

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL
BULLETIN 39**

**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)**

**FROM THE STORY OF OMRI KING OF ISRAEL WE LEARN
THE GREAT MERIT OF THE PIONEER BUILDERS OF ERETZ
YISRAEL**

After all I have said above, I will now address the builders of our Holy Land (may HaShem give them life, and may He help them succeed). It is as clear as day that the Holy One Blessed be He desires your deeds and your labor. You have built cities, and you have made flourishing gardens from fallow fields. This is the result of great toil and effort, and in many cases it involved genuine self sacrifice. You have transformed swamps containing all sorts of disease into flourishing, prime soil. I have cited in this volume many sources which prove that the Holy One Blessed be He is pleased with your actions. I would like to cite here one additional proof which is impeccable and irrefutable.

The Talmud states, "R. Yochanan says, 'Why did Omri deserve kingship? Because he added on a city to the Land of Israel'" (Sanhedrin 102b).

[The Midrash adds]: Tana DeVei Eliyahu: Once, I, [Eliyahu HaNavi], was sitting in a study hall. I asked, "My masters, why is it that all other kings were not succeeded by their sons, while Omri had three of his descendants inherit his throne?" They replied, "We do not know." I said to them, "My masters, it is because he added a great city to the Land of Israel. Omri thought, just as Jerusalem is [the capital] for the kings of Judah, so will Shomron be [the capital] for the kings of Israel" (Yalkut Shimoni 2:207)

In the Kabbalistic work, Otzrot Yosef, by the great R. Yosef Engel z"l, I discovered an insight to this Midrash. The Kabbalists ask, "It seems puzzling why did the Holy One Blessed be He reward Omri with kingship for that particular deed? Why not a different reward?" They reply, "It is well known that Eretz Yisrael is in the supernal sphere of Kingship (Malchut). Thus, since Omri rectified an aspect of Kingship on earth by adding a city to Eretz Yisrael, he received the specific reward of kingship." Otzrot Yosef, Ma'amar HaLevanah, Vav {beginning}

Omri was considered one of the wicked kings, as the verse states, "Omri did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all those who had preceded him. He went in the en tire path of Yerovam ben Nevat and in his sins that he caused Israel to commit, to anger Hashem, G-d of Israel, with their vanities" (I Melachim 16:25-26).

The city he established was not built for the sake of glorifying G-d's name, but for Omri's own honor, as stated above: "Just as Jerusalem is [the capital] for the kings of Judah, so will Shomron be [the capital] for the kings of Israel."

Nonetheless, even though it was built with great sins, it is clear that Omri fulfilled the positive commandment of settling Eretz Yisrael. After all, if he did not fulfill a mitzvah there would be no reward. Also, since he was rewarded specifically with kingship, we must conclude that he rectified the supernal sphere of Kingship. This is why he deserved such a great measure of kingship, that is, three generations of kings, as mentioned above.

Thus, Omri fulfilled the mitzvah of Yishuv Eretz Yisrael with all its rectifications, even those pertaining to the upper worlds. Through the physical act of building, he elevated and established the mitzvah, even though that was not his intention at all and even though he acted sinfully. The proof being the fact that he received his reward "a measure for a measure."

Hence, we have a clear, irrefutable proof that by building a city in Eretz Yisrael, even the greatest sinner - one who denies the entire Torah (heaven forbid), like Omri who worshipped idols, which is tantamount to denying the entire Torah - achieves all of the possible rectifications that this mitzvah can effect in the supernal worlds.

This principle can be applied to our times as well. Even though the men who currently build the Land have left the path of the Torah (due to our many sins), they are certainly no worse than Omri. The verse testifies that he was more wicked than all who preceded him and that he followed the ways of Yeravam ben Nevat, who caused Israel to sin. Nonetheless, when Omri built Eretz Yisrael, he fulfilled the mitzvah properly and achieved unification in the upper spheres. In the same manner, it seems quite clear that the supernal sphere of Kingship has been rectified and glorified by the toil of today's builders, no matter who they are. Even if they are the greatest sinners, the Creator of the Universe desires their actions, and they achieve the appropriate rectifications and unifications. That is, by constructing buildings and transforming the Land into fertile soil, they have fulfilled the essential component of the mitzvah of Yishuv Eretz Yisrael.

(FROM EM HA BANIM SEMECHA, RABBI YSACHAR SHLOMO TEICHTAL, ZTK'L)

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