



בשם האדריכל העליון של היקום
לשכת מצפה 6 - ירושלים
של הבונים החופשים, קדמונים ומקובלים



Jerusalem is a city of light and stone and of many legends. One even says that on each stone of the Holy City one can tell thousands of stories. One of them is about the neighborhood in which our lodge is situated. Ezrat Yisrael is a small neighborhood, located near Jaffa st. and Straus st.

A book, that describes the building of Jerusalem outside the walls of the Old City in the end of the 19th century, is telling about a Kabbalistic tradition. In this very place, where the neighborhood will be built, is situated the "Pitha dekarta", Aramaic for "the Gate of the City", where the Messiah himself is sitting and waiting for the day of Salvation. Here Kabbalists used to perform special and secret prayers in order to bring the Salvation to the Jewish people and the whole mankind. The Kabbalists rented the place from its owner and built a tent on it. They called it "The Tent of Messiah, son of Josef", which according to some traditions will be preceding the Messiah son of David, so there will be two redeemers. On 1889 the land on which the tent was standing was sold to the Jews. Three years later, the foundation for Ezrat Yisrael neighborhood was laid. Among the fathers of the neighborhood both Sefaradi and Ashkenazi leaders: Rabbi Yaakov Meir, Haham Bashi and first sefaradi Chief Rabbi of Eretz Yisrael. He and his successor Chief Rabbi Ben Zion Hai Uziel lived in the neighborhood. Other famous inhabitants: Rabbi David Feinstein, Rabbi Yaakov Mann, Rabbi Nisim Elyashar, Rabbi Shaul Elyashar, Rabbi Moshe Cantarovitsh and Rabbi Yosef Rivlin. From its very beginning until today the neighborhood consists of one narrow street with a line of houses in both sides. All in all there were 30 apartments, a synagogue and Torah learning rooms. The narrow street had gates in its edge. The gates were used to be locked every evening. With the expansion of Jerusalem outside the Old City walls, Ezrat Yisrael was surrounded by other quarters, the gates were lost and where the Messiah used to sit and wait, the Anglicans built their church. The tiny neighborhood was the house of some other famous inhabitants, such as Yehoshua Burla, father of the author Yehuda Burla, who himself lived there as



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a child, Yitshak Ben Tsvi, the second President of the State of Israel, and his wife, Rahel Yana'it.

Next to Ezrat Yisrael was built Bikur Holim, a hospital that was transferred to its present location from the Old City. Some famous printing houses from the history of the Yishuv were also operated there. Though neglected today and not an eye catching, one can notice that whoever passes the crossing Jaffa st. glances, even for a second, at our small Ezrat Yisrael.

It took some time till the Freemasons building in Jerusalem reached its present location. I think that a Directing Hand were leading the brethren choosing this place to be our temple. Ezrat Yisrael means literally: Helper of Yisrael, an epithet of God. Isn't help giving one of the foundation stones of Freemasonry?

Moti Elimelekh

Master of Mizpa Lodge No.6

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