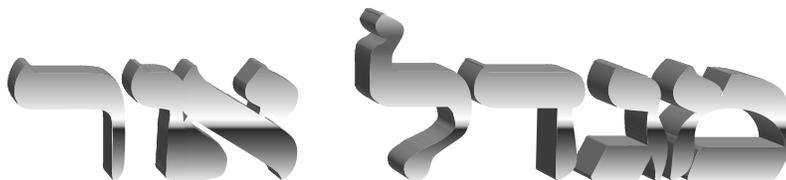


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Clarification: Last week we related a story that took place at a specific Young Israel synagogue in the 1920's.

The point of the story was to highlight the actions of the man who spoke up for Torah and not *chas v'shalom* to disparage any group or individuals nearly a century later. The isolated incident in no way reflects the principles of the Young Israel movement or its member shuls.

We apologize for any confusion.

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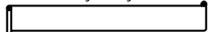
A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:26 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:44 - שקיעה
- 8:32 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:08 - זק"ש גר"א
- 9:58 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:44 - שקיעה
- 5:26 - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:56 - צאת 72

Times courtesy of MyZmanim.com



Did You Know?

With the changing of the clocks comes a serious issue for davening. It is now very easy to miss the time of Krias Shema, especially on Shabbos when davening usually starts later than during the week.

The Gr"א says one should be careful to say Krias Shema with the brachos during zman krias shema, as opposed to saying it alone beforehand and then davening before zman tefillah, because you get Krias Shema with the brachos and smichas geulah l'tefillah. The Mishna Berura questions the second reason because by saying the brachos before Shemoneh Esrai you do have semichas geulah l'tefillah.

The Pri Yitzchak comments that the main mitzvah of semichas geulah l'tefillah is during Zman Krias Shema and discusses the obligation of saying Krias Shema with the brachos at length. Rav Moshe Shternbuch writes (Teshuvos V'hanhagos) that if one says Krias Shema as part of *l'olam yehei adam* he has "said Krias Shema with a bracha" [though not birchas Krias Shema.]

Therefore, one should try to daven with a minyan that will reach Shema before the zman. If this is not possible, he should recite Shema before davening, preferably within the bracha of *mekadesh es Shimcha ba'rabbim*.

Thought of the week:

The cynic says, "One man can't do anything." I say, "Only one man can do anything."

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"ושמתי את זרעך כעפר הארץ אשר אם יוכל איש למנות את עפר הארץ גם זרעך ימנה" (בראשית יג:טז)

"I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth so that if one can count the dust of the earth, then your offspring, too, can be counted."

HaShem promised Avraham that his children would be numerous. Rashi therefore explains this phrase to mean that just as it is impossible to count the dust of the earth, so will it be impossible to count the Jews who would descend from him.

While that may be the basic explanation, the phrasing of the posuk seems unusual. It could have just said, "they will be too numerous to count," as the angel said to Hagar later on (16:10.) The way the posuk is worded here implies that one could count the Jewish people if he were so inclined and had the time and ability to do so.

Perhaps the posuk reads as it does to convey not only the physical number to be very great, but other qualities as well. The Divrei Yechezkel of Shinov explains an exchange that took place between Avram and HaKadosh Boruch Hu. HaShem promised Avram great reward but he responded, "What can You give me since I have no children, and my heir is 'Damesek Eliezer.'" Damesek is usually translated as Damascus, but Chazal say it is a contraction of the words *'doleh u'mashkeh mi'Toras rabo l'acheirim,* who drew and poured his master's Torah to others.

While this is a great compliment, The Divrei Yechezkel says it was not enough. Avram's claim to HaShem was that Eliezer was only able to repeat the Torah Avram had taught him, but not to initiate new understandings on his own. To this HaShem answered that Avraham's children would be like the stars. The moon only reflects the light of the sun but each star generates its own light. So would his children be.

Following in this vein, we can derive that this posuk, too, sheds light on the qualities of the Jewish people. To Hagar, no comparison was made, it was just stated that the children of Yishmael would be numerous. Later, after the Akeida, when the angel promised that the physical number of Avraham's descendents (22:17) would be great, they are compared to both the stars and the sand. Here, however, the comparison is not to sand, but to earth. This signifies that there is more than a simple comparison to the number of particles of earth.

Why would anyone wish to measure earth? To see what it can produce. Soil processes rain and nutrients and causes things to grow. It enables us to have food, which empowers us to accomplish great things. In other words, earth represents potential. Avram was told, "Look around you and see the land I will give your children to work with." They will not just live there but rather they will be like the earth itself, a source of constant production and growth.

Just as the earth has limitless potential, but one can look at a small piece of it and extrapolate some idea of what it can do, so are the Jewish people able to grow and produce infinitely. In fact, one need only look at a single Jew to realize that what he or she is able to accomplish and make happen is so great it defies computation, how much more so the entire nation.

R' Boruch Ber Leibowitz z"l, the brilliant Rosh Yeshiva and loyal disciple of R' Chaim Brisker z"l was known for his analytical mind and his love and devotion to Torah. His students relate something he said to them:

"When my day comes," said R' Boruch Ber, "and I am asked by the heavenly court, 'What have you brought with you?' what shall I answer?"

"If I answer that I have come with Torah, they may respond, 'Do you call that Torah?!' If I say I come with Yiras Shomayim, fear of Heaven, they may say, 'Is that your idea of Yiras Shomayim?!' "

"The one thing in which I find comfort is that I will say I come with Ahavas Yisrael. Whenever I walk in the street and see a Jew of any denomination or custom I am filled with love and say, 'A blessing on his head! May he be successful in his endeavors.' That is what will get me into Gan Eden."