

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL  
BULLETIN 329**

**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"?**

**In the Introduction we gave examples from Chazal, rishonim and acharonim who came to Eretz Israel with great self-sacrifice. The Gemara (Kesubos 112) tells of Rabbi Zeira's journey to the Holy Land. When he reached the Jordan River, he discovered that it had no bridge. But instead of waiting until he found a safe path across, he took the first one he found - a narrow, dangerous one. Why? "If Moshe and Aharon were not worthy of reaching Eretz Israel, who says I will be?" But today we are far from any genuine spiritual feeling, and so proper love of Eretz Israel eludes us as well.**

**In Sefer Eretz Israel, the Gaon Rabbi Yechiel Michel Tukachinsky describes the enthusiasm and sacrifice of the early settlers and builders of the old yishuv. "And today?" he asks. "It's so easy to get to Eretz Israel! By plane from America, it's only thirty-six hours (this was written thirty five years ago). In a luxury liner, only two weeks. From Jaffa to Jerusalem is just an hour by car. All the roads are paved, there's no shortage of water, fuel, electricity, or food. The Israeli government is the master of the Land now, and the gates are open wide to all comers. There are no more "red slips" or bribes to the Turkish overlords**

**"So, what is missing today? The strong desire that burned in the**

hearts of loyal Jews in past generations. Had it been as easy to travel and gain entry to Eretz Israel a hundred years ago as it is today, or if the faithful Jews of today longed for the Holy Land as they did a hundred years ago, the majority of the population in Eretz Israel today would be observant! Such problems as public desecration of the Sabbath, women's draft, or autopsies, would be unheard of. If the religious Jews in chutz la'Aretz had that pull to Eretz Israel, they could rescue the sanctity of the Land from any who might oppose it. True, most Jews have some emotional attachment to Eretz Israel. They turn to it during prayers, pray for it three times a day, mention it in 'benching' (Grace After Meals). To be sure, they give strong financial support, no less than in previous generations. But, for themselves, they are still enamored of their foreign homes. Their future, most seem to feel, lies there! Our early settlers came at great personal sacrifice, because they longed to be "in G-d's courtyard." All Torah-true Jews today, when the task is so much simpler, must take their example to heart" (Sefer Eretz Israel 99-100).

The reasons behind this unfortunate situation are many. We have already discussed one: The withdrawal from spiritual values and the total immersion in the vanities of olam hazeh. The olam hazeh of chutz la' Aretz makes a much better appearance than that of Eretz Israel. Only one who lives to be a ben olam haba will prefer Eretz Israel. Another reason is the justified opposition to Zionism. Former concepts and assumptions have been thrown out of place. Since Zionism calls for aliya, the masses took it to mean that the gedolim (great Rabbis) who opposed Zionism are also opposed to aliya and settling in Eretz Israel (G-d forbid). This is as far removed from the truth as anything could be.

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