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Parashat Vayigash / פרשת ויגש Candle Lighting in Jerusalem 3:58 PM, December 18, 2015 Tevet 6, 5776



**Ateret Cohanim Welcomes
 Eli Groner - General Director
 of the Prime Minister's Office
 during Chanukah at the
 Kotel HaKatan**



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](#)

The Importance of the Neck

After Yosef reveals himself to his brothers and reassures them, he embraces Binyamin. The Torah relates that he “fell on the neck of his brother Binyamin and cried” but interestingly uses a plural form of “necks.” Rashi cites the midrash that this textual anomaly indicates that Yosef was crying over the two temples that would be built in the portion of Binyamin but would ultimately be destroyed. Yosef crying on Binyamin’s neck(s) refers to his mourning over the destroyed temples.

Of all places in the body, why would the neck symbolize the Beit ha-Mikdash? Intuitively, one would posit that the Beit ha-Mikdash should be represented by the head which both structurally and in terms of significant is the top of the body?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that the neck serves the same function as the Beit ha-Mikdash. The head is qualitatively different than the other limbs of the body. It is the seat of cognition and is therefore the key to consciousness and to what makes us human. However, the unique qualities of the head are not meant to serve the head alone. The head’s superior capabilities can only reach their true potential when it assists the other limbs as the command center for the rest of the body.

This is precisely where the neck enters the picture. The neck serves as the connection between the head and the rest of the body. It is the conduit through which the commands of the head can permeate the limbs and breathe life into them. For all of its uniqueness, the head would literally be disembodied if not for the neck - unique, but impotent.

The Beit ha-Mikdash is also a conduit. The Divine Presence is the "head" of existence, possessing obviously singularly unique qualities. Similar to the head, the Divine Presence wants to affect the body, i.e. this lowly physical world in which we live. But how is the transcendent God supposed to connect with the terrestrial reality? Hashem, so to speak, needs a neck to serve as a conduit.

The Beit ha-Mikdash serves the crucial role of being the pipeline of spirituality. It connects Hashem to this world and allows for the will of Hashem to be practically carried out. Divinity is channeled through the Beit ha-Mikdash and from there enervates the whole world.

Yosef crying on Binyamin's neck represents the mourning over the loss of this conduit. With the destruction of the Beit ha-Mikdash and the exile of the Jewish people, heaven and earth were torn asunder. The pipeline no longer functions to the same degree and we are left as a decapitated body, bereft of a direct connection with Hashem.

This idea teaches us the great significance of those who are actively working to rebuild Yerushalayim and eventually the Beit ha-Mikdash. Restoring the Beit ha-Mikdash to its former glory will reconnect Hashem and the world, bringing creation to its ultimate state of perfection.

May we merit to see this connection rekindled, speedily in our days.

[1]Bereishit 45:14

[2]Citing the Gemara Megilah 16b.

[3]It is interesting to note that there is a midrash (Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah 4:6) which, in this context, seems to describe the neck as the highest point of the body. See also, Rashi Devarim 32:12

[4]Likutei Sichos chelek 10.

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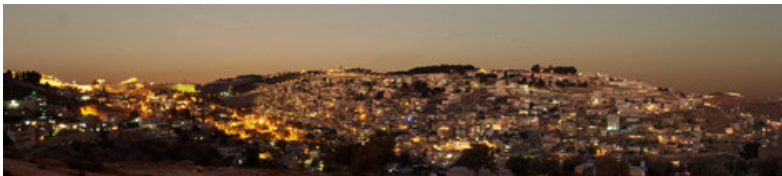


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- 5) Major restoration of Beit Wittenberg as a monumental heritage house (Mark Twain also stayed in the building in 1867)



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**5776 - תשע"ו May it be the year of
"The City - Jerusalem" (עיר), and her residents. (ויושביה')
May G-d's City - Yerushalayim, be rebuilt and restored to
its previous glory for the Jewish People.
Next year in a united Jerusalem with a flourishing Jewish
life centred around religious educational institutes.**

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