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## American Friends of Ateret Cohanim/Jerusalem Chai ....Making the Old City young Again

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Parashat Vayera / פרשת וירא Candle Lighting in Jerusalem 4:16 PM, November 18 17 Mar Cheshvan 5777

**5777 - תשע"ז May it be the year of "The City - Jerusalem" (עיר) of Gold. (זרהב')**

### Jerusalem Divrei Torah

**The centrality of Jerusalem to the Jewish People is indisputable and is the core of our mission. Our Divrei Torah by [Rabbi Yosef Bronstein](#) focus on Jerusalem and its connection to the weekly Torah portion. For a pdf to discuss at the Shabbat table, please [click here](#). To sponsor a Dvar Torah please [click here](#).**

### Fear and Perfection

Our parsha introduces the first half of Yerushalayim's name: "And Abraham named that place, The Lord will see, as it is said to this day: On the mountain, the Lord will be seen (yera'eh)."[1] While on one level Avraham was commenting on the fact that Hashem was just seen and will continue to be seen on the mountain, the midrash adds another layer of interpretation; namely that fear of heaven (yirat Hashem) will be achieved by people on the mountain.[2] On a linguistic level the midrash is based on the phonetic association of the Hebrew words for sight and fear. However, presumably there is also a deeper connection between the two interpretations of the verse. What might this connection teach us?

In chassidut, the fear of Hashem is associated with the concept of bittul or self-nullification.[3] One fears the King of the world and therefore neutralizes the parts of one's identity that it exists beyond the will of Hashem. This is symbolized by the prostrations that occurred in the Beit ha-Mikdash, which reflect the total nullification of the self and the welding of one's identity entirely to the will of Hashem. In this way a deep connection is forged between the person and Hashem which is the true meaning of fear of heaven.

How is this level of fear and nullification reached? The answer is, perhaps, through the unique vision of Hashem that is accessible in Yerushalayim. As various midrashim note, vision creates a stronger connection between the viewer and the object of one's sight than hearing. When one sees Hashem and senses his presence in the Beit ha-Mikdash a strong connection is forged between the "viewer" and Hashem and the natural reaction is one of awe and self-nullification.

With this in mind the name Yerushalayim takes on a new meaning. One might think that the self-nullification achieved after seeing Hashem (yirah) would leave a person broken and incomplete. However, the second half of the word Yerushalayim is "shalem" or complete. The true way of attaining completion and perfection is through nothing else other than "yirah" – seeing Hashem and bending one's will to His will. Only then can one be "shalem."

This idea undergirds the Mishna in Pirkei Avot: "Make His will into your will." While on the surface this Mishna might be understood as advocating self-abnegation and making oneself into a non-existent entity, Rav Kook[4] offers a different explanation. He explains that as we all contain a divine soul our true nature and will is always in sync with the will of Hashem. If we are able to get to the point of identity between our will and Hashem's will, then we have accessed our true selves. At that point we will have merited to achieve the meaning of the name "Yerushalayim" – through fear/nullification one becomes complete.

[1]Bereishit 22:14. Translation is from Chabad.org.

[2]Bereishit Rabbah 56:16.

[3]See, Sefer HaMa'amarim 5719 (Lubavitcher Rebbe), pg. 547.

[4]Orot HaKodesh volume 3, Mussar HaKodesh chapter 29.



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 Muro dei blanto de los Judios - Muro di lamento degli ebrei - Klagerauer der Juden.

**Rosh Hashana 5777** marked the beginning of the 50<sup>th</sup> year since the redemption of Jerusalem during the Six Day War. It was our soldiers and our leaders who looked upward with trust and faith as they hoisted the Israeli flag on the Har Habayit and lovingly touched the stones of the Kotel, the Western Wall, after 2000 years of physical separation. Our commitment and deep appreciation to their service and sacrifice will IY”H ensure that Jerusalem always remains in the secure hands of the Jewish people. Protecting the families who live there today is our duty and responsibility. This cannot be their struggle alone. **Become their partner. [Please Donate Now](#)**

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**5777 - תשע"ז** *May it be the year of  
"The City - Jerusalem" (עיר) of Gold. (זהב')  
May G-d's City - Yerushalayim Shel Zahav, be rebuilt and  
restored to its previous glory for the Jewish People.  
May it be a year of "עז" - strength for Jerusalem and Am  
Yisrael. Next year in a united Jerusalem with a flourishing  
Jewish life centered around religious educational institutes.*



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