

**"And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth." (13:16) -
"Look please towards Heaven and count the stars... and He
said to him, "So shall be your seed." (15:5) - "And I will
unconditionally multiply your seed as the stars of the
Heaven. And as the sand which is on the seashore." (22:17)**

The *Torah* metaphorically compares *Am Yisroel* to three different substances. *Horav Moshe Feinstein, z.l.*, suggests the following interpretation of this symbolism. In the first analogy, sand serves as a boundary for the sea. The boundary restrains the sea's overflow and the ensuing damage of human life and property. Likewise, when man is overwhelmed by physical or emotional troubles, he finds it difficult to serve Hashem with a relaxed attitude. Thus, Hashem offers us His blessing. This blessing enables us to restrain these difficulties from overwhelming us and interfering with our service to Hashem.

In the second analogy, the dust of the earth serves mankind in various ways. It provides the raw material for food, shelter, and clothing. Similarly, *Klal Yisrael* benefits all of mankind, since it constitutes the sole reason for the world's existence. Another lesson to be derived from this analogy is the importance of humility as a character trait. We must maintain a low profile, so that we are able to impart our *Torah* knowledge to others.

As stars rise above mankind, so, too, are we blessed with ascendancy above the nations, according to the third analogy. Although we are enjoined to be humble, we must still retain our uniqueness and self-respect. In order for an individual to be prepared to reach out to others, he must first establish within himself a symbiotic fusion of these two analogies - dust and stars. He must view himself as knowledgeable and capable of helping others. Simultaneously, he must act with humility and modesty. We must each be aware of our unique blessing and the awesome responsibility that accompanies this opportunity.