

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL  
BULLETIN 229**

**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**

**FROM THE WRITINGS OF RABBI MEIR DAVID KAHANE ZTKL  
THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL AND THE LAND OF ISRAEL  
STAND IN UNIQUE UNITY, ONE CANNOT BE  
SEPARATED FROM THE OTHER.**

It is only the land of Israel that is held up to us as the blessing on our heads. “It is better to lodge in the deserts of Israel than in the palaces of other countries,” state the Rabbis. “A man should forever live in the Land of Israel, even in a city that has a majority of gentiles, rather than live outside the Land even in a city with a majority of Jews, for he who lives in the Land of Israel is considered as having a G-d, while outside the Land he is considered as not having a G-d.” For those who go to the Land of Israel, the Rabbis permit leniency in certain Sabbath prohibitions and give a wife grounds for divorce from a husband reluctant to go there to live with her. The religious obligation of a Jew to go live in the Land of Israel is clear and unchallengeable despite the denials and anger

But it is more than merely a religious obligation for the Jew, The reality of the impossibility of permanent immunity from gentile hostility; the reality of pogroms, Crusades, Inquisitions, humiliations, discrimination, tension, and gas chambers, all led to a deep yearning and an instinctive understanding of the uniqueness of the Land as the sole solution to the Jewish agony and a deep Jewish yearning for it that became a passion. I can think of nothing more to add to this magnificent obsession of the Jew for his home than what I once wrote:

And the Jew scattered to the far corners of the earth, and the winds that blew in every nook took him with them. And wherever he went, he looked back—to home.

The Byzantines oppressed him, and he grew more stubborn and prayed each morning, “And may our eyes behold your return to Zion in mercy. The Church scorned and cursed him, and he grew tougher, praying each afternoon, “Sound the great horn for our Freedom. . . .” The Crusaders burned him alive and the feudal Christians refused to allow him to own land or join guilds, and he prayed each evening, “And unto Jerusalem, Your City, return in mercy. . .

The Arabs drove him out of Granada and stole his children in Yemen, and he broke a glass at his wedding . . . not to forget the destruction of Jerusalem. He was exiled from Spain and from France and from England and Portugal, and Cossacks delighted in pogroms in Russia, and he proclaimed each Passover:

“Next year in Jerusalem. . . . Now we are slaves—next year free men; now we are here—next year in the Land of Israel.”

And the more they burned your grandfather, the more stubborn he became, and the more they beat him, the tougher was his defiance. The more they strove to drive him from this world, the more he determined to live; the more his G-d tried to make him lose faith in Him, the more defiant your obnoxiously obstinate zeyde became.

He was obsessed with one thing. Return to Israel. He was driven by it; he was a man possessed. And so, when he prayed, it was always facing home. How curious it is.

Arabs, you see, also face one way— Mecca, land of slavery, city of Saudi Arabia. But Jews face home. Sephardic Jews in Baghdad pray to the west, Polish Jews in Warsaw to the east, the Jewish four corners of the earth turning to face a common dream—Israel.

And when he died—still in exile—the Jew was buried in a simple white pine box (this is the real and traditional “Jewish way of death”) and with one other thing—a tiny sack filled with soil from Eretz Yisrocl—the Land of Israel. If his eye could not see it in life, this stubborn old Jew was determined to clutch it in death.

Listen, young Jew: This is how the world determined that he should die and this is how—in his gentle, humble way—he told them, NO!

Because he knew that there was no place in this alien world where he could ever find . . . peace and security, he knew that he must return home. Because he knew—so much better than we—that all the utopias and all the ideologies and all the MarxismLeninisms and Trotskyisms and Maoisms hold no place for the Jew; because he knew that the Trotskys and Zinovievs and Kamenevs and Radeks who worshipped so eagerly at strange altars would be devoured by their false gods; because he foresaw the Soviet version of Babi Yar and the Polish Gomulka expulsion of loyal communists, because of their “Zhid” origins; because he was so much more perceptive and wiser than his grandchildren he was never tempted by the siren call of exile. He chose to return home.

Listen, young descendent of a stubborn zeyde. Listen and try to understand the tenacity of the Jews who sat in countless synagogues on the night of Tisha B’Av with flickering candles and tear-stained Book of Lamentations, with stockings on their feet and bearded face as befits the mourner for Zion and who mournfully remembered the anniversary of the destruction and sadly intoned the words: “How doth she sit solitary; the city that was filled with people hath become a widow.”

Listen to all this and ask yourself the question: Was it truly United States oil that created Israel? Was it truly the military-industrial complex that gave birth to a Jewish State? Was it the United Nations that brought us home? Was it British imperialism that created this dream? There was no Esso when Jews were driven from the land in which they had lived for centuries and to which they vowed to return. There were no Arabs when Bar Kochba went down to defeat, and Jews were already turning to Zion three times a day. There was no Pentagon when Yehuda Helevi, the greatest of medieval Jewish poets wrote: “My heart is in the East and I am at the end of the West.” Israel came into being because it never came out of icing. Israel came back to life because it never died. It was the Jewish State in the days of Joshua: it was he Jewish State when there were Pharaohs; it was the Jewish State when Assyrians and Moabites and Edomites and Philistines and Babylonians and Persians and Hellenes and Romans drifted through history and passed out of it again. It remained Jewish because Jews never left it and there was never a time when Jewish communities did not remain in Zion. Do you think Theodor Herzl created Zionism? Not so Zionism came into being the day the Jews went into exile and was nurtured by every religious law and custom. Every Jew who practiced his faith and every Jew who observed his tradition was a Zionist. Herzl was merely a man whose time had come, and Jews simply put into practice the goal and dream and aspirations of two millenia. Had there been no Balfour Declaration—there would still have arisen the State of Israel. Had there been no United Nations—there would still have come into being a Jewish State. The stubbornness of Jewish zeydes can be denied for only so long.

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