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**ERETZ ISRAEL
BULLETIN 107**

**WORLD ALLIANCE FOR THE CORRECTION
OF THE SIN OF THE SPIES**

**“LIVING IN ERETZ ISRAEL IS THE EQUIVALENT OF ALL THE
MITZVOT OF THE TORAH” (SIFRE, PARASHAT REE)**

LEARN THE LESSON AND DO NOT FOLLOW ON THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE SPIES

**RAV KOOK: *ERETZ YISRAEL* IS THE PLACE DESIGNED FOR US,
BOTH IN THE COMMUNAL SENSE OF THE ISRAELI NATION, AND
IN THE INDIVIDUAL LIFE OF EVERY SINGLE JEW.**

Here we are at home. Here we are family. The air of Eretz Yisrael is healthy for us. As Rav Yehuda Halevi wrote in his poems, The air of Y our Land is the breath of our soul

...Rabbi Kook was trying to clarify for the student, and for everyone else in the room, the very real differences between the Land of Israel and everywhere else in the world.

"The air of Israel makes one wise," Rav Tzvi Yehuda said, quoting the well-known *Gemara in Bava Batra 158b* "It causes intelligence and wisdom. And the beginning of intelligence is to understand that existence among the gentile nations is totally unpleasant."

A Jew who was born outside the Land of Israel, who spent his whole life in the Diaspora, doesn't know any other reality. He readily becomes a creature of the foreign culture which surrounds him. He becomes estranged from his natural connection to Israel. His sense of a need for his own Jewish government, or Jewish army, or Jewish calendar, or Land, is obscured. The governments of America, England, or South Africa take care of his needs. In the absence of Jewish nationhood, gentile cultures and pastimes occupy a significant role in his daily existence. Thus, the redemption of Israel can become a secondary issue in his life. His life ceases to feel like an exile, and, because of his alienation from the deeper aspects of Torah, his existence in a gentile land does not feel unpleasant to him, or to his soul.

Rav Tzvi Yehuda wanted us to know that, on the contrary, living outside of Israel was unpleasant indeed; not only in being a guest in someone else's country, but even in the very air that we breathe. It is a well-known fact that the food we eat influences our internal being. We are careful to eat kosher food, because a Jew understands that to live a life of Kedusha, he must observe the dietary laws which Hashem has decreed for His people. The food which we eat has an effect on our souls. How much more so our surroundings, the air we breathe, and the land we walk on. In Israel, we are surrounded by Kedusha, by holy air and holy soil. And every moment we are here, we are performing a mitzvah, as our Sages say: Everyone who walks four cubits in the Land of Israel merits a portion in the World To Come. (Ketubot 111A) In contrast, outside of Israel, the air is impure, the land is impure, even Halachically, the Diaspora is categorized as possessing a state of defilement similar to that of a grave. (Shabbat 14B) (From Sefer Torat Eretz Yisrael)

PLEASE HASHEM SAVE US FROM THE SIN OF THE SPIES WHO SPOKE LASHON HARA AGAINST ERETZ ISRAEL. LET US CORRECT THE SIN OF “THEY DESPISED THE DESIRABLE LAND” (TEHILLIM 106) FOR IN THIS WAY WE BRING CLOSER THE COMPLETE GEULA WHEN YOUR NAME WILL BE SANCTIFIED IN THE WORLD AND YOUR NATION ISRAEL SHALL BE EXALTED AND YOUR BEIT HA MIKDASH REBUILT MAY THIS BE SOON IN OUR DAYS, AMEN YEHI RATZON