

ERETZ ISRAEL

BULLETIN 142

**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
THE RAMBAM, WHO DIDN'T INCLUDE LIVING IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL IN
THE LIST OF 613 MITZVOT, BEHOLD, THIS ISN'T BECAUSE IT HAS LESS
VALUE THAN THE OTHER MITZVOT; RATHER IT IS ABOVE THE USUAL
VALUE. AND ALSO BECAUSE, ACCORDING TO THE UNDERLYING
FOUNDATIONS OF SEFER HAMITZVOT, PRECEPTS WHICH ENCOMPASS
ALL OF THE TORAH AREN'T INCLUDED IN THE LIST.” (L'NETIVOT YISRAEL,
PART 1, P.117, HARAV TZVI YEHUDA HACHOHEN KOOK. JERUSALEM, 5727)**

Not only did the Rambam think that living in Israel was a mitzvah; he felt it was a mitzvah on which the whole Torah was based! Rav Tzvi Yehuda explained this point further by citing a Gemara: "This is made clear at the end of tractate, Berachot, regarding Rabbi Haninah, the son of Rabbi Joshua's brother, a Talmid Chacham who descended from Eretz Yisrael to the Galut. At the time, the nation was in a sorrowful state, and many Gedolei Yisrael remained outside of Israel. Rabbi Haninah was a leader of the generation, and a giant in Torah. He began to intercalate years, and determine the beginnings of the new months outside of the Land of Israel. This is something completely forbidden. Therefore two Talmidei Chachamin were sent from Israel to fight against this.

Upon their arrival in Babylon, they took part in official ceremonies and didn't reveal the purpose of their visit. They were received with great honor. Gradually, they started to vent their opposition. Finally, they entered a crowded assembly and said to the Jews of Babylon, 'Behold, you are a great congregation. You can be independent. You don't need Eretz Yisrael. You don't need Mt. Moriah.' Their sarcasm was purposefully stinging in order to shock the Babylonian Jews. 'And you've also got Rabbi Ahia here. Let Ahia build an altar, and let Haninah play on the harp. But know that if you detach yourselves from the centrality of Eretz Yisrael, you have no portion in the G-d of Israel!' (Berachot, 63A and 63B)

"Separating oneself from the centrality of Eretz Yisrael in Jewish life and in Torah is heresy," Rav Tzvi Yehuda stressed. "The Gemara concludes, immediately, the people cried out in tears and said, G-d forbid, We do have a portion in the G-d of Israel!.. For from Zion shall go forth Torah, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Berachot, 63A and 63B) Thus, the Rambam emphasizes living in Eretz Yisrael is one of the fundamentals of our belief. Any understanding of Torah which does not place Eretz Yisrael in the center of Jewish life is a false and heretical doctrine. An in-depth study of the Rambam reveals that he does not view living in Eretz Yisrael as something peripheral to the nation. On the contrary, he sees the settlement of Jews in Israel as a necessary foundation of Torah, and as a foundation of Am Yisrael. (From Sefer Torat Eretz Yisrael)

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