

This is Jerusalem! Community beit midrash

(is) Jerusalem at the center | by Rabbi Meirav Kallush

Our Rabbis taught:

A blind man or one who cannot tell the cardinal points should direct his heart towards his Father in Heaven, as it says, And they pray unto the Lord.

If one is standing outside Palestine, he should turn mentally towards Eretz Israel, as it says, And pray unto Thee towards their land.

If he stands in Eretz Israel he should turn mentally towards Jerusalem, as it says, And they pray unto the Lord toward the city which Thou hast chosen.

If he is standing in Jerusalem he should turn mentally towards the Sanctuary, as it says, If they pray toward this house.

If he is standing in the Sanctuary, he should turn mentally towards the Holy of Holies, as it says, If they pray toward this place.

If he was standing in the Holy of Holies he should turn mentally towards the mercy-seat.

If he was standing behind the mercy-seat he should imagine himself to be in front of the mercy-seat.

Consequently, if he is in the east he should turn his face to the west; if in the west he should turn his face to the east; if in the south he should turn his face to the north; if in the north he should turn his face to the south. In this way all Israel will be turning their hearts towards one place.

R. Abin — or as some say R. Abina — said: What text confirms this? — Thy neck is like the tower of David builded with turrets [talpioth], the elevation [tel] towards which all mouths (piyyoth) turn.

- ✚ Is there a place you direct your heart to? how do you do it?
- ✚ Is Jerusalem a place like that for you? if so, how?
- ✚ What do we gain and lose when everyone directs their hearts to one place?

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Isaiah 2 ישעיה ב

1 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.
א הדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר רָאָה, יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ בֶן-אָמוֹז, עַל-יְהוּדָה, וִירוּשָׁלַם.

2 And it shall come to pass in the end of days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established as the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.
ב וְהָיָה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים, נִכּוֹן יְהִיֶה הַר בֵּית-יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים, וְנִשְׂאָ, מִגְּבְעוֹת; וְנִהְרֹוּ אֵלָיו, כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם.

3 And many peoples shall go and say: 'Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
ג וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים, וְאָמְרוּ לְכוּ וְנַעֲלֶה אֶל-הַר-יְהוָה אֶל-בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, וְיָרִינוּ מִדְּרָכָיו, וְנִלְכֶה בְּאַחֲרֵיתָיו: כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה, וּדְבַר-יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַם.

4 And He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. {P}
ד וְשִׁפֵּט בֵּין הַגּוֹיִם, וְהוֹכִיחַ לְעַמִּים רַבִּים; וְכָתְתוּ חַרְבֹתָם לְאַתִּים, וְהִנִּיתוּתֵיהֶם לְמִזְמָרוֹת--לֹא-יִשָּׂא גוֹי אֶל-גּוֹי חֶרֶב, וְלֹא-יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה. {פ}

🚩 "And all nations shall flow unto it" what are the characteristics of Jerusalem as a place that all nations turn to?

🚩 Is Isaiah's prophecy still relevant to our days?

In chapter 62 Isaiah says:

6 I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, they shall never hold their peace day nor night: 'Ye that are the LORD'S remembrancers, take ye no rest
ו עַל-חֹמֹתֶיךָ יְרוּשָׁלַם, הִפְקַדְתִּי שֹׁמְרִים--כָּל-הַיּוֹם וְכָל-הַלַּיְלָה תָּמִיד, לֹא יִחְשׂוּ; הַמְזַכְרִים, אֶת-יְהוָה--אֶל-דְּמֵי לְבָבְךָ.

🚩 Who are the guards of Jerusalem? why?



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🚩 How does this relate to what David Ben Gurion said about Jerusalem in 1951:

"Jerusalem is the capital of the nation. It is the capital of Jewish history, it is the capital of the hebrew spirit, it is the capital of the eternity of Israel. More than all it needs to be an example to the whole country, to the whole nation, because Jerusalem does not belong only to the country, Jerusalem belongs to the nation, it should set an example to all of Israel in its land and in diaspora"

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Yehuda Amichai, born in Germany, raised in Jerusalem wrote many poems to/about/for the city. The following poem, All the generations before me, was written in 1968:

All the generations before me	כל הדורות שלפני
All the generations before me contributed me	כל הדורות שלפני תרמו אותי
Little by little so I would emerge here in Jerusalem	קמעה קמעה פדי שאוקם כאן בירושלים בבת אחת, כמו בית תפלה או מוסד צדקה.
All at once, like a prayer house or a philanthropy.	זה מתיב. שמי הוא שם תורמי.
That compels. My name is the name of my contributors.	זה מתיב.
That compels.	
I approach the age of my father's death.	אני מתקרב לגיל מות אבי.
My will has many patches,	צואתי מטלאת בהרבה טלאים,
I have to change my life and my death	אני צריך לשנות את חיי ואת מותי
Day by day, to fulfill all the prophecies	יום יום פדי לקום את כל הנבואות שנבאו אותי. שלא יהיו שקר.
That prophesied me. So they wont be a lie.	זה מתיב.
That compels.	
I passed my fortieth year. There are jobs	עברתי את שנת הארבעים. יש
I cannot get. If I were in Auschwitz	משרות שבהן לא יקבלו אותי
They wouldn't have sent me to work,	בשל פה. אלו הייתי באושוויץ,
They would have burned me right away.	לא היו שולחים אותי לעבד,
That compels.	היו שורפים אותי מייד. זה מתיב.

- 🚩 How does this poem reflect on David Ben Gurions words?
- 🚩 Do Jerusalem residence have a responsibility to the city's future as the center of the world?