Why the UN Needs the Beit HaMikdash
by Rabbi Ephraim Sprecher
Dean of Students, Diaspora Yeshiva

One of the 13 Principles of Faith listed by the Rambam is the belief that Mashiach will come and build the Final Beit HaMikdash. Why is the belief in the rebuilding of the Mikdash an Essential of Judaism?

The Beit HaMikdash was much more than just a magnificent physical building in which G-d’s Holy Divine Presence dwelt. The Beit HaMikdash was the place where every human being, not just a Jewish person, could connect with G-d, and form a unique, special bond of love and closeness with Him.

The concentration of Holiness that was contained in the abode of G-d’s Glory enabled EVERY person to develop a special closeness and love that nourishes one’s G-dly soul and spiritual existence. The Beit HaMikdash was the spiritual center of the ENTIRE world, which served as a conduit through which every human being’s prayers ascended to G-d in Heaven. And through which an abundance of Divine Grace and bounty descended to the physical world. The Beit HaMikdash was truly the Stairway to Heaven for ALL mankind.

This is why G-d tells Yeshayahu in ch. 56 "...for My House will be called a House of Prayer for ALL the (United) Nations.” G-d is not just the G-d of Israel but He is the G-d of ALL mankind, and He calls all peoples to acknowledge and worship Him.

The Talmud in Menachot 53 states that the Beit HaMikdash has to be built by a person who is called a YEDID, which means a lover of G-d. That is why Shlomo HaMelech, who built the First Beit HaMikdash, was called Yedidiyah by G-d, which means G-d’s Lover.

And that is why the first two and the Final Beit HaMikdash are all located in the territory of the Tribe of Binyamin, because Binyamin is the only son of Yaakov who is called Yedid Hashem, the Lover of G-d (D’varim 33). Why is Binyamin so special? After all, he is the youngest of Yaakov’s 12 sons. The Ramban answers that he is the only son of Yaakov who was born in the Holy Land. Therefore all the Batei HaMikdash are located only in his territory.

The message to us is to appreciate and cherish the merit of dwelling in G-d’s Holy Palace!