

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL
BULLETIN 250**

**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

JEWS ALWAYS SOUGHT TO FIND REST IN THE EXILE

**SO COMPLETELY DID THEY SETTLE IN, THAT THEY DID NOT
WISH TO LEAVE EGYPT, AND G-D HAD TO TAKE THEM OUT
WITH A STRONG HAND. THOSE WHO STILL DID NOT WISH TO
LEAVE, DIED IN THE THREE DAYS OF INTENSE DARKNESS.
WHAT A CHILUL HASHEM IS THIS REFUSAL TO LEAVE THE
SERVITUDE OF EXILE AND ENTER THE HOLY LAND! THE EVIL
DEEDS OF OUR ANCESTORS FORETELL OUR OWN**

G-d was obligated to wipe out this Chilul Hashem by killing all of the children of Israel who did not wish to leave Egypt. So great a need did G-d see to isolate Israel from the influence of the nations, that He did not give them a choice. Rather, He ordained that whoever would not leave Egypt for Eretz Israel, would die, there, in Egypt! Our sages said (Shemot Rabbah, 14:3):

Why did G-d bring the darkness upon them? Blessed is the name of G-d, before Whom there is no favoritism G-d examines the heart and scrutinizes the innermost thoughts. Because there were sinners among Israel who had Egyptian patrons, and they had wealth and honor in Egypt and did not wish to leave, G-d therefore said, "If I bring a plague upon them publicly and they die, the Egyptians will say, 'Just as G-d passed over us, so did He pass over them.' " G-d, therefore, brought upon the Egyptians the darkness of three days so that Israel would bury their dead and their enemies would not see them.

We likewise find in Tanchuma (Beshalach, I):

"Armed [chamushim] the children of Israel went up" (Ex. 13:18): One in five [i.e., only one in five Jews left Egypt, and the rest died because they did not wish to leave]. Some say it was one in fifty. Some say it was one in five hundred. R. Nehorai says, "I swear that it was not more than one in five thousand." And when did they die? During the three days of profound darkness.

So profound was G-d's understanding of Israel's refusal to leave the fleshpots of the exile! The crying out of Israel was not a cry to leave Egypt, for Egypt was a fat, wealthy land, full of bounty. Rather, their cry was only a sigh about the labor: "The children of Israel were groaning about their subjugation" (Ex. 2:23). Yet, if they were liberated and free, the vast majority most certainly would have preferred the tranquil, fat exile.

Even when they had already left, they regretted it and lifted up their eyes to return: "Who is going to give us some meat to eat? We fondly remember the fish that we could eat in Egypt at no cost, along with the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic" (Num. 11:4-5). Woe to the nation that is ready to trade in its greatness and holiness for items on a menu. With G-d's help, we shall elaborate on Israel's refusal to ascend to Eretz Israel. For this sin which recurs in every generation, Israel are still suffering, G-d's wrath is poured out on us, and His hand remains raised high. Heaven help us!

In any event, G-d's decree regarding separating Israel from the nations via the designation of a special land for them, in which they would live alone and create a holy nation and state according to the holy Torah, has established two Divine foundations of supreme importance. Without these two, it is impossible to achieve G-d's goal of a holy nation that fulfills the Torah properly and completely. These two foundations are: 1) Mitzvat Yishuv Ha'aretz, the mitzvah incumbent upon every Jew to live in Eretz Israel and not in the exile; 2) the mitzvah of banishing all non-Jews who are unwilling to accept upon themselves the legal status of ger toshav, and being subject to taxes and bondage.

This whole verse levels an accusation against the children of Israel. G-d decreed, "Your descendants will be foreigners [ger]" (Gen. 15:13) i.e., temporary sojourners], and they wished to be toshavim [permanent residents], when being sojourners had been decreed. Thus the verse blames them for this residence, in which they sought possession of a land not theirs... So completely did they settle in that they did not wish to leave Egypt, and G-d had to take them out with a strong hand. Those who still did not wish to leave, died in the three days of intense darkness.

**REMOVING THE EXILE FROM ISRAEL IS TEN TIMES
HARDER THAN REMOVING ISRAEL FROM THE EXILE
TO OUR SORROW, THIS DISEASE HAS EVEN
SMITTEN TORAH SCHOLARS.**

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