



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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ישעיה ב Isaiah 2

**א** הַקָּרְבָּן אֲשֶׁר חֹזֶה, יִשְׂעִيهוּ בֶּן-אָמוֹץ, עַל-הַיּוֹדֵה,  
וַיְרִשְׁלָם.

**ב** וְהִיָּה בַּאֲפֻרְתִּית הַיּוֹם, נִכְונֵן יְהוָה כִּרְבִּית־יְהוָה בֶּרֶאשׁ הַהִרִּים, וּנְשָׂא, מְגֻבָּעָה; וּנְקֹרֵר אַלְיוֹן, כָּל־הָגּוֹיִם.

2 And it shall come to pass in the end of days, that the mountain of the LORD'S

**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.

**ג** וְהַלְכּו עִמָּם רֹבִים, וְאָמְרוּ לֵאמֹר וְנַעֲלֶה אֶל-הָר-יְהוָה  
אֶל-בֵּית אֱלֹהֵינוּ יַעֲקֹב, וַיַּרְנוּ מִזְרָכֵינוּ, וְגַלְכָה  
בְּאֶרֶחֶמְיוֹן: כִּי מִצְיוֹן פָּצַא תֹּרֶה, וְדָבָר-יְהוָה מִרְוָשֵׁלֶם.

**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.

**ד** וְשִׁפְט בֵּין הַגּוֹם, וְהוֹכֵח לְעָמִים רְבִים; וְכַתֵּח  
חרבָּם לְאַתִּים, וְנִגְיֹתָתֵיכֶם לְמִזְמֹרוֹת--לֹא-יִשָּׂא גֹוי  
אל-גֹוי קָרְבָּ, וְלֹא-יַלְמֹדו עוֹד מִלְחָמָה. {פ}

**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}

- 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:

**וְעַל-חֲמֹתֶיךָ יְרוּשָׁלָם, הַפְּקֻדֵּת שְׁמָרִים--כֹּל-הַיּוֹם וְכֹל-הַלַּילה תִּמְיוֹד, לֹא יִחְשֹׁו; הַמִּנְצְּרִים, אַתְּ-הָוֹה--אֶל-גָּמִין, לְכָם.**

- 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  
All the generations before me contributed me  
  
Little by little so I would emerge here in  
Jerusalem  
  
All at once, like a prayer house or a philanthr  
  
That compels. My name is the name of my  
contributors.  
  
That compels.

**כל הדורות שלפני**  
**כל הדורות שלפני פרמו אותו**  
**קמעה קמעה כדי שאוקם באנ ברושלים**  
**גבת אחת, כמו בית תפלה או מוסד צדקה.**  
**זה מחייב. שמי הוא שם תורמי.**

I approach the age of my father's death.  
My will has many patches,  
I have to change my life and my death  
Day by day, to fulfill all the prophecies  
That prophesied me. So they wont be a lie.  
That compels.

אָנֹי מַתְקַרֵב לְגִיל מוֹת אָבִי.  
צְנוּאָתִי מַטְלָאת בְּהֻרְבָּה טְלָאִים,  
אָנֹי צָרִיךְ לְשִׁנּוֹת אֶת חַיִי וְאֶת מוֹתִי  
יֹמֶם יוֹם כִּדִי לְקִים אֶת כָּל הַגְּבוּאֹת  
שְׁנַבְּאוֹ אֹתוֹתִי. שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיוֹ שָׁקָר.  
זהה מהبيب.

I passed my fortieth year. There are jobs  
I cannot get. If I were in Auschwitz  
They wouldn't have sent me to work,  
They would have burned me right away.  
That compels.

עַבְרִתִי אֶת שָׁנַת הַאֲרָבָּعִים. יָשַׁם  
מִשְׂרוֹת שְׁבֵהוּ לֹא יִקְבְּלוּ אָוֹתִי  
בְּשֶׁל כָּה. אֲלֹו קִיְתִי בָּאוֹשְׁנוֹיז,  
לֹא הָיו שׂוֹלְחִים אָוֹתִי לְעַבְדֵד,  
הָיו שׂוֹרְפִים אָוֹתִי מֵיד.  
זה מהبيب.

- 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?