

“Will the World End in 2012?”

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Believe it or not, Google has 217,000 results for this question! That’s a lot of people concerned with the world ending very soon.

On December 12, 2012 the Mayan long-count calendar comes to an abrupt end and there are thousands of people who believe it will be the end of civilization as we know it.

Due to the particular alignment of the sun and the Milky Way, there seems to be fears that the Earth’s magnetic field will reverse, resulting in cosmic radiation. Some are also predicting that an all-time high of sunspots will interfere

with electricity and revert us back into the dark



ages. Additionally, there are many who are expecting a particular asteroid that is en route to collide with Planet Earth!

The BBC news even reported that there is a team of British scientists and engineers that are developing a spacecraft that will be able to intercept asteroids. Their plan is to intercept the asteroid, exert a small gravitational force on it, and throw it off course from destroying Earth!

There are millions worldwide who are taking these threats very seriously and are preparing for “Doomsday”. A worried soul can even purchase all his “survival necessities” including a year supply of freeze dried entrees (\$1,299), Potassium Iodide (\$19), and a solarpowered oven (\$299), at specialized 2012 end-of-world supply stores!

So, should we be worried?

40 Years of Protection

Let’s see if we can glean some insight from our history in order to prepare for our supposedly “doomed” future.

The yidden had a miraculous guide in the midbar for 40 years¹. There was a pillar of smoke that lead them during the day, and a pillar of fire that lead them at night.

However, these pillars were no ordinary guides. They were infused with supernatural powers unlike anything history has ever seen. They cooled and cushioned the hot and rocky desert floor. They flattened mountains of colossal proportions, and they filled all the earth’s deep depressions. Venomous snakes and scorpions were instantly exterminated². The clouds even stood up against the expert stone throwers and archers of the Mitzriyim³. All in all, these Clouds of Hashem protected Klal Yisroel from all harm and ensured them safe and secure travel to the Holy Land. Or did they?

40 Years of Death

We find in this week’s Parsha, that after the meraglim returned with their slanderous report about Eretz Yisroel, Hashem decreed a terrible punishment on Klal Yisroel⁴. Each year on Tisha B’Av night, the men of the generation were instructed to dig their own graves and go to sleep in them. In the morning, thousands would not awake. This deadly tradition continued each year for 40 years⁵.

We need to wonder, what help were these miraculous clouds that protected us from snakes and scorpions, when the majority of the male populace ages 20-60 were wiped out!?

40 Years of Worry

Bnei Yisroel had many worries in the midbar. They worried about the mitzriyim, they worried about food, about water, about meat, about the giants in Eretz Yisroel. However, Hashem, in fact, provided for all of their needs in miraculous ways. He split the Sea, brought manna from shamayim, provided quail, a

well of fresh water followed them everywhere they went (now that would come in handy down here in Miami), the Clouds of Glory, and the list of miracles goes on and on.

Klal Yisroel worried about all the external potential catastrophes that might threaten them. What they neglected to worry about was their own behavior. At the end of the day, their downfall was not the snakes and scorpions, it was their own choices.

Asteroids

Human nature tends to make us worry about everything outside of us. Will the Obama administration stand by its word and support Israel? Will the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico kill all the pelicans? Will asteroid X hit the earth killing all mankind? These are definitely topics of interest, but not topics of concern.

What the Jew needs to be *concerned* about is *his own personal* battles. World catastrophes are interesting topics of discussion, but our *personal* character development and self-growth should really be what’s on our minds.

The ananei hakavod had the power to catch any asteroid headed towards Klal Yisroel, but it lacked the ability to protect against even a single word of lashon harah.

So, if you happen to be one of the British scientists who are spending billions of tax dollars developing a spacecraft which will save us from impending doom, I wish you the best of luck. In my opinion, there are even bigger things to worry about – ourselves!

Good Shabbos☺

There are millions worldwide who are preparing for “Doomsday” - should we?

What the Jew needs to worry about is his own personal battles.

¹Shemos (13:21) ²Rashi, Bamidbar (10:34) ³Rashi, Shemos (14:19) ⁴Bamidbar (14:29) ⁵Rashi Taanis (30b)
Please email sstilerman@gmail.com with any questions or comments. Your input is greatly appreciated!