

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL  
BULLETIN 253**

**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  
WE ALSO FIND IN BAVA KAMMA (80B): WHEN ONE  
PURCHASES A HOUSE IN ERETZ ISRAEL, WE MAY WRITE  
THE DEED OF PURCHASE EVEN ON THE SABBATH. MAY WE  
ACTUALLY WRITE IT ON THE SABBATH? RATHER... ONE  
MAY TELL A NON-JEW TO WRITE IT. AND EVEN THOUGH  
TELLING A NON-JEW TO PERFORM WORK FORBIDDEN ON  
THE SABBATH IS ITSELF RABBINICALLY FORBIDDEN, THE  
RABBIS DID NOT APPLY DECREES WHERE SETTLING ERETZ  
ISRAEL WAS AT STAKE.**

Rashi comments (Gittin 8b): "i.e., expelling the nations and settling Jews there."  
Rambam (Hilchot Shabbat 6:11) ruled this way, too, as well as Shu1chan Aruch,  
Orach Chaim 306:11. If the mitzvah of living in Eretz Israel did not apply today, or  
even if it were only Rabbinic in force, how would we dare permit this Rabbinically  
forbid den act on the Sabbath? After all, Tosafot wrote (Bava Kamma 80b),  
"Specifically for this mitzvah of living in Eretz Israel, but for another mitzvah, telling  
a non-Jew to violate a Torah prohibition is not permitted."

Our sages further said (Jerusalem Talmud, Sotah 8:4) regarding one who returns  
from the front because he has built a new house and not lived in it: I might think  
that someone who has built a new house outside the Land should have to return  
from the front. It therefore says, "And has not begun to live in it" (Deut. 20:5). The  
verse refers to one for whom living in it is a mitzvah, and excludes all others.

P'nei Moshe comments (ibid.), "One for whom it is a mitzvah: In Eretz Israel, due to  
the mitzvah of living in the Land. This excludes outside the Land, where there is no  
mitzvah to live in it." The same law applies to one who has planted a vineyard  
(Jerusalem Talmud, Sotah 8:5), and Rambam rules the same (Hilchot Melachim  
7:14):

It likewise says, "Clear out the Land and live in it" (Num. 33:53). Ramban comments  
(ibid.): In my opinion, this constitutes a positive Torah precept. The Torah is

commanding them to live in the Land and clear it out, because He gave it to them and they must not despise G-d's inheritance. If it ever occurred to them to go and conquer Shinar, Assyria or any other land, and to settle it, they would be violating a command of G-d.

Our sages attached great weight to the mitzvah of living in the Land and to the prohibition against leaving it, deeming "rebellious" the person who refuses to accompany his or her spouse to Eretz Israel ["rebelliousness" being grounds for divorce]. The reason is that here (Num. 33:53) we were commanded in this regard, this verse constituting a positive precept, reiterated in numerous places such as, "Come, occupy the Land" (Deut. 1:8).

This last quotation is part of the following: Turn around and head toward the Amorite highlands.... See! I have placed the Land before you. Come, occupy the land that the L-rd swore He would give to your fathers... and to their descendants after them" (Deut. 1:7-8).

There Ramban comments, "It is a mitzvah, not just a promise, as I have explained (Num. 33:53, quoted above)." Ramban further wrote (Sefer HaMitzvot, Positive Precepts Forgotten by Rambam, Mitzvah 4):

We were commanded to occupy the land G-d gave our ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We must not abandon it to any other nation, or leave it desolate. G-d said, "Clear out the Land and live in it, since it is to you that I am giving the Land to occupy. Distribute the Land..." (Num. 33:53-54). Proof that this is a mitzvah comes from G-d's saying in the spy episode, "Head north and occupy it, as the L-rd G-d of your fathers has told you. Do not be afraid and do not be concerned" (Deut. 1:21). Furthermore it says, "At Kadesh Barnea, the L-rd sent you forth and said, 'Head north and occupy the land that I have given you'" (Deut. 9:23). And regarding the spies' not wishing to go up to the Land, it says, "You rebelled against the L-rd" (Deut. 1:26,43; 9:23), and, "You would not listen" (Deut. 1:43). G-d's word to Israel had been a command rather than a promise...

## **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**