

And he named the place Bais-El; however, Luz was the city's name originally. (28:19)

The name Luz denotes the principle of eternity. *Chazal* (*Vayikra Rabbah* 18) teach that there is a certain tiny bone within the human body that does not decompose. It is from this indestructible bone that Hashem will resurrect the dead. *HoRav Mordechai Ilan, zl*, explains the background, the name change from the original *Luz* to *Bais-El* (Beth-El). Until Yaakov *Avinu* emerged on the scene, people thought that the way to ensure continuity is through the establishment of community, etc. Thus, they named the city *Luz*, because its name represents endurance and perseverance. Our Patriarch changed the city's name to *Bais Kel*, House of G-d. His message was quite simple; if you want permanence, if you desire enduring cultural growth, you must infuse the community with a spiritual element. It must have a Divine Component. *Rabbeinu Bachya* explains that *Luz* is actually Yerushalayim. In other words, the holy city of Yerushalayim is the foundation of *Techiyas HaMeisim* and for the future of the world.

Luz had other distinctions. *Chazal* (*Berashis Rabbah* 69:8) asserted that *Luz* is where they dyed the *techeiles*, bluish wool used for *Tzitzis*. This was the city to which *Sancheirav* came, but did not disarrange- as he did to all the world by exiling nations from their native countries. When *Nevuchadnetzar* destroyed all of *Eretz Yisrael*, he did not destroy *Luz*. Last, it is the city in which the *Malach Ha'Maves* has no dominion. (The *Yifeh Toar* suggests that the Angel of Death and dying are allegorical references to the *Yetzer hora*, evil inclination.)

The city of *Luz* personified purity and lucidity. It had no ambiguity, no gray area, no prevarication of any kind. It is such a place that produced *techeiles* made of the true color, not *kala ilan*, a similar dye the charlatons used to convince people that they were wearing *techeiles*. It is the city which symbolizes *Nitzchiyus*, eternity, a city which the evil *Sancheirav* and *Nevuchadnetzer* could not touch. It is in that city, that the *Luz bone* which endures through any form of destruction, that Hashem saves the person from death. The nature of this is *Kiyum ha nitzchi*, eternal truth. When something is *emes*, it is *Yatziv, Nachon, V'Kayom*. These unique attributes characterize our holy city of Yerushalayim, which was the original city called *Luz*. When the beginning of Yerushalayim is *Luz* (or built on the principles which define the character of *Luz*), it endures forever.