with its

fixed focus after centuries of separation was the heart and core of the victory.

The paratroopers reached the wall bloody and begrimed. Young men gave life so that the historic circle could be closed and all Jerusalem become once again the united capital. Their deeds, though war-like, were really deeply spiritual. They surged forward in fire and steel to reach an inanimate object which was really the living and beating heart of a unique people.

We are going from the Wall, whose meaning causes our hearts to beat the faster, to the National Military Cemetery, in which they lay with hearts stilled. From those young men and from the Wall, we will draw the inspiration to raise the Jewish people and its State to ever greater heights of glory.

