

## CURRENT TALMUD PASSAGE

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### BH

## WHERE IS THE LAND OF MILK AND HONEY, EXACTLY?

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Yes, we know that the land of Israel is the land of milk and honey but, where, exactly is that land of milk and honey? Is it defined by the boundaries of the current state of Israel? If so, then that means the Negev Desert is flowing with milk and honey.

With all due respect, I worked on a kibbutz in the Negev and, while it was beautiful and they did grow things, it wasn't exactly flowing with milk and honey. It was a miracle of irrigation and modern agriculture and lots of hard work that brought any living thing out of that earth.

So, where is the land of milk and honey? The Yerushalmi knows:

Rabbi Yose said in the name of Reish Lakish, Rabbi Jonah, and Rabbi Zeira in the name of Rabbi Haninah: 16 miles surrounding Sepphoris (in modern Israel, Tzippori) are the land of milk and honey.

Said Rabbi Jonah: He who measures the slopes of Beit Sha'an will find that area is part of this territory.

He who measures the valley of Gennosar will find that area is part of the same territory.(Y. Bikkurim 1:8)

According to the Yerushalmi's sages the land of milk and honey is in what is today northern Israel, near the Sea of Galilee.

### Discussion Questions:

1. The Yerushalmi is created by the sages of Sepphoris. Is it possible that the "Sepphoris Tourist Lobby" could be behind these teachings? If not them, then who?
2. In Deuteronomy 11:9-12, we find that the land of Israel is described as better than Egypt because there, one has to irrigate one's field by carrying one's water from the Nile, whereas in Israel, the water simply falls down out of the sky. Tiberius and the land surrounding it had the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River so they were able to have a "safety net" if the rain didn't come. What else might make this region the best place in Israel?
3. If we were describing Israel as being a land of plenty today, what would we say? A land flowing with internet access and start up companies?

I'm interested to see your answers!

