

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL
BULLETIN 324**

**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 BOOK ZION TODAY**

SINCE THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ORTHODOXY AND SECULAR ZIONISM, VOICES PRAISING THE GREATNESS AND SANCTITY OF THE HOLY LAND HAVE BECOME STILL. BASIC PRINCIPLES WHICH HAD ALWAYS BEEN CLEAR TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN. HOW MUCH DOES EVEN A BEN-TORAH TODAY KNOW ABOUT THE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF ERETZ ISRAEL, OF THE MITZVOS OF THE LAND? EVEN THE MOST OBSERVANT TAKE TRIPS TO CHUTZ LA'ARETZ, SOMETHING THE HALACHA FORBIDS. COULD THERE BE GREATER IRONY THAN THIS: THE TORAH COMMUNITY, WHICH CHERISHED THE MEMORY OF ERETZ ISRAEL SO THROUGHOUT THE AGES, NOW LEAVES LOVE OF ZION TO THE "SECULAR"?

Even long ago, Chazal tell us, when the Jewish people entered Eretz Israel, many nations considered it the "desirable Land". Yehoshua conquered thirty-one kings in Eretz Israel. "Is it possible that all thirty-one kings ruled in Eretz Israel? No, but there was no ruler who didn't buy a palace and estate in Eretz Israel, so universally cherished was it. Thus, it is called (Yirmiyahu 2) "Goodly heritage of the hosts of nations" (Rashi, Devarim 33, from Sifrei there and the Tanchuma on Mishpatim 17)

"And I saw among the spoils a good coat from Shinar" (Yehoshua 7). Rabbi Parnach said, in the name of Rabbi Yochanan, "This was a Babylonian coat worn by the King of Babylon when he ruled in Jericho" (Midrash Tanchuma and Yalkut Shimoni there). "Sidonites call the Hermon 'Siryon' and the Emori call it 'Snir' .. (Devarim 3). According to the Breisa, the Snir and Siryon were mountains in Eretz Israel. Just as these two nations built big cities and named them after the mountain of Eretz Israel, so did every nation in the world. Thus even the mountains of Eretz Israel were precious to the gentiles! (Chullin 70)

Rashi explains (on Devarim 3) that each of the four kingdoms boasted that Eretz Israel would be called by its name.

These teachings of Chazal are a prototype for much more recent events as well. About one hundred years ago, various countries competed for influence in Eretz Israel, specifically Jerusalem. One has only to look at the names of Jerusalem's different neighborhoods: French Hill, the German Colony, the Russian Compound, the Italian Hospital, and many more. Indeed, the activities of the last century are a direct continuation of earlier attempts to gain control of Eretz Israel. In ancient times, the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians strove to conquer the Holy Land. Later came the Moslems, the Crusaders, Napoleon.

Even though many of these nations were thousands of kilometers from Eretz Israel, they still tried valiantly to gain at least a foothold here, if not to conquer it completely. What other country in the world - even those many times the size - is so important to all the nations? In our own times the United Nations took the unprecedented step of declaring Jerusalem an "international city

'She is Zion and no one asks for her' (Yirmiyahu 30). The implication is that Zion needs to be asked for." (Rosh Hashana 30)."Happy is he who waits to arrive and see the rise of your light, over him your dawns shall break" (from Rabbi Yehuda Halevi's "Zion Won't You Inquire", lamentations for Tisha B'Av).

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