

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL  
BULLETIN 230**

**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.**

For two thousand years the Jew bombarded his G-d with pleas, entreaties, tears, promises, repentance, threats, recriminations, and yet more tears. Home, was his persistent and nagging plea to his Maker. When shall we be allowed to go home? Even the All Mighty can endure just so much. The unceasing persistence of a Jew can even wear down Omnipotence, and at last lie consented. In a drama unrivaled in the history of man, a people that had begun its long journey into exile twenty centuries earlier, returned. The maddening patience was blessed, the unshakable memory of the hills of Judea was rewarded by return to their barren and rocky slopes. The mind boggles! Can one really grasp the magnificence and impossibility of it all? Can one appreciate our fortune in having been, for some inexplicable reason, chosen as the generation to behold that which all the prophets of old never saw? The return of a scattered, weak, government-less, and defenseless people to a land it had left at a time when most modern-day peoples were attaining the cultural level of swineherd in dark and dank backwardness. The rebirth of a language that moved from the petrified atmosphere of library and study hall into the streets, laboratories, and jet fighter planes of today. The clear and unmistakable fulfillment of prophecy; the miraculous realization of vision. For thus did the Jewish seers and visionaries of old speak as the Divine hand touched them:

Thus says the Lord: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; it is Rachel weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted, for they are away. Thus says the Lord: Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears; for your work shall have its reward, says the Lord; they shall return from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in your future, says the Lord, that your children shall return to their own land (Jeremiah 31).

And He said unto me: Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered: O Lord G-d, Thou knowest. Then He said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole House of Israel: behold, they say: Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost. . . . Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord G-d: Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come Out of your grave, O my people; and . . . I will bring you into the land of Israel (Ezekiel 37:3, 11).

Words spoken millennia ago; visions dreamed and dreams envisioned. And today they have come true. Indeed, there can no longer exist atheists among us—

only men who are blind. When the first foolish intellectuals and students arrived from Russia to a Holy Land that was filled less with the Presence than with deserts, swamps, malaria, and poverty, it seemed impossible for the land to come back to life at all—how much more so at the hands of the amateurish Jews who could never become tillers of the soil. Tailors, yes: toilers, never. When a Viennese journalist erupted one day from assimilation to Jewishness and began to rave about a Jewish State, he was properly condemned as a madman by all the proper people. But Herzl was to succeed and, when he rose in 1897 to declare that “surely in fifty years we will see a Jewish State,” he was to be proven right. When Arab armies rushed to wipe out the outnumbered and out-gunned Jews of the newborn Jewish State, the Jews, weak and cowardly, suddenly emerged as victors, and a state, larger than the absurdity offered by the United Nations, came into being. Miracles no longer happen.

And in 1967—as the primitive Jewish enemies whose cruel and barbaric makeup had been translated in 1920 and ‘29 and ‘36-39 into mutilations, torture, rape, and murder—poised for a Middle Eastern version of the “Final Solution” the fire of G-d through the courtesy of the Defense Forces of Israel exploded into the most awesome military victory of modern times.

And five of you shall choose a hundred and a hundred of you shall choose ten thousand; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

All that was dreamed has come true—in our times. “Blessed art thou O Lord our G-d . . . who has enabled us to live, and sustained us and allowed us to reach this time.” Are we not truly blessed and is our lot not beautiful?

After two millennia of a drama of suffering and endurance that shames the most imaginative of fiction by its poignancy, horror, and unbroken continuity, the Jew, again, has a home. It stands today, a beautiful state and a large one. Indeed, after 1967, it is no longer the tiny and precarious thing of Lake Success. It is a large state and a beautiful state and it is all Jewish.

It is a state where our children and theirs can grow tall and proud and free and Jewish. It is a state where the abnormality, insecurity, and gnawing reminder of minority status does not exist; where the problems of majority culture are reflected, not in Jewish children’s exposure to Christmas patterns in public schools, but in the children of the foreign embassies coming home to their parents and wondering why they, too, cannot light Hanukkah candles as all the other children do. .

It is a state where “kike” and “zhid” and “death to the Jew” are not heard and where the Saturday Sabbath is the one observed, where Jewish holidays are the days off, where the language of the prophets is the language of daily life, where longshoremen curse in Hebrew and policemen give traffic summonses in the holy tongue.

It is a state where Jewish rabbis and schools keep the spirit alive while Jewish generals and frogmen keep its body safe. It is a state where one cannot walk in the present without colliding with the past, where one daily treads upon the footsteps of his ancestors. Here is the Wall which is never left unattended, and is a symbol of its children’s devotion. Here are the children looking at the remnant of glory past and of future promise. It is a beautiful state and a large state and it is all Jewish.

And if so, why do we sit here? If so, why will next Yom Kippur find our synagogues filled with Jews who watch the clock ticking away the final minutes of the solemn holiday and as the service draws to its conclusion and we turn to the last page and the last line in the prayer book, a million voices throughout the great land will shout forth: "Next Year in Jerusalem!"

And next year we shall still be here in exile.

What is wrong with us? Do we not understand what is happening and will yet happen to us in exile?

Do we not realize that remaining in the Diaspora is equivalent to making a decision to assimilate, either for ourselves or for our children, and do we not know that if we do not return to the Jewish homeland our children's Jewish identity may be swallowed up in the self-delusion of alien philosophies?

Do we not see the assimilation, the intermarriage, the alienation of our young? Do we not see the murder of their souls and their identity, the tragedy of their wanderings in a culture that is not theirs and in a world in which they are strangers, rootless and a minority? It is unnatural to be a minority. It is abnormal. One cannot grow up normal and healthy when one is a stranger and different. And we are strangers in this land and we are different. Do we not realize what is happening to us and do we not behold the spiritual and cultural genocide into which we are walking? Are our children and our children's children that unimportant to us that we ply them with material gifts and let them die of spiritual starvation?

Are the fleshpots and the good life more important than the preservation of our children as Jews and the guarantee that they will marry Jews, have Jewish children of their own and live in a Jewish atmosphere that breeds confidence, normalcy and mental, spiritual, and physical strength!

And after the Holocaust of our own times do we not yet realize that remaining in exile is to see the endless repetition of tragedy, of hatred of the Jew, physical persecution, pogrom and Holocaust? What is there in us that allows us to sit with neo-Nazis and Panthers and an angry, restless, envious and hating majority whose idea of Jew-hatred merely awaits a time to come?

The fires of thirty years ago have barely been extinguished, the smell of the gas still pervades the nostrils of millions and the graves of six million, who never imagined it could happen, are still fresh. And, already, we forget; we already attempt to put it from our minds. But we know. Deep in our hearts we know and all the brave platitudes and speeches fade away into the insignificance and mirages they are when a George Wallace is shot and a million Jews falter for a moment and fearfully ask: "Was it a Jew who shot him?"

We have a land, at last, and—in mad flight from logic and sanity—we prefer to sit here with our own Nazis and haters.

It is time to go home; it is time to return. Out there is a land that awaits its children. Only there can one be a complete and a completely normal Jew. And in the face of all these things that we know to be true we continue to sit here. In the face of all the terrible specters of assimilation on the one hand, and physical annihilation on the other, we remain in exile—a self-imposed exile. In the end, the Jew remains a victim of his refusal to see that which he does not wish to see, in a frenzy of fear that he will be convinced he conjures up all the arguments:

"But if we leave America who will support Israel through political pressure and influence?"

Let us not delude ourselves and let us not create for ourselves a political ego that will contribute to that delusion. In the end it is not American Jewish political pressure that will create a favorable or unfavorable American foreign policy climate toward Israel. American Jewish political power is at its lowest ebb in decades and, with the growth of ethnic identity on the part of groups far larger than the Jew, it will become less significant yet. In addition to all this, is the fact that Jews, in a lemminglike refusal to make Jewish self-interest their yardstick and measuring rod, have let the major parties know that there is almost nothing that any political leader can do that will not see the great majority of Jews vote liberal Democrat and oppose conservative Republicanism. The great majority of Jewish eggs are in one basket; and why should the owner of that basket be worried about losing eggs that are guaranteed to him? And why should his competitor ever dream of acquiring them when there is apparently nothing he can do that will ever tempt them his way?

The myth of Jewish political power was severely damaged when, in an election year, President Dwight Eisenhower criticized Israel for its Sinai campaign and publically pressured it to withdraw. The impossibility of getting Jews to vote for their own interests and thus give themselves political leverage is revealed by a Jewish insistence on voting for a New York City mayor who has eroded Jewish power and interests to an incredible degree; by a persistent Jewish support for a presidential candidate who preaches isolationism for abroad and woos groups and circles that are diametrically opposed to Jewish interest at home; by a regular and unshakable knee-jerk kind of politically blind voting pattern that finds Jewish votes taken for granted by those who have always had them and despaired of by those who are convinced they can never acquire them.

Any support for Israel on the part of the United States will come, not through American Jewish political pressure or appeals for support of the “democracy of the Middle East,” but through that most open and honest of all reasons—American self-interest.

In recent times American military, political, and economic support of the Jewish State came about because Israel was able to convince America that it was to the American interest to stop the Soviet Union in the Middle East. As long as arguments along the lines of the community of American and Israeli interests are considered logical and convincing by Washington, Israel will get its support. When the arguments begin to sound weak or when other interests begin to take precedence, American support will end and there will be little that the small and divided American Jewish community will be able to do.

Far more tangible and far more effective support for the existence of Israel will come—not from some overblown vision of American Jewish political lobbying strength, but—through the millions of soldiers, investors and citizens that American Jewry can pour into the Jewish State.

“But who will give Israel the financial support it needs if all American Jews leave?”

Have no fear; unfortunately they are not all leaving. Not all, and not half. But if all American Jews did leave for Israel and if they did take with them their wealth, property, and capital, who would ever again need a United Jewish Appeal and what an economically healthy state it would be! All that capital could not be matched by another 100 years of UJA fundraising.

“But Israel cannot hold all the American Jews should they decide to come there.

I have already spoken of Israel the beautiful—and Israel the large. In 1947 the Jewish authorities, spokesmen for the proposed new Jewish state, agreed to partition Eretz Yisrael, the Land of Israel. Eretz Yisrael, the ancient home of the Jewish people consisted of far more than the absurdity contemplated by the United Nations. Jews had reigned with sovereignty not only over the land that was now called Tel Aviv and the citrus groves of the coastal plain. They had ruled over the lands of Judea and Samaria and Jerusalem and Golan and what was now called Transjordan. The latter had been ripped away by British fist in the early '20s while the rest was sadly waived in the hope that Jewish reasonableness and compromise would bring the peace Jews so desired and at least a tiny beginning of the redemption. As usual Jews were saved from their own foolishness by the hatred and stupidity of their enemies.

And so, today, Jews have returned—not to captured territories but to liberated ones. If Hebron, resting place of the patriarchs is not Jewish, then nothing is. If Bethlehem, city of Ruth and David, is not Jewish, then nothing is. If Shechem, where Jacob wandered and the first Jewish king, Elimelech, was crowned, is not Jewish, nothing is. If Judea and Samaria, where the Bible came to life and where one cannot take four steps without colliding with the Jewish past, are not Jewish, nothing is. If the land where the patriarchs lived, the Judges fought liberation battles for their people, the prophets dreamed their vision of exile and return, and the kings ruled in splendor, is not Jewish—nothing is.

But the land is Jewish and it will remain Jewish and it will be able to hold, not hundreds of thousands, but many millions—all the millions of Jews who can return from America and the Soviet Union and all the lands of their dispersion. “The Land of the Deer” is what the rabbis called Eretz Yisrael and they explained that just as deerskin stretches so does the Jewish land expand to take in its children—all its children. How true and how correct. It is only for Jewish hands that the land has given forth its fruit and the desert bloomed. It is only with Jews that so many people live today in an area that critics warned could not hold more than a few hundred thousand and that, tomorrow, can hold as many as will desire to come.

“But if America turns upon the Jews and withdraws its support, then, surely, Israel is no longer safe, and it too, will go under.”

There remain with us—as always—men of little faith and little vision who cannot grasp the fact that the Jewish people have been chosen by their Creator for a greatness from which they cannot escape and for a permanence that no one—neither they themselves nor their enemies—can destroy. The suffering of the Jewish people is undeniable, but so is their indestructibility. History is not a mere game of chance. It is a planned and ordained series of events with purpose and reason to it and the Jewish people, their lot, their past, and future are all part of the Divine scheme.

And that plan speaks of an end to the long night of exile and a return home. Are there people so obtuse that they really believe that the return, after two millennia, was not a miracle that partakes of the most permanent of meanings? Are they so lacking in understanding that they think that such an event came about only to collapse after thirty or fifty years? Men of little vision, little faith, and little intelligence!

To be sure, there is no promise and there is no guarantee for the exile except that of suffering, persecution and terror.

**And the Lord shall scatter thee among all the nations. . . And among these nations shalt thou have no repose and there shall be no rest for the sole of thy foot but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, failing of eyes and languishing of soul. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee and thou shalt fear night and day and shalt have no assurance of thy life.**

**Yes, this is the reality of the Exile.**

**But the Land of Israel and the people who will return there are assured a pledge of continuity and permanence, rebirth and rebuilding. When the late Chief Rabbi of Israel, the saintly and scholarly Rabbi Yitzhak Isaac Halevi Herzog, of blessed memory, heard of Jewish fears of Nazi extermination of the Jewish community of Eretz Yisrael in the dark days of the Afrika Corps' approach to the gates of the Holy Land, he reacted angrily and with sublime confidence:**

**"It is impossible. The Prophets speak only of two destructions and not a third one."**

**And the faith and confidence of the Chief Rabbi was echoed by a simple, pious Jerusalem Jew, who on the day in 1967 that Jordanian Hussein signed his military agreement with Egypt's Nasser and the Jewish world was plunged into deep gloom and foreboding, smiled and said:**

**"You'll see, by Shavuot—Pentecost—we will be praying at the Wall again." It is through the mad confidence of such foolish dreamers and impractical visionaries that Jewish life continues. Disaster for American Jewry? The destruction of the Jewish community in the new world exile? All possible. But the Land of Israel cannot be destroyed again and stands as a fortress of safety for Jews, beckoning them home. Its guarantees are not from France, that turns upon it, or America that can do the same tomorrow. "O Lord, my strength and my stronghold and my refuge in the day of affliction"—this is the weapon of Israel, this is the Guarantor of the survival of the Jewish state.**

**Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together; a great company shall they return hither. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble: For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.**

**Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob and ransomed him from the hand that is stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion . . . (Jeremiah 31: 812).**

**The Land calls us and we stand in the midst of the burning and trembling exile. It is time to go home.**

**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**