

Rabbi Sue Mauer Morningstar
 5297 Old Siskiyou Highway
 Ashland, OR 97520
 January 17, 2011
 12 Shvat, 5771

Dear Leaders of Israel,

I am writing to support the women of the wall, and the right of women to sing out loud to God at the *Kotel*.

I am a rabbi ordained in the Jewish Renewal movement, and was privileged to join the Women of the Wall last November on *rosh chodesh Kislev*. It was an awesome, profound experience to be reading about the *karbanot* brought to the *beit hamikdash* on *rosh chodesh*, AT the *beit hamikdash* on *rosh chodesh*. I felt the power of the ages flowing through me, and was completely filled with *ruach hakodesh*.

I am a strong lover and supporter of Israel. I have lived on kibbutzim, studied at Hebrew University, and brought my children to Israel numerous times. As Israel is an "*or lagoyim*" in so many ways, it is time for Israel to lead the way in recognition of women and women's rights in the Middle East. Our holiest site should not be a place of discrimination or silencing of women.

I was raised in an orthodox household in an orthodox community. I understand the proscriptions of *kol isha*. I respect the rights of all Jews to worship in the way that speaks most authentically to them. I honor the efforts of the Women of the Wall to come up with a compromise that creates a separate space for men who do not want to be exposed to the voice of women and for women who do not want to be exposed to the voice of other women.

However, I also believe that it is an inherent part of expressing our Judaism to sing out to God! As men and as women! In the tradition of our foremothers *Miriam han'viya*, *Devorah* and *Channah*, who sang out in a strong voice, and in the name of my grandmother, Ida Bunim, who was devout, pious, prayed daily, but never had the opportunity to fully express herself out loud before God, I ask for an end to the discriminatory policies currently in place at the *Kotel*. It is time to *shiru l'Adonai shir chadash*, to honour and exalt women who want nothing more than to praise God, wholeheartedly, in a clear and strong voice.

B'kavod rav,

Rabbi Sue Mauer Morningstar
 International Vice-Chair
 Rabbis for Women of the Wall

We add our names and our voices to Rabbi Morningstar's above.

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