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Rabbis for Religious Freedom & Equality in Israel



“The State of Israel... will guarantee
freedom of religion and conscience...”
Israel's Declaration of Independence (May 1948)

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Introduction

Sept. 14, 2017
23 Elul 5777

Dear Friends,

We've been told by readers that our articles are informative but often too long a read for our busy members. Therefore, we are taking our lead from many of today's best news organizations, and summarizing the content of the article as the beginning of the newsletter. Interested in more information? Just click and read on.

In two of these articles we allowed them to summarize themselves. After all, every good reporter knows that the opening paragraph should give a good overview of the contents to follow. But at times, as in the other article, I'll do my best to give you the important content in just a few sentences.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

2017 [ISRAEL RELIGION & STATE INDEX](#)
COMING SOON!

This Sunday, just before Rosh Hashanah, Hiddush will release its annual [Israel Religion & State Index](#), including comprehensive, in-depth data on Jewish Israeli public opinion on most matters of religion & state.

This week's RRFEI articles

Summaries & Links



MK Rabbi Yisrael Eichler

1. **JDN, A Haredi News site, published comments by Knesset Member Yisrael Eichler, contending that WoW is a gang**

In this week's edition we find that MK Yisrael Eichler has launched an attack on Women of the Wall, contending that they are paid agents of the Reform Movement to wage a holy war on Israel's, and the Jewish people's, holiest site. The WoW are supposedly doing the bidding of the Reform Movement not only regarding the Kotel, but also about the draft (see article 3), shabbat observance, conversion and funding for schools.

The Jerusalem Post has taken an editorial position that marriage is a civil right from which hundreds of thousands of Israelis are currently excluded, and the solution is civil marriage. Interestingly, the JPost editorial contends that individuals have the right to marry as they see fit, an argument contrary to the Chief Rabbinate's claim that it's the welfare of the entire Jewish community that will be endangered.

Finally, Israel's highest court has taken the position that the Haredi students cannot be excluded from Israel's military draft, and the current situation is illegal. The article presents a good summary of this ongoing and protracted

receiving money from the Reform Movement to wage a war on the Holy Western Wall. *"The Supreme Court judges are committing an historic crime of religious war in the name of the Reform [Jews]."* [\[LINK\]](#)

2. **The Jerusalem Post takes a position on Civil Marriage in Israel, saying that hundreds of thousands of people are not able to avail themselves of a basic human right: *"This infringes on people's basic human and democratic rights. Citizens of this country are expected to pay taxes and to serve in the army, among other obligations. One of the rights the state should afford them is the ability to marry. The failure to do so is a stain on the Zionist enterprise we call the State of Israel."*** [\[LINK\]](#)
3. **Haaretz: Israel's High Court Strikes Down Exemption of ultra-Orthodox From Military Service - *"An expanded nine-justice panel of the court headed by outgoing Supreme Court President Miriam Naor ruled eight to one, with Justice Noam Sohlberg dissenting. The decisive majority of justices agreed with the position of the petitioners, the Movement for Quality Government, that the law perpetuates inequality between secular youths who are required to enlist in the army and religious youth who are exempt."*** The ultra-Orthodox parties will attempt to overturn the ruling through legislation, and have already denounced it as aimed at destroying Judaism. [\[LINK\]](#)

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dispute over the last 20 years, and brings us up to date, to await further moves by Israel's Haredi political parties.

L'shanah tovah tikateyvu to all. May the coming year be filled with peace and success for the entire house of Israel, and may the Jewish State bring fulfillment for the entire Jewish people.

We look forward to hearing from you at: organizers@rrfei.org and on our [FB group](#).

Kol tuv,

Mark

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Should you be speaking about Israel at the High Holy Days, please email a copy of your sermon as an attachment to: markhowardlevin@gmail.com

Resources

- [Vision of Hiddush and Rabbis for Religious Freedom](#)
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- [Courts - religious & secular](#)
- [Conversion](#)
- [Death & burial - ancient & now](#)
- [Diaspora-Israel](#)
- [Diversity & inclusivity among Jews](#)
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Rabbis for Religious Freedom and Equality in Israel represents a broad spectrum of Jewish belief and practice, and champions the values of religious freedom and equality fundamental to World Jewry, in partnership with Hiddush for the realization of these principles in Israel and the Diaspora.

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