

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL
BULLETIN 251**

**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
LIVING IN ERETZ ISRAEL EQUALS THE COMBINED WEIGHT OF ALL THE
MITZVOT IN THE TORAH**

**LIVING IN ERETZ ISRAEL IS A MITZVAH DE'ORAITA, A
MITZVAH COMMANDED BY THE TORAH ITSELF. NOT ONLY
THAT, BUT IT CARRIES EQUAL WEIGHT TO ALL THE OTHER
MITZVOT COMBINED. IN FACT, IT SUPERSEDES THEM IN
IMPORTANCE; BECAUSE ALL OF THEM ARE DEPENDENT
UPON IT, AND IT IS THERE THAT WE ARE COMMANDED TO
PERFORM THEM ALL.**

The Torah says, "When the L-rd your G-d cuts off the nations whom you are approaching to], you shall expel them and live in their land" (Deut. 12:29). This verse explicitly states the two mitzvot tied to Eretz Israel. The first is expelling the non-Jews. The Hebrew corresponding to, "whom you are approaching to inherit," is rendered by Onkelos as, "Whom you are approaching to banish." The second is "You shall live in their land." It is a mitzvah to live in their land, in Eretz Israel.

Regarding this verse our sages said (Sifri, Re'ei, 80):

"You shall expel them": R. Yehudah ben Beterah and R. Matia ben Cheresh and R. Chanina ben Achi and R. Yehoshua and R. Yonatan were leaving the Land, and they arrived at Paltum and they remembered Eretz Israel. Their eyes brimmed over and their tears poured forth, and they tore their garments and they recited this verse: "You shall inherit it [the Land] and 'dwell therein, and you shall carefully keep all the laws" (Deut. 11:31-32). They returned to their place and they said, "Living in Eretz Israel equals the combined weight of all the mitzvot in the Torah."

R. Elazar ben Shamua and R. Yochanan HaSandler were walking to Netzivim to the home of R. Yehudah ben Beterah to study Torah from him, and they reached Sidon and recalled Eretz Israel. Their eyes brimmed over and their tears poured forth and they tore their garments and recited this verse: "You shall inherit it and dwell therein, and you shall carefully keep all the laws." They returned to their place, and they said, "Living in Eretz Israel equals the combined weight of all the mitzvot in the Torah."

Here our sages state explicitly that living in Eretz Israel is not just a mitzvah but such a great mitzvah that it equals all the others in their combined weight. Likewise, it emerges clearly from here that the mitzvah of living in Eretz Israel does not depend on the existence of the Temple. After all, the two anecdotes above occurred after the Destruction. All the same, the scholars of the Mishnah established that living in Eretz Israel is a mitzvah from the Torah and so is the prohibition against leaving Eretz Israel.

**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