

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL
BULLETIN 157**

**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

**HARAV TZVI YEHUDA ILLUMINATED THE TRUE
COURSE OF ZIONISM AND THE CONTROVERSY IT
ENCOUNTERED BY PRESENTING A SHORT HISTORY
OF THE MOVEMENT, AND THE RESPONSES IT
EVOKED THROUGHOUT THE TORAH WORLD.**

"It isn't correct that the majority of Gedolei Torah opposed Zionism," he said. "Around the year 5660 (approximately fifty years before the establishment of the State of Israel,) a pamphlet defaming Zionism was published in Kovna. It was called, 'Light to the Just' At the end of the pamphlet, a few letters from Gedolei Yisrael were included: from Rabbi Chaim of Brisk, Rabbi David Friedman of Karlin, (On R David of Karlin's opposition, see Shivat Zion, Part 1, 18.) and others. Afterward were some letters from some Admores, such as Rabbi Shalom Ber of Lubavitch, who was then in his youth. At a time when all of Eastern Europe, and especially Lita, were filled with a bounty of Gaonim and Talmidei Chachamin, they only managed to obtain the signatures of eight Torah scholars who had the stature of Rabbi Chaim of Brisk. To strengthen their contention, the compilers of the pamphlet had to go out of their way to obtain a letter from Rabbi Natan Adler from London. The editors of the pamphlet claimed that the community of Israel was going up in smoke because of Zionism. If so, why didn't they gather the signatures of the hundreds and thousands of great Torah personalities and Tzaddikim who lived at the time?! What happened that the great sea of Gedolim and rabbis didn't respond? If Clal Yisrael was burning in flames, how are we to comprehend their failure to sign?"

"The reason is that only handfuls took sides on the two extremes of the issue. On the positive side were Gaonim like Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, the Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Shmuel Mohliver, and Rabbi Yitzhak Rinnes; and on the other side were Gaonim like Rabbi Chaim of Brisk, and Rabbi David of Karlin. But the majority of Gedolei Yisrael were in a quandary. They didn't know in which direction to lean. They neither supported Zionism, nor rejected it. They were afraid to express a definite opinion, and thus became a silent majority. "

For a further discussion of Gedolim who emphasized the great mitzvah of settling in Eretz Yisrael, see the book, Shivat Zion, Part 2. Prominent among them are: the

Baal Shem Tov, Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, the Gaon of Vilna, the Chatam Sofer, Rabbi Akiva Yosef Schlesinger, Rabbi Akiva Eiger, Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Kalisher, Rabbi Eliyahu Guttmacher of Grieditz, the Malbim, Rabbi Yisrael Yehoshua of Kotna, Rabbi Elchanan Spektor of Kovno, Rabbi Yehoshua Leib Diskin, the Netziv, Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman (although a fierce opponent of secular Zionism, he stressed the greatness of the Torah command to live in Israel, and he recognized the end of the Exile in his time,) the Rebbe of Piloy, Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, the Chazon Ish, the Rebbe of Obstrovtsa, the Ohr Somayach and others)
(From Sefer Torat Eretz Yisrael)

IF THE OBLIGATION TO LIVE IN ERETZ YISRAEL IS SO CLEAR, HOW CAN ONE EXPLAIN THE PHENOMENON THAT THE MODERN PIONEERS OF ALIYAH AND SETTLEMENT WERE NOT RELIGIOUS JEWS?

RAV TZVI YEHUDA SAID THAT THIS ASSUMPTION SIMPLY WAS NOT TRUE "First of all, in the name of historical accuracy, the movement of Geula in our time did not begin with Herzl, but with (the religious group) Chibat Zion, the Lovers of Zion. At the head of this movement were Talmidei Chachamim of immense, holy stature, HaRav Tzvi Hirsh Kalisher, and HaRav Eliahu Guttmacher. Both of these men were graced with Divine spirit, and all of their words and deeds were directed toward Israel's Geula. Afterwards, when the movement spread, new spokesmen arose, and new directions developed, with a multiplicity of organizers and supporters. The Almighty brought these events about from many directions and sources. From four directions the Spirit comes.(Ezekiel, 37:9) The spirit of Hashem comes from every direction; through the physical world; through the phenomenon of anti-Semitism; through the national awakenings of foreign nations (and their wars;) and also through the secular side of Am Yisrael. "

A general lack of awareness concerning the religious beginnings of the Zionist movement has led to a distorted understanding of Zionism, and to many mistaken beliefs. Perhaps the most damaging is the belief that the leading Torah scholars of the generation opposed the return of the Jewish people to Zion. A proper investigation of this subject deserves a chapter of its own.

(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