

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL
BULLETIN 325**

**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"?

The Chasidim tell of Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk, one of the early Chasidic Rebbes, who went to live in Eretz Israel. After he arrived, he fasted forty consecutive fasts, and then he made a feast. At the feast, he explained to his students the reason for his fasts. He had heard from a Sefardic Kabbalist that a worthy person sees the Holy Land literally paved with diamonds, even though to all others it looks like simple earth. Rabbi Menachem Mendel kept this secret in mind until he reached Eretz Israel. How disappointed he was! All he could see was the plain, simple earth. So he began his series of fasts. When he had finished he perceived the meaning of the Kabbalist's words. With his own eyes, he was now able to see the ordinary stones of Eretz Israel shine like precious jewels. The feast was a celebration of this achievement (From Diglainu, Shevat 5707).

'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