

Thousands Attend Jerusalem Annual Passover Priestly Blessing, Focus on Hostages

By: Julie Stahl /CBN News

JERUSALEM, Israel – Despite war and rumors of war, tens of thousands of Jewish people came to the Western Wall during the intermediary days of Passover to pray and receive an annual blessing.

Unsurprisingly, this year's focus was the hostages and their families.

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More than 30,000 people came to take part in the Birkat Hacoheinim, which in Hebrew means "Priestly Blessing" this Passover, and cried out for the return of the Hamas-held hostages and peace for the State of Israel.

The attendees came from around the world to bless and be blessed. This year, that included families of the hostages.

Sigi Cohen's son Eliya was wounded and taken hostage into Gaza in the Hamas-led massacre and kidnappings of October 7th.

"We came to the Kotel to the priestly blessing, because Eliya is a cohen (from the priestly line) and he couldn't come to participate in the priestly blessing, so we were invited here by the Rabbi of the Western Wall, to come to hear the priestly blessing and to pass on the power of the blessing that was here today to Eliya and all the hostages that are in Gaza 0:41 that they'll be strengthened by this blessing until Eliya, with the help of God will return to us, Cohen told CBN News.

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In the book of Numbers, God gives Moses and Aaron these words to bless the children of Israel:

“The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.”

While The Aaronic Benediction or Blessing is a daily part of Jewish prayers, this public tradition at the Wall happens twice a year – during Sukkot (the Feast of Tabernacles) and Passover.

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