

BSD

**ERETZ ISRAEL
BULLETIN 351**

**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 holiness granted Eretz Yisroel by the presence of the shechina is an intrinsic part of the Land, and is not dependent on any act of 'sanctification' by the Jewish people. This is the holiness our forefathers yearned for. It was not cancelled by the destruction of the Temple. But the sanctity that necessitates the mitzvos results from the presence of the Jewish people. Therefore it was annulled when the Jewish nation was exiled.

But these two concepts are not entirely separate. The holiness of the mitzvos derives from the holiness of the Land. When the Jewish people are there, the holiness emerges in the form of mitzva obligations. When they are gone, the holiness remains hidden. This is how the chaver in the Kuzari answered the question of whether G-d's presence left the Land with the destruction:

"The openly visible presence of G-d is what is missing, because it can only appear to a prophet or a favored multitude in the special place. This is what we are waiting for when we say 'for they shall see eye to eye the L-rd returning to Zion', (Yeshaya 32), and when we say in our prayers 'and our eyes will see when you return to Zion'. But the hidden spiritual presence of G-d is with any Jew whose actions and heart are pure, and whose soul chooses the G-d of Israel" (Kuzari 5, 23).

"Living in Eretz Yisroel is equal to all the mitzvos in the Torah" (Sifrei, Re'ay). The value of this mitzva along with the added weight of other mitzvos performed here is tremendous.

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