

BS`D
ERETZ ISRAEL
BULLETIN 9

*"DWELLING IN ERETZ ISRAEL IS EQUIVALENT TO
ALL THE MITZVOT OF THE TORAH" (SIFREI, PARASHAT REE)*

HASHEM'S NAME IS SCORNE
D AND DESECRATED
WHEN JEWS ARE IN EXILE

"And when they came to the nations, into which they came, they profaned My Holy Name, in that men said of them, These are the people of the Lord, and they have gone out of His land." (Ezekiel, 36:20)

When the Jews are in exile, Judaism and Torah are scorned. The "Chosen People" become persecuted, downcast victims, despised by all of the nations. G-d's Name is desecrated. In the eyes of the gentiles, the once mighty G-d of Israel lacks the strength to safeguard His people in His land. (Ibid, Rashi)

This sin (that is, the fact that few Jews long to actually return to Eretz Israel) prevented the fulfilment of that which was destined for the Second Temple. For Divine Providence was ready to reappear as at first if all the Jews had willingly agreed to return. But, only a minority returned; the majority remained in Babylonia... Divine Providence only appears to a person in proportion to his preparedness for it. If he prepares a little, he will receive a little, if a lot, a lot. If we would be prepared to willingly and wholeheartedly draw near to the G-d of our forefathers, He would save us as He saved our ancestors from Egypt. [But since this is not the case], our utterances of "Who restores His presence to Zion" and Bow down at His Holy Mountain are like the chirping of the birds, for we say these things without proper intent (The Kuzari 2:24)

"IT ONCE HAPPENED that Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira [and three of his colleagues] had to leave Eretz Israel. When they reached Paltus, they remembered Eretz Israel. They raised their eyes, and tears ran down their cheeks. They rent their garments, and recited the verse, 'Inherit the Land and dwell therein' (Devarim 11) They turned around and returned home, saying: 'Dwelling in Eretz Israel is the equivalent of all the Mitzvot in the Torah" (Sifrei, Parashat Ree)

Please Hashem, Be good to Me according to Your will, and grant me with compassion and kindness and as a free gift, that I will soon merit to come to Eretz Israel, to the Eretz ha Keddosha, the Land our forefathers inherited, the Land which all the authentic Tzaddikim, wished with all their soul and desired to be there, and most of them came there... (Tefillah of Rebbe Nachman of Bresslov)