

THE MITZVAH TO DWELL IN ERETZ ISRAEL

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THE MITZVAH TO DWELL IN ERETZ ISRAEL (A COMPILATION)

For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth like radiance, and her salvation like a burning torch. 2- And the nations shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of Hashem shall express. (Isaiah 62: 1-2)

“Dwelling in Eretz Israel is the equivalent of all the Mitzvot in the Torah” (Sifrei, Parashat Ree)

THE MITZVAH: COME AND POSSES THE LAND

It is a mitzvah to settle in the Land of Israel and to dwell there, as it is written: “... you shall expel them and live in their land.” (Devarim 12, 29). (Sifre)

Hashem our G-d spoke to us in Chorev saying, "You have dwelt long enough at this mountain, turn and take your journey and come to the mountain of the Amorite... Behold, I have set the land before you, come and possess the Land which Hashem swore to your forefathers...to give to them and their seed after them" (Devarim 1:6-8)

And Hashem your G-d will bring you to the Land that your forefathers possessed and you shall possess it... And Hashem your G-d will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, to love Hashem your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul that you may live. (Devarim 30:5-6)

Yehoshua said to the people of Israel: How long will you be remiss in going up to possess the Land which Hashem, G-d of your fathers, has given you? (Yehoshua 18, 3)

“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)

Sefer Chareidim (Mitzvot Asei HaTeluyot B'Eretz Israel, chap. I, sec 15) states, "There is a positive, biblical commandment to dwell in Eretz Israel, as it

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says, You shall possess it and dwell in it” (Devarim 17:14, 26:l). Chazal say that this mitzvah is equal to all the mitzvot of the Torah (Sifrei, Re'eh 28), and it is one of the 613 mitzvot according to the Ramban and the Rashbetz

“Go forth for yourself...to the Land that I will show you” (Bereshit 12) The Mitzvah to live in Eertz Israel is very great for it is the first Mitzvah which was commanded to a Jewish man Rabbi Meir Yechiel Me Ostrovta

It is a Mitzvah for all Jewish people to fix his house in Eretz Israel and to settle in it, according to his power Rabbi Menachem ha Meiri

This is the Mitzvah, the rules and the laws that Hashem your G-d commanded (me) to teach you so that you will keep them in the Land you are crossing over to occupy. (Devarim 6, 1)

WHAT A (GREAT) MITZVAH IT IS TO DESIRE TO GO TO ERETZ ISRAEL

What a (great) mitzvah it is to desire to go to Eretz Israel! The Shelah and Sefer Yereim teach that a person should constantly have in his heart a desire and love for Eretz Israel, as it is written, "And your eyes and your heart shall be there all the days." (Based on I Melachim 9:3) If a man has all that he desires, he should always remember that he is lacking something, because he is not in Eretz Israel... He should be sad about that, for the most important thing is missing (Yeaarot Devash, beginning of Derashah 14.)

THE RAMBAN COUNTS IT AS ONE OF THE 613 MITZVOT

The Ramban discusses this obligation at length in Sefer Hamitzvos. "We are commanded to take possession of the Land G-d gave to our forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. We must not leave it to others or in desolation, as G-d told them: 'And you will take possession of the Land, for I gave the Land to you to possess. And you will settle the Land which I promised to your fathers'..."

"We may not relinquish the Land to any nation at any point in time. If any nation should flee the Land...we are commanded to conquer those cities and settle our tribes therein. Indeed, after we have destroyed the other nations, if our tribes should wish to leave the Land and go conquer other lands, they are not permitted to do so. This is because we were commanded to conquer the Land and live in it - and this applies throughout the generations.

"This mitzva, I believe, which our sages emphasized so strongly - saying 'Whoever leaves it and dwells outside the Land must be in your eyes as one who

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worships idols' (Kesubos 110) and many other strong statements - is the positive commandment of inheriting the Land and living there."

You have to be reprimanded for wanting to settle Chutz La Aretz, AND NOT IN the Holy Land and the Chosen Land of Hashem Or ha Chayim Bamidbar 32:3

SETTLING ERETZ ISRAEL IS A MITZVAH THAT ENCOMPASSES ALL THE TORAH

Settling Eretz Israel is a Mitzvah that encompasses all the Torah, for all those who walk in it four Amot have a portion in the World to Come which is all life. Or ha Chayim Devarim 30:20

Settling Eretz Israel is a Mitzvah on its own, as we found how much our Rabbis insisted on the Mitzvah of settling Eretz Israel Or ha Chayim Ketuvot 111, devarim 26:1

"Don't you know? Haven't you heard? The beauty, the glory and the greatness of the Mitzvah of strengthening the settlement of Eretz Israel, for it is a great Mitzvah, to awaken the old love and the desire for the Holy Land and to renew the love as former days, so that the love burns like flames of fire The Alter Rebbe brought in the Sefer Mishnat Yoel)

For the main place for the observance of the Mitzvot is in the Land of the Living, Eretz Israel Chatam Sofer Vayeshev

ERETZ ISRAEL IS MORE BELOVED TO ME THAN EVERYTHING

Ha Kaddosh Baruch Hu said: Eretz Israel is more beloved to Me than everything Bamidbar Rabba 23

Eretz Israel is beloved to Me and I have sanctified it more than all other Lands Tanchuma Behar 1

Eretz Israel is the house of G-d Or ha Chayim Shemot 20:2

THE MITZVAH TO SETTLE ERETZ ISRAEL

The one who rents a house in Eretz Israel places a Mezuzah immediately because of the Mitzvah to settle Eretz Israel Massechet Menachot 44

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HE WHO LIVES IN ERETZ ISRAEL SHOULD BE PERPETUALLY HAPPY WITH HIS MITZVAH

The Peleh Yoetz writes: "He who lives in Eretz Israel should be perpetually happy with his Mitzvah, and all the suffering he experiences should be insignificant to him in light of his love for this mitzva" (Peleh Yoetz Eretz).

IT IS FORBIDDEN TO LEAVE ERETZ ISRAEL

It is forbidden to go out of Eretz Israel Masechet Gittin 78a

Elimelech, Machlon, and Kilion were the greatest men of their generation - leaders of the generation... Why were they punished? Because they left Eretz Israel. (Baba Basra 91)

We also find this in Midrash Tanchuma regarding Elimelech and his sons: They dwelt there [Moav] about ten years (Ruth 1:4). All of these years, the Holy One Blessed be He gave them warnings, perhaps they will repent and return to Eretz Israel. When they did not repent, He began to smite their cattle and camels. When they [still] did not realize that they must repent, they died immediately. (Tanchuma, Behar 3)

Even one who enjoys parental merit (Zechut avot) will not benefit from it if he leaves Eretz Israel. (Bava Basra 91)

These are the words of the Rambam in Mishne Torah. Hilchos Melachim (5, 9). "It is always forbidden to leave Eretz Israel (to go anywhere outside the Land) except in order to learn Torah, or to marry (a wife), or to be saved from the gentiles - and then to return to the Land. One may also leave for business purposes. "But to live outside the Land is forbidden, unless a famine there is so severe that a dinar's worth of wheat costs two dinars. When does this apply? When money is available, and produce expensive. However, if produce is cheap but no money can be found, one has no earnings and his pockets are empty- then he may leave for any place where he can make a profit. But, even though it is permissible to leave - it is not righteous conduct (midas chasidus). For Machlon and Kilion were the two gedolim of their generation, and left because of a terrible situation, yet they were sentenced to extinction by the Almighty."

A SMALL GROUP IN THE LAND DEARER THAN A FULL SANHEDRIN OUTSIDE OF IT

Said the Holy One Blessed be He: A small group in the Land of Israel is dearer to Me than a full Sanhedrin outside the Land. (Yerushalmi, Sanhedrin 86)

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ONE SHOULD ALWAYS LIVE IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL

One should always live in the Land of Israel, even in a city where the majority are idol worshippers, and not in chutz laAretz, even in a city where the majority are Jews. (Kesubos 110); also included in the Rambam (Hilchos Melachim Chapter 5)

EVEN REGULAR CONVERSATIONS IN ERETZ ISRAEL IS TORAH

Rav Zera said: "Even the conversation of the sons of Eretz Israel is Torah" (Vayikra Rabba 34)

THOSE WHO LIVE IN ERETZ ISRAEL RESIDE WITHOUT SIN

All who live in Eretz Israel reside without sin (Ketuvot 101)

Fortunate are they who live in Eretz Israel for they have neither sin nor transgression, not the living and not the dead (Midrash Shocher Tov 85)

Anyone who dwells in the Land of Israel, the very Land atones for him. (Sifrei, Haazinu)

THE DESERTS OF ERETZ ISRAEL IS BETTER THAN THE PALACES OUTSIDE OF IT

"It is preferable to dwell in the deserts of Eretz Israel than the palaces of Chutz LaAretz" (Bereshit Rabba 39:8).

THE PRESENCE OF THE SHECHINA IN THIS WORLD

"If you desire to see the Presence of the Shechina in this world, study Torah in Eretz Israel." (Midrash Tehillim 105)

THE ONLY HAPPINESS IN THE WORLD

There is no happiness, but only when Israel is settled in the Holy Land Zohar ha Kaddosh Bamidbar 118a

There's no happiness except in dwelling in Eretz Israel (Ohr ha Chayyim ha Kaddosh Devarim 26:l)

We should not rejoice, we should only rejoice about settling Eretz Israel, as they said: "Then our mouths will be filled with laughter" Rabbi Chayim Ben Atar

The one who lives in Eretz Israel has to be happy always Rabbi Eliezer Azkari

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Only in Eretz Israel can happiness be complete and it is also possible to sanctify oneself with great Kedusha, something that is impossible in foreign lands Rabbi Elimelech Mi Lizensk

HASHEM LOVES ZION

Hashem loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Yaakov. (Tehillim 87, 2)

ALL BLESSINGS COME FROM ZION

All the benefits and blessings and sources of comfort which the Almighty will ever confer upon the people of Israel will come only from Zion. (Vayikra Rabba 24)

Hashem will bless you from Zion and you will see the good of Yerushalaim all the days of your life (Tehillim 128:5)

The Land of Israel lacks nothing. (Berachot 36)

MASHIACH BEN YOSEF RETURNS THE EXILED JEWS TO THEIR HOMELAND

All that happened to Yosef happened to Tzion... (Tanchuma, Vayigash 10)

... The ingathering of the exiles and the return to the Holy Land, in general and in detail until the Final Redemption, is the role of the first Mashiach, Mashiach Ben Yosef... (Kol HaTor, Chapter 1)

All those who involve themselves in the ingathering of the exiles ease the suffering of Mashiach Ben Yosef; the 'Birthpangs of Mashiach' will come a little at a time. (Kol HaTor, Chapter 1)

THOSE WHO BEHAVE LIKE THE SPIES PERPETUATE THEIR STAY IN IMPURE LANDS AND DO NOT GO UP TO ERETZ ISRAEL

When the ten spies went out to spy the land, the souls of the ten corresponding tribes came into them, the actual sons of Yaakov. This is the sod of what Yosef told them (his brothers), "You are spies" (Bereishis 42:9), to allude that in the future their souls would go into the spies. (Kitve ha Ari ha Kaddosh Shaar HaGilgulim, Introduction 36)

So just the same way in which the brothers opposed Yosef and they further opposed the land, in our times religious Jews oppose the Mitzvah of settling in Eretz Israel (They oppose Tzion) by perpetuating their abode in impure

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lands, thereby becoming contaminated by the ideals of the nations where they live in. And so it is that when Jews live in America they become contaminated with the idea that material success is the main goal in life, and thereby they refuse to go up to Eretz Israel for it entails the risk of a descent in respect to their luxurious dwellings and their prospects for material success

THE EVIL REPORT OF THE SPIES AGAINST THE LAND

They [the spies] brought back to the Children of Israel an evil report of the land which they had searched, saying, "The land which we investigated is a land that eats up its inhabitants. " (Bamidbar 13:32)

EATS UP ITS INHABITANTS: "In every place we passed we found them burying their dead!" However, the truth was that The Holy One, Blessed is He, did this for their good, to involve them (the inhabitants of Canaan) in mourning to distract them from paying attention to the spies." (Rashi)

Why does the letter ayin come before the letter peh (in the Aleph-Bet)? Because of the spies, who spoke about that which they did not see. (Sanhedrin 104b) And, more importantly, the following: Yosef said to his brothers, "I am Yosef, is my father still alive?" However, his brothers weren't able to answer him because they were in shock. (Bereishis 45:3)

Woe to us on the Day of Judgment, and woe to us on the day of reproof. Yosef was the youngest of the tribes, but when he said, "I AM YOSEF!" the brothers were overcome with humiliation at having acted wrongly. When G-d will reveal Himself to each of us, announcing, "I AM HASHEM!" we will certainly be unable to answer and will be deeply ashamed of ourselves. (Bereishis Rabbah 93:10)

THE BEST TORAH IN THE WORLD

There is no Torah like the Torah of Eretz Israel. (Bereshit Rabba 16, 7)

There are ten portions of Torah in the world: nine in Eretz Israel and one in the rest of the world. (Esther Rabba I)

"And the gold of that Land is good" This comes to teach that there is no Torah like the Torah of Eretz Israel and there is no wisdom like the wisdom of Eretz Israel Bereshit Rabba 6

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"There is no greater abrogation of the Torah (Bittul Torah) than when the Jews were exiled from their place" (Chagigah 5b).

"Amongst the goyim, there is no Torah. From this we learn that the Torah is in Eretz Israel." (Sifre, Ree)

"He has set me in dark places, as those who are long dead.' Rav Yirmiyah said, this is the Talmud of Bavel." Sanhedrin 24A

"Those in Eretz Israel have a great advantage over those in Bavel, in that they are directed more to the truth since the air in Eretz Israel is pure from all impurity and does not add falsehood and mistaken ideas, which is not the case in Bavel." (Chatam Sofer, Drashot, Pg.374)

"The air of Eretz Israel makes one wise" (Bava Batra 158b)

THE SAME IS TRUE OF THE TORAH; IT EXISTS PRIMARILY IN ERETZ ISRAEL

It is well known that the close relationship between Torah and Eretz Israel is parallel to the relationship between life and the heart. Torah is eternal life, as we say, "And eternal life He has planted in our midst." The seat of life and of the soul is in the heart. The main instructions of life lie there, and life emanates to the rest of the body from it. The same is true of the Torah; it exists primarily in Eretz Israel. (Rav Moshe Cordovero, Or Neerav 5: 4)

WE ARE ONLY ONE NATION IN ERETZ ISRAEL

"In Israel, they are one nation, and not outside of it." (Zohar ha Kaddosh Emor, 93)

HASHEM IS OUR G-D ONLY IN ERETZ ISRAEL

As long as you are in the Land of Canaan, I am your G-d; when you are not in the land - I am not your G-d. (Tosefta, Avoda Zara 85)

"He who dwells in Eretz Israel is like one who has a G-d, and he who dwells outside the Land is like one who does not have a G-d" (Ketuvot 110b)

The people of Israel who are outside the Land worship false G_ds in purity." (Avoda Zara 8)

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The Tosefta comments on the verse "And I will truly implant them in this Land with all My heart and with all My soul" (Yirmiyah 32:41): If they are not upon the Land, they are not truly implanted before Me, neither with all My heart nor with all My soul. (Tosefta, Avodah Zarah 5:4)

HASHEM IS CALLED KING ONLY IN ERETZ ISRAEL

"The Holy One Blessed be He is called 'King' only in Eretz Israel" (Zohar ha Kaddosh 3:276a).

Rashi on Hoshea (3:5) cites the following: R. Shimon ben Menassiya said: "The Jewish people will not be shown a good sign until they once again request the kingdom of Heaven, the kingdom of the House of David, and the rebuilding of the Beit HaMikdash. It is thus written, Afterwards, the Children of Israel will return and seek out Hashem their G-d and David their king... (Hoshea 3:5)."

WE ACCEPT HASHEM AS OUR KING ONLY WHEN WE LIVE IN ERETZ ISRAEL

"I am Hahsem your G-d Who brought you out of Egypt to give you the Land of Canaan, to be a G-d for you." (Vayikra 25, 38) From here we know: Every Jew who lives in the Land of Israel accepts the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, and everyone who leaves the Land is like one who worships stars and planets. (Torat Kohanim)

ONLY THOSE WHO ENTER ERETZ ISRAEL ACCEPT HASHEM'S KINGDOM

If your sons enter Eretz Israel they accept My kingdom, and if they don't enter Eretz Israel then they don't accept My Kingdom Bereshit Rabba 40

WHILE DWELLING IN ERETZ ISRAEL, WE ARE ASSURED A PORTION IN THE WORLD TO COME

Better is a dry piece of bread with tranquility in it than a house full of quarrelsome feasts (Mishle 17:1) R. Yochanan said, "This refers to Eretz Israel, for even if a person eats (dry) bread and salt every day while dwelling in Eretz Israel, he is assured a portion in the World to Come...Than a house full of quarrelsome feasts: This refers to Chutz LaAretz, which is full of violence and robbery." (Yalkut Shimoni 2:956)

Everyone who walks 4 Amot in Eretz Israel is assured a portion in the World to Come (Ketuvot 111a)

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“Three are assigned portions in the world-to-come, and they are these: the one who lives in the Land of Israel, the one who raises his son to Torah learning, and the one who makes havdala over wine at the conclusion of the Shabbat.” (Pesachim 113)

He who lives in Eretz Israel and eats CHULLIN in purity and speaks Lashon ha Koddesh and reads the Shema in the morning and in the evening, he is assured of a portion in the World to Come Yerushalmi Shabbat 1:3

Even a maid servant who is buried in Eretz Israel she is assured a portion in the World to Come. Massechet Ketuvot 111

ERETZ ISRAEL HAS GREAT VIRTUES, AND HE WHO HAS A PORTION IN IT IS CONSIDERED AS [IF HE HAS] A PORTION IN THE WORLD TO COME.

Yaakov arrived complete at the city of Shechem which is in the Land of Canaan..., and he bought the portion of land (Bereshit 33:18-19). Rashi comments, "Like a person who says to his friend, 'So and so escaped from the lion's teeth and has returned unharmed (lit., complete).'" The Ibn Ezra writes: He bought the portion of land: a portion in the Land. Scripture mentions this to demonstrate that Eretz Israel has great virtues, and he who has a portion in it is considered as [if he has] a portion in the World to Come.

WE ARE STILL DESTROYING THE BEIT HA MIKDASH

The Yerushalmi states, "Any generation which does not witness the rebuilding of the Beit HaMikdash is considered as if it destroyed it" (Yoma 1:1 [4b])

THE CLEAREST SIGN OF THE END OF DAYS: THE FRUIT OF THE LAND

R. Abba said, "There is no clearer sign of the end of days than this verse: But you, O mountains of Israel, will give forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are soon to come (Yechezkel 36:8)." (Sanhedrin 98a) Rashi explains, "When Eretz Israel gives forth its fruit in abundance the end will be near, and there is no clearer sign of the end of days”.

IF HE (THE HUSBAND) SAYS TO ASCEND (TO LIVE IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL) AND SHE (THE WIFE) SAYS NOT TO - SHE IS FORCED TO ASCEND

If he (The husband) says to ascend (to live in the Land of Israel) and she (The wife) says not to - she is forced to ascend; otherwise she is divorced without her Ketuba. If she says to ascend (To live in the Land of Israel) and he says not to

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- he is forced to ascend; otherwise he must divorce her with her full Ketuba. (Ketubot 100)

THE YEARS LIVED OUTSIDE OF ERETZ ISRAEL DO NOT COUNT

The rabbis taught: If a person is married to a woman for ten years and she does not give birth for him, he should divorce her and give her a kesuvah, because maybe he doesn't merit to build a family through her. Even though there is no proof for this, there is an allusion to it: "Sarai, the wife of Avram took Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, after Avram dwelled in the land of Canaan for ten years, and gave her to Avram . . ." (Bereishis 16:3). We learn from here that his stay outside of Israel did not count [in the ten years]. (Rashi: He was with Hagar, which means he did not marry her before he came to Eretz Israel, though there were many years spent in Padan Aram [childless]. This teaches you that the time outside the Land did not count for him; perhaps the transgression of [living] outside the land caused her to be barren). (Yevamos 64a)

YOSEF HA TZADDIK LOVED ERETZ ISRAEL

The daughters of Tzelofchad-the son of Cheifer, the son of Gilad, the son of Machir, the son of Menashe, from the family of Menashe, the son of Yosef approached. These are the names of his daughters: Machlah, No'ah, Chaglah, Milkah, and Tirtzah. (Bamidbar 27:1)

FROM THE FAMILY OF MENASHE, THE SON OF YOSEF: Why did it have to mention this, since it already said "the son of Menashe"? To tell you that Yosef loved the Land, as it says, "Bring my bones up" (Bereishis 50:25), and that his 'daughters' also loved the land, as it says, "Give us our possession" (Bamidbar 27:4). (Rashi)

HASHEM DOES KINDNESS ESPECIALLY TO THOSE WHO DWELL IN ERETZ ISRAEL

R. Natan comments on the verse: "And doing kindness to thousands of generations to those who love Me and keep My commandments" (Shemot 20:6): "This refers to those who dwell in Eretz Israel and dedicate themselves to all of the Mitzvot" (Yalkut Shimoni, Yitro 292)

BURIED UNDER THE MIZBEACH

He who is buried in Eretz Israel is as if he was buried under the Mizbeach
Massechet Ketuvot 111

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ONE OF THE GREAT GIFTS THAT HASHEM GAVE US

Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai said: "The Holy One Blessed be He gave the people of Israel three wonderful gifts - and all are acquired through suffering. They are: Torah, Eretz Israel, and the world to come". (Talmud Berachot 5)

HASHEM CRIES FOR THE TEMPLES AND FOR OUR BEING EXILED FROM OUR PLACE

The Talmud states: "And my eye will weep sorely and run down with tears (Yirmiyah 13:17). Why three tears? One for the First Temple, one for the Second Temple, and one for the Jews who were exiled from their place" (Chagigah 5b).

THOSE WHO STUDY TORAH PROTECT THE SOLDIERS AND THE SOLDIERS PROTECT THOSE WHO STUDY TORAH

Were it not for David who sat and occupied himself with Torah, Yoav ben Tzeruyah would not have been victorious in war. And, were it not for Yoav who fought the battles, David would not have been able to sit and occupy himself with Torah. (Sanhedrin 49a)

NEVER SAY ANYTHING BAD ABOUT ERETZ ISRAEL OR ITS INHABITANTS

"Rav Ami and Rav Asi used to (have their students) get up (and move) from a sunny place to a shady place, and from a shady place to a sunny one." (Ketuvot 112) The Ben Ish Chai comments on this Gemara the following: "So that no student would be moved to say, about the place where they stood, 'not good,' and thereby speak ill of a piece of the earth of Eretz Israel. And from this should every man learn a lesson: to guard his mouth and tongue against any negative utterance, condemning even one cubit of Eretz Israel, whether its air, its weather, its fruits, or its buildings; even in a time when the Land is desolate and in gentile hands, and the houses belong to non-Jews."

YERUSHALAIM CAN ONLY BE REBUILT WHEN ISRAEL YEARNS FOR IT TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT THEY EMBRACE HER STONES AND DUST

The Kuzari writes that "Yerushalaim can only be rebuilt when Israel yearns for it to such an extent that they embrace her stones and dust,"(Kuzari 5:27) as the verse of Tehillim states: "You shall arise and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favor her, the set time has come. For your servants take pleasure in her stones and embrace the dust thereof " (Tehillim 102: 14)

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THE SPECIAL PROVIDENCE OF ERETZ ISRAEL

Eretz Israel (The Land of Israel) is watered by the Holy One Blessed be He Himself. And all the world He waters through an emissary, as is written (Iyov 5): "...Who gives rain upon the land, and sends water upon chutzot [outside or fields]." (Taanit 10)

It is a Land where you will not eat bread in poverty, and you will not lack anything - a Land whose stones are iron, and from whose mountains you will quarry copper. (Devarim 8,9)

And of Zion shall it be said: This man and that was born in her, and the Highest Himself shall establish her. (Tehillim 87, 5)

IT IS OUR DUTY TO GO UP TO ERETZ ISRAEL OUT OF OUR OWN INITIATIVE

The Zohar states: "R. Chiya said, 'The nations will rule over Israel for only one day, a day of the Holy One Blessed be He, which is a thousand years. It is thus written, "He has made me desolate, faint throughout the day" (Eichah 1:13), one day and no longer.' R. Yosi said, 'If [the Jews] are subjugated longer than this, it is not because of the King's decree, but because they refuse to return towards Him " (Zohar 2:17a). (Brought Minchat Yehuda sec. 18, p. 237 by R Yehuda Alkalai)

Rabbi Yehuda Chai Alkalai writes in a Kol Korai, "Because Israel didn't rise up to return to our Land, and to the inheritance of our forefathers, the decrees began, the expulsions and slaughters, for the matter is dependent on the repentance of returning to Eretz Israel (Kol Korai, Rabbi Yehuda Chai Alkalai. The Writings of Rav Alkalai.)

THE MITZVOT WERE GIVEN TO BE FULFILLED IN ERETZ ISRAEL

Why did Moshe Rabbenu yearn to enter Eretz Israel? Did he need to eat its fruits, or to satisfy himself from its bounty? Rather, Moshe said: The people of Israel have been given many commandments, and they cannot be fulfilled except in the Land of Israel. (Sota 14)

OUTSIDE THE LAND THERE IS NO MERIT

A person who sees himself in a dream unclothed in Babylonia is without sin (Rashi: Because outside the land there is no merit, only sin, and one who stands without clothing is like one lacking those sins); in Eretz Israel, he is

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without mitzvos (Rashi: Because there are many mitzvos there, and to be naked is a sign of being without mitzvos). (Brochos 57a)

WHEN ALL THE JEWS LIVE IN THE LAND, IT IS CONQUERED; WHEN THEY DO NOT ALL LIVE IN THE LAND, IT IS NOT CONQUERED

“About forty thousand soldiers (of Reuven and Gad) passed before Hashem for the battle” (Yehoshua 4:13). It also says, “Hashem has delivered the entire Land into our hands” (ibid. 2:24). Do you really think that Israel conquers the Land before the Omnipresent? Rather, when all the Jews live in the Land, it is conquered; when they do not all live in the Land, it is not conquered. (Tosefta, Avodah Zarah 5:2)

THE SIN OF NOT RETURNING TO THE LAND

“A miracle should have occurred at the time of Ezra, but sin prevented it” (Berachot 4a). The Maharsha (Yoma 9b, s.v. kechomah) explains that Ezra's redemption was supposed to last forever, but the sin of not returning to Eretz Israel en masse prevented this from happening.

ERETZ ISRAEL IS THE MOTHER WHO RAISES THE SONS AND HASHEM INQUIRES ABOUT HER

Why does the Torah mention the merit of the Land alongside the merit of the Patriarchs? Reish Lakish says, “This can be compared to a king who has three sons, and a maidservant who raises them. Whenever the king inquires about his sons he [also] inquires about the woman who raises them. Similarly, whenever the Holy One Blessed be He mentions the Patriarchs, He mentions the Land with them, as it says, And I will remember. My covenant with Yaakov, [and also My covenant with Yitzchak, and also My covenant with Avraham I will remember] and I will remember the Land (VaYikra 26:42).” (VaYikra Rabba 36:5)

HAD JEWS FOUND REST IN THE EXILE, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE RETURNED.

“And the dove did not find rest” (Bereshit 8:9): Yehudah bar Nachman said in the name of R. Shimon, “Had she found rest, she would not have returned.” Similarly, She [Israel] dwelled among the nations, but found no rest (Eichah 1:3): Had she found rest, she would not have returned. Similarly, And among those nations you will not be tranquil; there will be no rest for the sole of your foot (Devarim 28:65): Had they found rest, they would not have returned. Bereshit Rabba (33:8)

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HASHEM BRINGS JEWS BACK TO THE LAND THROUGH NATURAL MEANS

The Radak writes (Radak, Tehillim 146:3) Salvation is solely in the hands of Hashem, and He brings it about through mortals, as He did with Cyrus during the Babylonian exile. In the future, as well, Hashem will bring Israel's redemption through gentile kings, by inspiring them to set the Jews free.

IF YOU SEE MANY DIASPORA JEWS ASCENDING FROM BABYLONIA TO ERETZ ISRAEL, IT IS A SIGN THAT THE HOLY ONE BLESSED BE HE CALCULATED THE END OF DAYS

The Midrash states (Eicha Rabba I:41): "R. Abba bar Kahana said, 'If you see benches filled with Babylonians in Eretz Israel, anticipate the footsteps of Mashiach. Why? For, it says, He spread a net for my feet (Eichah I:13)

The Torah Temimah (Eicha I:141) writes: "If you see benches filled with Babylonians in Eretz Israel" means, if you see many Diaspora Jews ascending from Babylonia to Eretz Israel, it is a sign that the Holy One Blessed be He calculated the end of days.

"LET ISRAEL, WHO BECAME MY PORTION, INHERIT THE LAND WHICH BECAME MY PORTION."

The Land of Israel is beloved since the Holy One Blessed be He chose it. You find that when G-d created the world He distributed the various lands to the heavenly ministers and chose the Land of Israel for Himself. How do we know this? Moshe said, When the Supreme One apportioned to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the children of man, He set the boundaries of the people according to the number of the Children of Israel (Devarim 32:8). He also chose the people of Israel as His portion, as it is written, For Hashem's portion is His people; Yaakov is the lot of His inheritance (ibid. 32:9). Said the Holy One Blessed be He: "Let Israel, who became My portion, inherit the Land which became My portion." (Midrash Tanchuma, Re'eh 8)

THESE ARE THE WAYS OF EXILE: YOU HAVE SOWN MUCH, BUT BRING IN LITTLE; YOU EAT WITHOUT BEING SATIATED...; YOU CLOTHE YOURSELVES, BUT NO ONE IS WARM

The prophet Chaggai cries out: And now, thus says Hashem of Hosts, "Consider your ways. You have sown much, but bring in little; you eat without being satiated...; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and whoever earns wages earns for a bag with a hole." Thus says Hashem of Hosts, "Consider your ways" (Chaggai 1:5-7). Rashi explains:

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Consider your ways, meaning, your business. You see that your labor achieves no blessing, as the verse says, You have sown much, but bring in little..., and whoever earns wages earns for a bag with a hole. Any profit you make perishes, just like one who places money in a pocket with a hole

WHEN THE SONS OF ISRAEL WERE EXILED TO BABYLONIA, EZRA SAID TO THEM, "ASCEND TO ERETZ ISRAEL." THEY, HOWEVER, DID NOT WANT TO GO.

"You find that when the Children of Israel were exiled to Babylonia, Ezra said to them, "Ascend to Eretz Israel." They, however, did not want to go. Ezra said to them, You have sown much, but bring in little; you eat without being satiated...; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and whoever earns wages, earns for a bag with a hole. (Midrash Tanchuma, Tetzaveh 13)

This sin (that is, the fact that few Jews longed to actually return to Eretz Israel) prevented the fulfillment 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)

THEY WERE WORTHY TO ASCEND AND BUILD THE BEIT HAMIKDASH

R. Yosi bar Chanina said: "There are four categories with respect to names: There are those whose names are becoming and whose deeds are becoming. There are those whose names are ugly and whose deeds are ugly. There are those whose names are ugly and whose deeds are becoming. And, there are those whose names are becoming and whose deeds are ugly... 'Those whose names are ugly and whose deeds are becoming' refers to the people [who returned from the Babylonian] exile: The children of Bakbuk, the children of Chakufa, the children of Charchur (Ezra 2:51, Nechemyah 7:53). They were worthy to ascend and build the Beit HaMikdash." (Bereshit Rabba 71:3)

THE ONE BORN IN ZION AND THE ONE WHO LOOKS FORWARD TO SEEING HER ARE CONSIDERED THE SAME

"And of Zion it shall be said, this man and that man were born in her, and He shall establish her above all.' (Tehillim 87) What does this mean? Said Rabbi

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Meisha, grandson of Rabbi Meir: The one born in Zion and the one who looks forward to seeing her are considered the same" (Kesubos 75).

THERE WILL BE A REMNANT ONLY IN YERUSHALAIM

"In that day shall the branch of Hashem be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for those of Israel who have escaped. And it shall come to pass, that he who is left in Zion, and he who remains in Yerushalaim, shall be called holy, every one who has been recorded among the living in Yerushalaim; When Hashem shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Yerushalaim from its midst by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning". (Yeshayahu 4)

AND THE TZADDIKIM THAT REMAIN IN YERUSHALAIM, WILL NOT RETURN TO THEIR DUST ANYMORE. PRECISELY THE ONES WHO ARE LEFT IN TZION AND YERUSHALAIM

Rabbi Abba said: The day in which Hashem will be happy with His creations, there has never been happiness like this from the day the world was created, and the Tzaddikim that remain in Yerushalaim, will not return to their dust anymore as it is written (Yeshayahu 4): "And it will be that the ones left in Tzion and the ones that remain in Yerushalaim Holy will be said to them". Precisely the ones who are left in Tzion and Yerushalaim. Rabbi Acha said: If this is so, then there will be very few; rather all those that remain in Eretz ha Koddesh de Israel (The Holy land of Israel) their judgment is like that of Yerushalaim and Tzion in every respect; from here we learn that all Eretz Israel (The Land of Israel) is included in Yerushalaim and so it is written: When you come to the land (Vayikra 19) includes everything. Zohar ha Kaddosh Vayera 114a

THE HOLY ONE BLESSED BE HE SAID: "ERETZ ISRAEL IS MORE BELOVED TO ME THAN ANYTHING

The Holy One Blessed be He said: "Eretz Israel is more beloved to Me than anything. Why? Because I spied it out..." This teaches that there is no love like the love for Eretz Israel. The Holy One Blessed be He said to Moshe: "The Land is beloved to Me, as it says, A Land that Hashem your G-d constantly seeks out (Devarim 11:12); and the people of Israel are beloved to Me, as it says, Rather, because of Hashem's love for you (ibid. 7:8). I will bring the people of Israel, who are beloved to Me, into Eretz Israel, which is beloved to Me, as it says, When you come into the Land of Canaan (Bamidbar 34:2)." (Bamidbar Rabba 23:7)

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OUR LAND WILL NOT RECEIVE OUR ENEMIES, AND THIS IS A GREAT PROOF AND PROMISE FOR US

"And that which is stated here, 'And your enemies will rule over the desolate land,' is a blessing which guarantees that through all of the ages, our land will not receive our enemies, and this is a great proof and promise for us. For you can not find in the entire world a land which is good and bountiful, that was once settled, and is now as desolate as is Israel. For since we left her, she never received any other nation." (Ramban on the Torah, Leviticus, 26:32)

"IF ONLY MY CHILDREN WERE WITH ME IN ERETZ ISRAEL, EVEN THOUGH THEY DEFILE IT."

"If only My children were with Me, even though they anger Me." This is the meaning of the verse, Oh, that I were in the desert in a lodging place of wayfarers (Yirmiyah 9:1). The Holy One Blessed be He said, "If only My children were with Me as they were in the desert when they complained against Me." (Eichah Rabba 3:7)

The House of Israel dwell on their Land and they have defiled it (Yechezkel 36:17): The Holy One Blessed be He said, "If only My children were with Me in Eretz Israel, even though they defile it." (Eichah Rabba 3:7)

WHEN THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL WERE NO LONGER IN THE LAND, HE SAID: "IF ONLY MY CHILDREN WERE WITH ME, EVEN THOUGH THEY MAKE ME ANGRY

"My soul remembers and is bowed down within me." (Echa 3) Rabbi Chiya learned: This may be compared to a king who went on a trip, and took his children along. At one point, they made him so angry that he swore not to take them again. The next day he went out without them. He kept remembering them and crying, saying, "If only my children were with me, even if they do make me angry" So it is with the Almighty King and His children, Israel. When the people of Israel were no longer in the Land, He said: "If only My children were with Me, even though they make Me angry. If only My children were in Eretz Israel, even though they defile the Land" (Echa Rabbati 3)

OMRI CONTRIBUTED TO BUILDING ERETZ ISRAEL AND DESERVED KINGSHIP FOR THIS ACTION

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

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

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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 Yerushalaim is [the capital] for the kings of Judah, so will Shomron be [the capital] for the kings of Israel" (Yalkut Shimoni 2:207)

'WE ARE UNWORTHY TO ENTER ERETZ ISRAEL EVEN IF WE DIE THERE IMMEDIATELY, FOR WE ARE ENTERING THE PLACE WHICH HASHEM PROMISED OUR FOREFATHERS TO GIVE TO US.

The Sifrei Zuta states: R. Shimon said: "Come and see how beloved is Eretz Israel. A person who goes off to war runs and runs, but when he reaches the battlefield, his legs buckle under. This did not happen to the Jewish people. When they approached Eretz Israel their legs lifted them up, and they said to one another, 'We are unworthy to enter Eretz Israel even if we die there immediately, for we are entering the place which Hashem promised our forefathers to give to us.'" (Sifrei Zuta, BeHaalotecha 33, on Bamidbar 10:33)

THIS IS WHAT ABOLISHED OUR KINGDOM, DESTROYED OUR BEIT HAMIKDASH, PROLONGED OUR EXILE, AND BROUGHT US TO OUR PRESENT PREDICAMENT, THEY DID NOT STUDY WARFARE AND LAND CONQUEST

This is what abolished our kingdom, destroyed our Beit HaMikdash, prolonged our exile, and brought us to our present predicament. Our fathers sinned and are no more. For they found many astrology books, followed them, and went astray. They imagined that these wisdoms were glorious and greatly beneficial, and they did not study warfare and land conquest. Instead, they imagined that these wisdoms would help them. Therefore, the prophets called them fools; and they certainly were fools, for they followed vanities which cannot avail nor rescue, for they are vain.

(Iggrot U'Teshuvot LeRambam, Iggrot Shonot, p. 21. 204)

HOW DO YOU FOLLOW HASHEM? WHEN YOU ENTER THE LAND ENGAGE IN PLANTING FIRST

R. Yehudah ben R. Simon began: "You shall follow Hashem your G-d" (Devarim 13:5). Is it possible for flesh and blood to follow the Holy One Blessed be He...? Rather, at the beginning of creation the Holy One Blessed be He engaged in planting, as it is written, "Hashem G-d planted a garden in Eden" (Bereshit 2:8). Similarly, when you enter the Land engage in planting first, as it is written, When you shall come into the Land, and you shall plant (VaYikra 19:23). (VaYikra Rabba 25:3)

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Hashem ordered that the main aspect of entering Eretz Israel would be to plant there fruit producing trees who are the students of the Torah, for the land of Eretz Israel gives wisdom to and purifies the soul (Baba Batra 158) And a Torah student is called fruit producing tree, for from him comes the food for the soul
Or ha Chayim Vayikra 19:23

I WISH THAT I CAN PLANT FRUIT TREES WITH MY OWN HANDS

I wish that I can plant fruit trees with my own hands around Yerushalaim in order to fulfill (Vayikra 19) "And when you come to the Land, you shall plant"
The Vilna Gaon

THEY SHALL RETURN FROM THE LAND OF THE ENEMY: YOUR CHILDREN SHALL RETURN TO THEIR OWN LAND

Thus says Hashem: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; it is Rachel weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted, for they are away. Thus says Hashem: Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears; for your work shall have its reward, says Hashem; they shall return from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in your future, says Hashem, that your children shall return to their own land (Jeremiah 31).

I WILL OPEN YOUR GRAVES (IN EXILE), AND CAUSE YOU TO COME OUT OF YOUR GRAVE (THE EXILE ITSELF), O MY PEOPLE; AND . . . I WILL BRING YOU INTO THE LAND OF ISRAEL

And He said unto me: Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered: O Lord G-d, Thou knowest. Then He said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole House of Israel: behold, they say: Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost. . . . Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith Hashem G-d: Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come Out of your grave, O my people; and . . . I will bring you into the land of Israel (Ezekiel 37:3, 11).

WHEN THE JEWS ARE IN EXILE, JUDAISM AND TORAH ARE SCORNE

"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 Hashem, 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)

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YOUR FOREFATHERS CHOSE IT [ERETZ ISRAEL] AS THEIR ABODE IN PREFERENCE TO THEIR BIRTHPLACES

"Your forefathers chose it [Eretz Israel] as their abode in preference to their birthplaces, and lived there as strangers, rather than as citizens in their own country. They did this even at a time when the Shechina was not yet visible, and the country was full of unchastity, impurity, and idolatry." (Rabbi Yehuda Ha Levi, The Kuzari, 2:23.)

ANYONE WHO LIVES IN ERETZ ISRAEL IS CONSIDERED A TZADDIK (RIGHTEOUS INDIVIDUAL) EVEN THOUGH IT DOES NOT SEEM THAT WAY

The Kabbalist, R. Avraham Azulai (the grandfather of our master, the Chida), writes in his holy work, Chesed LeAvraham: Anyone who lives in Eretz Israel is considered a Tzaddik (righteous individual) even though it does not seem that way. For if he was not a Tzaddik, the Land would vomit him out, as it says: And the Land vomits out its inhabitants (VaYikra 18:25). Since the Land does not vomit him out he must be considered a Tzaddik, even though he is presumed to be wicked

Chesed LeAvraham, Ma'ayan 3, Nahar 12

"IF A MAN IS OUTSIDE THE LAND OF ISRAEL, HE HAS A SOUL OF LESSER CELESTIAL FORCES. IF HE MERITS TO ENTER THE LAND OF ISRAEL, A SOUL FROM A NEWLY CREATED SOURCE COMES TO HIM, AND CLOTHES ITSELF WITH HIS OLD SOUL

"If a man is outside the Land of Israel, he has a soul of lesser celestial forces. If he merits to enter the Land of Israel, a soul from a newly created source comes to him, and clothes itself with his old soul. The first night he sleeps in Eretz Israel, both souls depart from him and rise to worlds above, and in the morning, only the new soul returns." (Chesed L'Avraham, The Third Spring, Spring of the Land, River 12)

WHOEVER LIVES IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL IS FULFILLING THE WILL OF HIS FATHER IN HEAVEN AND IS CALLED A TZADDIK AND G-D LOVES HIM... AND IT IS SUPERFLUOUS TO NOTE THAT ANYONE WHO SPEAKS ILL OF THE LAND OR OF ITS INHABITANTS IS LIKE THE MERAGLIM (SPIES)

Whoever lives in the Land of Israel is fulfilling the will of his father in Heaven and is called a Tzaddik and G-d loves him... and it is superfluous to note that anyone who speaks ill of the Land or of its inhabitants is like the meraglim (spies). (Rav Moshe Hagiz, Sefat Emet)

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SOMETIMES GREAT HOLY THINGS (CONQUERING ERETZ ISRAEL) COME OUT OF LOW PLACES OR THROUGH SEEMINGLY PEOPLE OF LOW MORAL STATURE

The sacred words of the Maharal of Prague, in *Gevurot Hashem* (*Gevurot Hashem* 18) , shed light on current events in Eretz Israel: You must understand...that the holy kingdom of Israel, which has an inherent, divine status, sprouts from an unsanctified kingdom. For, this befits a kingdom which has a divine and inherent nature. The verse, "I brought forth fire from within you" (*Yechezkel* 28:18), alludes to this. Sanctity, which is compared to the fineness of fire, will arise from the profane and consume everything. Similarly, an unripe fruit stays in its peel, but when the fruit grows and ripens the peel decays. For, anything which has an inherent status sprouts from something external to it. This is why Moshe Rabbeinu a"h grew up in Pharaoh's house - so that his sacred and G-dly status could come from the mundane. Had this not occurred, he would not have been inherently 'separate' (*nivdal*). Understand this for it is very deep, and it is familiar to those who know about the development of spiritual [*lit.*, 'separate'] things from material things. Similarly, Mashiach sits in Rome.

WHEN IT SEEMS TO US IN OUR PRESENT PEACEFUL EXISTENCE OUTSIDE THE LAND OF ISRAEL, THAT WE HAVE FOUND ANOTHER ERETZ ISRAEL AND YERUSHALAIM, THIS IS TO ME, THE GREATEST CAUSE OF ALL OUR TRAGEDIES

Rabbi Yaakov Emden (*The Yaavetz*) writes in the introduction to the *Siddur, Beit Yaakov*: "When it seems to us in our present peaceful existence outside the Land of Israel, that we have found another Eretz Israel and Yerushalaim, this is to me, the greatest, deepest, most obvious, and direct cause of all of the awesome, frightening, monstrous, unimaginable destructions that we have experienced in the Diaspora. "

WE OURSELVES HAVE FORGOTTEN ABOUT LIVING IN ERETZ ISRAEL COMPLETELY

These words are only a fraction of what the *Yaavetz* has to say about the imperative nature of our obligation to settle the Land of Israel: "Now... we ourselves have forgotten about living in Eretz Israel completely. Not one in a thousand arises to go and settle there. Perhaps one from a country, two in an entire generation. We imagine, sitting peacefully here [*Ed: in Germany*] that we have found a new Eretz Israel and replaced Yerushalaim with a city just like it. "For precisely this reason did such terrible things befall us when the people of Israel dwelt in Spain. G-d is just, for the fact of their *GALUT* had left their consciousness completely, and they were at home among the gentiles."

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HOW OFTEN HAVE WE TRIED TO ASSIMILATE

How often have we tried to assimilate! Yet we, like the oil which can never blend with other liquids, are doomed to remain separate. Rav Chaim Volozhiner put it succinctly: "If the Jew does not make Kiddush then the goy makes havdala." Either we separate and sanctify ourselves, or the matter will be taken care of for us in much more painful ways. (From the book To Dwell in the palace, Rabbi Leff)

BEHOLD, WHO IN OUR DAYS IS NOBLE OR ARROGANT ENOUGH TO CALL TODAY'S OLIM (THOSE WHO SETTLE IN ERETZ ISRAEL) "UGLY" OR "WICKED" (G-D FORBID)? WHO CAN CONDEMN THEIR ACTIONS OR DENIGRATE AND SLANDER THEM? WITH TRUE SELF-SACRIFICE THEY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN BUILDING A FLOURISHING LAND

Behold, who in our days is noble or arrogant enough to call today's olim (Those who settle in Eretz Israel) "ugly" or "wicked" (G-d forbid)? Who can condemn their actions or denigrate and slander them? With true self-sacrifice they have succeeded in building a flourishing Land. Unwittingly, they have fulfilled the great, positive commandment of "You shall possess it and dwell in it" (Devarim 17:14, 26:1), with all of its revealed and hidden rectifications, as I proved in the foreword. I say unhesitatingly that their deeds are becoming to the Holy One Blessed be He and their reward is exceedingly great. I only wish that my lot could be with theirs in this matter. We only have to ask them to follow the ways of Hashem from now on, and do everything in the spirit of the Torah, according to the instructions of the gedolim of the generation. We will achieve this, with G-d's help, if we bring them close to us, lovingly and respectfully. The gentle words of the wise will be heard, but not loud noise and yelling. Then, they will subject themselves to the spirit of Torah and fear of G-d, and we will succeed in purifying them, just like Ezra did. He was able to bring the sinners closer to Torah and sanctity because they saw that he befriended them and did not alienate them. This is true and clear to anyone who wants to see the truth Rabbi Ysachar Shlomo Teichtel ZTKL Em ha Banim Semecha, Chapter 3

ISRAEL'S LEADERS THROUGHOUT THE GENERATIONS WILL BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FACT THAT WE ARE STILL IN EXILE, BECAUSE THEY SHOULD HAVE INSPIRED THE SONS OF ISRAEL TO LOVE ERETZ ISRAEL

This explains the words of our mentor, the Or HaChayim. He writes that Israel's leaders throughout the generations will be held responsible for the fact that we are still in exile, because they should have inspired the Children of Israel to love Eretz Israel. (Or HaChayim, VaYikra 25:25) Rabbi Ysachar Shlomo Teichtel ZTKL Em ha Banim Semecha

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DO NOT PAY ANY ATTENTION TO THOSE WHO SLANDER THE LAND, EVEN IF THEY ARE TRULY RIGHTEOUS

Therefore, my friends and brothers, do not pay any attention to those who slander the Land, even if they are truly righteous. For, I mentioned above that the brilliant mentor of Eretz Israel, R. Yosef Chayim Sonnenfeld z"l, derived from the words of the Shelah that even tzaddikim can be spies. Realize that all those who oppose aliyah and the building and resettlement of the Land belong to the camp of the spies. But, all those who choose aliyah belong to Yehoshua and Calev's camp. Rabbi Ysachar Shlomo Teichtel ZTKL Em ha Banim Semecha

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO COME TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL WITHOUT DIFFICULTIES AND SUFFERING. THE ROOT OF ALL THE DIFFICULTIES AND SUFFERING LIES IN THE SLANDEROUS IMAGE OF THE LAND WHICH IS PUT ABOUT BY THE WICKED

It is impossible to come to the Land of Israel without difficulties and suffering. The root of all the difficulties and suffering lies in the slanderous image of the Land which is put about by the wicked. They are the source of all the obstacles. But the power of the Torah which we draw into ourselves enables us to overcome all the obstacles, the difficulties and suffering. The more profound a person's grasp of the Torah and the greater the tikkun he brings about through his attainment, the greater his victory over the obstacles, and he will succeed in reaching the Land of Israel (REBBE NACHMAN LIKUTE MOHARAN 6).

IN ATTEMPTING TO MINIMIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF DWELLING IN ERETZ ISRAEL, THE JEW RESORTS TO A VARIETY OF RATIONALIZATIONS

IN ATTEMPTING TO minimize the importance of dwelling in Eretz Israel, the Jew resorts to a variety of rationalizations. Among those most popular today is denigration of the Jews who do live here. How important could the current Yishuv be, say many (and why should I attach myself thereto), if the people in the Land are such sinners?

But when you see this Midrash you will think twice

Said the Holy One Blessed be He: A small group in the Land of Israel is dearer to Me than a full Sanhedrin outside the Land. (Yerushalmi, Sanhedrin 86)

I HAVE SEEN JEWS BUILDING HOMES LIKE THE FORTRESSES OF PRINCES, MAKING THEMSELVES PERMANENT, THIS WORLDLY DWELLINGS IN IMPURE LANDS

The Shela Hakadosh, writes (at the end of Masechet Sukkah): "I will disclose something that has always troubled me greatly. I have seen Jews building homes like the fortresses of princes, making themselves permanent, this

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worldly dwellings in impure lands. (I have observed that) it is their intention to leave these homes as an inheritance to their children after them! This appears to be, G-d forbid, an abandonment of the idea of GEULA (REDEMPTION). Therefore, even if G-d gives you wealth, build simple houses, to accommodate your bare needs, and no more."

THEY NEVER TURN TO HASHEM WITH ALL THEIR HEARTS TO ASK THAT HE RETURN THEM TO THEIR LAND. THEREFORE, THE ALMIGHTY LEAVES THEM THERE

The Keli Yakar, as well, has words on this issue (on Bereishis 47): "Many are the ignorant Jews who settle in the lands of other nations. They build themselves splendid, secure houses - homes built of stone, buildings meant to endure. For this reason, they never turn to Hashem with all their hearts to ask that He return them to their Land. Therefore, the Almighty leaves them there."

ONE WHO BUILDS A STONE HOUSE TO EXPAND HIS DWELLING OUTSIDE ERETZ ISRAEL, WITHOUT GIVING A THOUGHT TO (RETURNING TO) THE LAND... WILL HAVE NO PROTECTION SINCE HE IS WRONGLY EXTENDING HIS SOJOURN IN CHUTZ LA ARETZ.

And the Chasam Sofer, in a teshuva, explains the dictum of Rabbi Yehuda hechassid that one may not build a stone house, and that it is a danger to live in one: "One who builds a stone house for no reason other than to expand his dwelling outside Eretz Israel, without giving a thought to (returning to) the Land... will have no protection from the dangers of living in such a house, since he is wrongly extending his sojourn in chutz la Aretz."

NO MATTER WHERE A JEW IS, HE BELONGS ONLY TO ERETZ ISRAEL

"This must be clear before anything else - no matter where a Jew is, he belongs only to Eretz Israel. This is his permanent home. Outside the Land, we have the status of guests. For two or three years, it is possible to be there, in order to fulfill a mitzvah, but the aim of our life is to be here." (Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda HaKohen Kook TZK'L)

EVERY JEW IS OBLIGED TO ANSWER - I COME FROM ERETZ ISRAEL

"When Jews meet, they customarily exchange, 'Shaloms', and ask, 'Where do you come from?' The usual response is: I come from Belgium, Brazil, or Colorado. The Admor of Ostrovtsa says, 'Every Jew is obliged to answer - I come

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from Eretz Israel.' This is a very deep insight, telling us that every Jew, in his innermost essence, belongs to Eretz Israel." Rabbi Meir Yechiel of Ostrovtza

AND A PERSON SHOULD HELP HIS BROTHER, WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH AND MIGHT IF ONE OF THE BROTHERS WISHES TO ESTABLISH HIS RESIDENCE IN ERETZ ISRAEL

And a person should help his brother, with all his strength and might if one of the brothers wishes to establish his residence in Eretz Israel, how pleasant if all the brothers together help him, because their brother is their flesh as it is written: "And do not hide from your flesh" (Yeshayahu 58)

Pele Yoetz, Eretz Israel

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THIS IS A GREAT MITZVAH, FOR THE INGATHERING OF THE EXILES IS THE BEGINNING OF THE GEULA

"There is no doubt that this is a great mitzvah, for the ingathering of the exiles is the beginning of the Geula. And especially since we have now seen a tremendous yearning, both amongst non-believers, amongst ordinary men, and amongst the righteous, we are close to absolute certainty that the spirit of redemption has budded." (Rabbi Yehoshua of Kutna Responsa, Yeshuot Malko, Section 66)

IF A JEW THINKS THAT BERLIN IS YERUSHALAIM...

The Meshech Chochmah, written by the Ohr Somayach, Rav Meir Simcha HaCohen from Dvinsk, states that, "If a Jew thinks that Berlin is Yerushalaim... then a raging storm wind will uproot him by his trunk... a tempest will arise and spread its roaring waves, and swallow, and destroy, and flood forth without pity. (Meshech Chochmah, P.191-2)

THE JEWS WHO DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE EGYPT DIED IN THE THREE DAYS OF DARKNESS

These matters were stated by our Rabbis years before the Holocaust. The Netziv, Rav Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin, writes the following in his Hagadah, on the verse, And G-d brought us out with a strong hand, - "The Jews who didn't want to leave Egypt died in the three days of darkness. (Four-fifths of the Jews in Egypt died in the plague of darkness. Rashi, Exodus, 13:18) And we must remember all of this in our time also, when many Jews deny our future redemption, may it come soon, but Hashem will reign over us with a strong hand."

THE MITZVAH TO DWELL IN ERETZ ISRAEL

OUR TEACHER, THE GAON OF VILNA, KADOSH ISRAEL, WITH WORDS CARVED IN FLAMES, ADVISED HIS STUDENTS TO GO ON ALIYAH TO ISRAEL

"Our teacher, the Gaon of Vilna, Kadosh Israel, with words carved in flames, advised his students to go on Aliyah to Israel, and to further the ingathering of the exiles. Furthermore, he encouraged his students to hasten the Revealed End, and the fulfillment of the redemption, through the settlement of Eretz Israel. Almost every day, he spoke to us with trembling and emotion, saying that, in Zion and Yerushalaim there would be a refuge, and that we shouldn't delay the opportunity to go. Who can articulate, or who can describe, the magnitude of our teacher's worry when he spoke these words to us, with his Ruach HaKodesh, and with tears in his eyes (Kol HaTor, End of Chapter Five)

MANY OF THE SINNERS IN THIS GREAT SIN OF, 'THEY DESPISED THE CHERISHED LAND,' AND ALSO MANY OF THE GUARDIANS OF TORAH, WILL NOT KNOW OR UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE CAUGHT IN THIS SIN OF THE SPIES

The Vilna Gaon, Kol HaTor, Ch.5: "Many of the sinners in this great sin of, 'They despised the cherished land,' and also many of the guardians of Torah, will not know or understand that they are caught in this sin of the Spies, that they have been sucked into the sin of the Spies in many false ideas and empty claims, and they cover their ideas with the already proven fallacy that the mitzvah of the settlement of Israel no longer applies in our day, an opinion which has already been disproved by the giants of the world, the Rishonim and Achronim."

MAKE THE TRIP EVEN ON FOOT

"He who genuinely wishes to get to Eretz Israel should make the trip even on foot." (Chayei Moharan miBreslav

PRAY TO G-D TO GIVE YOU DESIRE AND YEARNING FOR THE LAND OF ISRAEL

Pray to G-d to give you desire and yearning for the Land of Israel. Then you will succeed in reaching there. And pray also that He should plant yearning for the Land in the hearts of all the Tzaddikim (Rebbe Nachman mi Bresslov Likute Moharan.).

THE MOTIVE FOR MAKING THE JOURNEY TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL SHOULD BE PURELY SPIRITUAL: TO DRAW CLOSER TO G-D

The motive for making the journey to the Land of Israel should be purely spiritual: to draw closer to G-d. A person who goes there with this as his aim will certainly benefit. Merely by stepping foot on the Land he will become merged

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with it and transformed by its sacred character. That is why even “One who walks four cubits in the Land of Israel will assuredly inherit the World to Come” (Ketubot). On the other hand, if a person’s motive has nothing to do with devotion to G-d and cleansing himself of his evil, then what help will the Land be to him? The Land will vomit him out “as it vomited out the nation that was before you” (Leviticus 18:28) (Likute Moharan 29).

WHEN I COME TO THE HOLY LAND, I FEEL CLEARLY THAT HERE MY HEART IS MORE EASILY AROUSED BY THE STUDY OF MUSSAR

"When I come to the holy Land, I feel clearly that here my heart is more easily aroused by the study of mussar. We also see palpably the supernatural help one gets here in Torah learning." Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, zt"l (Michtav Me Eliyahu vol. III, p. 194)

DUE TO OUR GREAT INIQUITY, MANY ERR IN THINKING THAT THEY WILL BE SITTING ENJOYING THEMSELVES AT HOME WHEN, SUDDENLY, THE GATES OF MERCY WILL OPEN

Rabbi Eliyahu Guttmacher, a close student of Rabbi Akiva Eiger, writes: "Due to our great iniquity, many err in thinking that they will be sitting enjoying themselves at home when, suddenly, the gates of mercy will open, and miracles shall occur upon heaven and earth, actualizing all of the prophecies, and they shall then be invited to come forth from their dwellings. The truth of the matter is not so (Shivat Zion, Part 2, Pg.41)

WHERE ARE THE TORAH JEWS FROM THE LANDS OF OUR EXILE? DON'T THEY SEE G-D'S FINGER IN ALL THIS?

In Moriah, Dr. Yitzchak Breuer tells us that in 1926, Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld asked him, "Where are the Torah Jews from the lands of our exile? Don't they see G-d's finger in all this? Now I understand what it says in the musaf prayer for Yom Tov. 'And because of our sins we were exiled from our country and were distanced from our Land.' 'We were exiled from our country' by G-d, and then 'we were distanced from our Land' by ourselves! Have we ceased our constant anticipation? Imagine that it hadn't rained for 2,000 years, and then suddenly one day a tiny cloud appeared. Wouldn't everyone become excited, and say, trembling - 'Perhaps this is it? Maybe after all...? Isn't the (British) Mandate at least comparable to this little cloud?' , (Moriah, p. 197).

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IF THOSE WHOM WE CALL "SINNERS" WORK SO HARD AND GIVE SO MUCH FOR ZION, THEN HOW MUCH MORE SHOULD BE EXPECTED OF THE TIKUN CHATZOS (MIDNIGHT PRAYER FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE) SAYERS?

Similarly, the gaon Rabbi Akiva Yosef Schlesinger writes that if those whom we call "sinners" work so hard and give so much for Zion, then how much more should be expected of the tikun chatzos sayers? Perhaps the Zionists have great merit, since they are after all, like "an infant captured by the Gentiles" (i.e., totally ignorant of Torah.)

"WHOEVER HAS THE MEANS TO COME LIVE IN ERETZ ISRAEL AND DOES NOT, WILL HAVE TO ANSWER FOR IT IN HEAVEN,"

Again and again, Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld exhorted the Jews of chutz la'Aretz to come to Eretz Israel. "Whoever has the means to come live in Eretz Israel and does not, will have to answer for it in Heaven," he would say. (Halsh Al HaChoma, II, 149)

TELL YOUR FRIENDS [HERE IN ERETZ ISRAEL] THAT THEIR REWARD IS VERY GREAT

Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld said: 'So tell your friends [here in Eretz Israel] that their reward is very great. Their personal toil and effort on behalf of the Holy Land are as important as any of the institutions here, because they are creating the foundation of a religious settlement in Eretz Israel. Go and tell your friends in my name that for the sake of G-d, I beg them not to leave Eretz Israel! G-d will help them. The main thing is not to despair or lose trust in G-d. One of this age's biggest problems is that people have grown accustomed to comfort and are not trained to bear hardship. For example, not long ago a young man came to me and explained that he was being compelled to leave Eretz Israel because he was unable to earn more than one pound a week. This is the tragedy of our youth! I, Baruch Hashem, live on sixty cents a week and do not need more (Halsh Al HaChoma, II, 149)

THE MORE ONE IS INCAPABLE OF TOLERATING THE AIR OUTSIDE THE LAND OF ISRAEL; THE MORE ONE FEELS THE IMPURE SPIRIT OF THE DEFILED LAND - THIS IS A SIGN OF A MORE INTERIOR ABSORPTION OF THE KEDUSHA OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL

The more one is incapable of tolerating the air outside the land of Israel; the more one feels the impure spirit of the defiled land - this is a sign of a more interior absorption of the Kedusha of the Land of Israel, of the sublime kindness which will never abandon the person who has merited to take refuge in the clear

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umbrage of the land of life, even in his distant journeys, even in his exile, and in the land of his wanderings (Based on OROT of Rabbi Avraham Ytzchak ha Kohen Kook)

IF THERE WILL CEASE THE HOLY FERVOR, AND THE DESIRE FOR EXALTED REDEMPTION WHICH STEMS FROM IT; AND IF THE NATURAL, HUMAN FEELING FOR NATIONALITY, AND THE YEARNING FOR THE HONORABLE LIFE OF THE NATION, WILL DISAPPEAR - THE ENEMIES OF ISRAEL WILL COME AND BLOW A SHOFAR IN OUR EARS WHICH CALLS FOR OUR REDEMPTION

Several years before the Holocaust, HaRav Avraham Yitzhak HaCohen Kook foresaw the horror which was coming. In a speech delivered in the Churvah synagogue in Yerushalaim, on Rosh Hashana, in the year 5694 (1934), several years before the Second World War, he said: "If there will cease the holy fervor, and the desire for exalted redemption which stems from it; and if the natural, human feeling for nationality, and the yearning for the honorable life of the nation, will disappear - the enemies of Israel will come and blow a shofar in our ears which calls for our redemption. They force us to hear the voice of the shofar. They sound an alarm, and set off a cannon in our ears, and don't grant us rest in the Galut. This shofar of an impure beast will be transformed into the shofar of Mashiach. Amalek, Hitler, and others like them, awaken the redemption. And he... who didn't want to hear, because his ears had become blocked, he will hear... out of absolute coercion, he will listen (The Essays of Rav Avraham Yitzhak HaCohen Kook, P.269)

IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT EVERY JEW WHO COMES TO LIVE IN ISRAEL IS FULFILLING A TORAH COMMANDMENT. THIS IS TRUE WHETHER HE IS AN OBSERVER OF TORAH, OR NOT

"It is important to understand that every Jew who comes to live in Israel is fulfilling a Torah commandment. This is true whether he is an observer of Torah, or not; whether he knows it is a mitzvah, or not; whether he comes with the intention to do the mitzvah, or not. Contrary to this, every Jew who dwells in the Diaspora, even if he is religious, commits a transgression, and the religious Jew's transgression is certain, because he is not acting from a lack of intention (for he knows that he is not doing a mitzvah.)" (Rav Tzvi Yehuda Kook quoted in Sefer Torat Eretz Israel)

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A THIRD OF THE PRECEPTS CAN ONLY BE PERFORMED IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL, AND THEREFORE, OBVIOUSLY, ONE MUST LIVE IN ISRAEL TO TRULY KEEP ALL OF THE TORAH. LIVING IN ISRAEL IS MORE THAN THIS. IT IS A MITZVAH WHICH ALL OF THE TORAH DEPENDS ON

So too with the mitzvah of living in Eretz Israel. It is an all-encompassing mitzvah, not simply because over a third of the precepts can only be performed in the Land of Israel, and therefore, obviously, one must live in Israel to truly keep all of the Torah. Living in Israel is more than this. It is a mitzvah which all of the Torah depends on, above and beyond the precepts specific to the Land. Not only did the Rambam think living in Israel is a Torah commandment, he believed it to be a major foundation of our faith, and a pillar of all of the Torah (Rav Tzvi Yehuda Kook quoted in Sefer Torat Eretz Israel)

THE VALUE OF A COMMANDMENT WHICH A JEW PERFORMS IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL, LIKE PUTTING ON TEFILLIN, IS TWENTY TIMES GREATER THAN THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SAME PRECEPT OUTSIDE OF THE LAND.

The Chofetz Chaim stated in his practical way, that the value of a commandment which a Jew performs in the Land of Israel, like putting on Tefillin, is twenty times greater than the performance of the same precept outside of the Land. In Israel, the performance of a commandment is natural to our lives. Even song is possible only in Eretz Israel, as it says, How can we sing Hashem's song on foreign soil? (Tehillim, 137:4.) (Rav Tzvi Yehuda Kook quoted in Sefer Torat Eretz Israel)

WHEN THE FLAG OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL WAS RAISED, ALL OF THE VATICAN'S DOCTRINES OF THE OUTCAST, MISERABLE JEW COLLAPSED.

The Gemara, Sanhedrin, tells that a certain Christian asked Rabbi Abahu, When will the Mashiach come? The Rabbi answered him, "When the shame of these people will be uncovered". (Sanhedrin 99^a) The people he refers to are the followers of the Nazarethite. When the flag of the State of Israel was raised, all of the Vatican's doctrines of the outcast, miserable Jew collapsed. We returned to our Land, and it became clear that the Eternal One of Israel will not lie. "(Samuel, I 15:29)

**THE SIDE OF KEDDUSHA [HOLINESS] ONLY RESTS
IN THE HEART OF THE WORLD**

The side of Keddusha [Holiness] only rests in the heart of the world and this is Yerushalaim (Zohar ha Kaddosh Ki Tisa 193)

THE MITZVAH TO DWELL IN ERETZ ISRAEL

THEY BUILD GREAT BUILDINGS, AND WE SEE ALL THIS AS SIGNS OF THE REDEMPTION SOON IN OUR DAYS

And there are in Yerushalaim thank G-d, more than 500 Baale Batim Sefaradim, and they build great buildings, and we see all this as signs of the redemption soon in our days, in a short time Im Yirtze Hashem, for the Ahkenazic congregation will be very large, for I know thank G-d that many will go there”
Baal Shne Luchot ha Brit Ha Kaddosh Died 5420

IN ORDER TO SHOW YOU MY POWER, I KILL THOSE WHO HATE YOU AND I GIVE TO YOU THEIR LAND

Ha Kaddosh Baruch hu said to Israel: I could have created a new Land and given it to you, but in order to show you My power, I kill those who hate you and I give to You their Land Bamidbar Rabba 23

THE SHECHINA ITSELF

Why did the Shechina rest in the portion of Binyamin?, Because all the other tribes were born outside Eretz Israel and Binyamin was born in Eretz Israel Mechilta Yitro 4

Eretz Israel is the Shechina itself Rabbi Menachem Mendel mi Vitebsk

FORTUNATE THE ONE WHO SOUL LEAVES HIM IN THE HOLY LAND

Fortunate the one who soul leaves him in the Holy Land for no evil spirit rests on him Zohar ha kaddosh Shemot 141

AS IF WAS GIVEN TO YOU TODAY

“And it shall be when Hashem shall bring you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and to your fathers, and shall give it to you” That it will not be in your eyes like an inheritance from your fathers but as if was given to you today Mechilta Bo

THE HEART AND THE SOUL ARE PURE AND REFINED ONLY IN IT

Eretz Israel is the land of prophecy and the heart and the soul are pure and refined only in it Rabbi Yehuda ha Levy

THE MITZVAH TO DWELL IN ERETZ ISRAEL

REBBE NACHMAN MI BRESSLOV SEES THE HOLINESS OF ERETZ ISRAEL

In physicality we do not see any difference between Eretz Israel and foreign lands, only one who merits to believe in its Kedusha can understand a little bit of the difference Rebbe Nachman mi Bresslov

All the life force that I have merited was due to the few days that I made in Eretz Israel Rebbe Nachman mi Bresslov

Know that when Yaakov Avinu sent his ten sons to Mitzraim to Yosef, he sent them with the melody of Eretz Israel and this is the secret "Take for you from the praise [Zimrat] of the Land" Rebbe Nachman mi Bresslov

THE ILLUMINATION OF HASHEM OCCURS IN ZION

"Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of Hashem has risen upon you." (Yeshayahu 60:1) Rabbi Aha said: The Holy One Blessed be He said to Israel: "My sons, since My light is your light and your light is My light, you and I shall go and illuminate Tzion Pesikta de Rav Kahana 21

HASHEM WAITS FOR YAAKOV IN ERETZ ISRAEL

"And Hashem said to Yaakov, Return to the land of your fathers, and to your family; and I will be with you". (Bereshit 31:3) Your father is waiting for you, your mother is waiting for you, and I am Myself waiting for you" Bereshit Rabba 74

And after Yaakov came to the Holy Land with the 12 Tribes and "the main portion of the house and the mother of sons is happy" was accomplished, then it is written: "And G-d appeared to Yaakov" (Whereas before He appeared to him in dreams) Zohar ha Kaddosh Toldot 149a

HASHEM WAS MORE STRINGENT REGARDING THE HONOR OF ERETZ ISRAEL THAN REGARDING HIS OWN HONOR

Hashem was more stringent regarding the honor of Eretz Israel than regarding His own honor, for regarding the golden calf, when they did teshuvah, Hashem forgave them as it is written: (Shemot 32) "And Hashem repented from the evil He said He would do to His people" but when they spoke evil and denigrated the Land, Hashem swore and did not forgive as it is written (Bamidbar 14): "You will not go up..." Rabbi Meir Simcha mi Dvinsk

THE MITZVAH TO DWELL IN ERETZ ISRAEL

THE LOVE OF KING DAVID FOR ERETZ ISRAEL

“For a day in your courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be at the threshold in the house of my G_d, than dwell in the tents of the wicked” (Tehillim 84:11). Rabbi Tanchum ben Rabbi Chanilai and Rav explained as follows: One of them said: King David said to the Holy One Blessed be He: Even if I have palaces and castles outside the Land and I only have a small hut in Eretz Israel, I still prefer to live in it...the other one said: “Even if I only have meager Carobs to eat in Eretz Israel, I still prefer to dwell in it” Midrash Tanchuma Ree

PLEASE HASHEM, BE GOOD TO ME ACCORDING TO YOUR WILL, AND GIVE WITH COMPASSION AND KINDNESS AND AS A FREE GIFT, THAT I WILL SOON MERIT TO COME TO ERETZ ISRAEL

Please Hashem, Be good to Me according to Your will, and give 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, with all their soul they wished and desired to be there, and most of them came there, and repaired what they had to repair, and they did what they had to do and they merited what they merited, all in the merit of Eretz Israel which is the center of the Keddusha of all the world. Hashem, purify me in Your great compassion that I will have and all Israel will have desire and longing and real intentions to come to Eretz Israel, easily and soon, for You know my necessity, how much I need to be in Eretz Israel Rebbe Nachman of Bresslov

WE NEED TO GO THERE JUST TO BE THERE AND NOT FOR ANY OTHER REASON

A person does not merit to live in Eretz Israel unless he goes there for the Land and not for any other reason. Rabbi Moshe Alshich

WE ARE TIED BY OUR LOVE FOR MONEY

“For a day comes” in which a man will throw his G_ds of silver, and his desire for the pleasures of the world, and his G_ds of gold, his lust for money, and they will come to Eretz Israel for it is in you hands, only that you are tied down by the mud of lust for the vanities of this world Rabbi Shlomo ha Levi Alkabetz

EVERY JEW HAS TO RESOLVE IN HIS HEART TO GO UP TO LIVE IN ERETZ ISRAEL

Every Jew has to resolve in his heart to go up to live in Eretz Israel...And truthfully it is an astonishment upon Israel that in every place Jews were

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stringent regarding the details of various Mitzvot, they spend great amounts of money in order to observe the Mitzvot, and why do you delay and abandon this beloved Mitzvah, a handle on which all the Torah depends? Rabbi Yaakov Emden

ANYONE WHO LEAVES ERETZ ISRAEL IS AS IF HE IS WORSHIPPING IDOLS

Anyone who leaves Eretz Israel and resides outside of it, will be in your eyes as one who worships idols Masechet Ketuvot 110b

WEALTH IN THIS WORLD IS TAKEN FROM THE TREASURES OF OLAM HA BA

It once happened with a student of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, that traveled outside Eretz Israel and came back wealthy, the other students saw this and were jealous, and it became known to Rabbi Shimon. Then he took the students to the valley that was in front of Meron and he prayed and said: "Valley, Valley: Fill me with coins of gold" the Valley started producing coins of gold in front of their eyes. Rabbi Shimon said to them: "If you want gold, here it is, take it, but you must know, he who takes now, he takes from his portion of the World to Come, for the reward of the Torah is only for the World to Come Shemot Rabba 52

REWARD WITHOUT LIMITS

He who goes to Eretz Israel Leshem Shamaim, his reward has no limit Maharam mi Rottenberg

NOW THE LAND IS NOT DESOLATE ANYMORE

It will not be said anymore regarding Eretz Israel: "Abandoned land which nobody asks for it", And now the curse of Hashem that the Land would be desolate, has departed, and the word of Hashem regarding the Covenant with the Land: "And I will remember the Land" comes Rabbi Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin

THE GREAT MERIT OF THOSE WHO SACRIFICED MATERIALISM FOR SPIRITUALISM

And when the Jews who lived outside Eretz Israel will see that their brothers [Who were in Eretz Israel] become new creatures and fly through the air in order to enter the lower Gan Eden to study Torah from Ha Kaddosh Baruch Hu, then they will worry greatly and will complain to Melech ha Mashiach and will say: Aren't we the Sons of Israel, just the same as them? Why did they merit to become spiritual with body and soul? Why was this withheld from us? And Melech ha Mashiach will say to them: It is well known that the ways of Ha Kaddosh Baruch Hu are MIDDA KENEGGED MIDDA Those who lived outside the Land, and made the effort to come here in order to merit a pure soul, and did not

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care about their possessions, and did not care about their bodies, and came through land and sea, and they did not worry about drowning in the sea, or about being taken captive by evil masters. And because they made their spirits and souls the most important thing, and not their bodies and possessions, therefore they received a higher level of spirituality, measure for measure. And as to you, who could have returned to the Land like them, yet you delayed coming here because of your love of money, and you worried about your money and your bodies, and you made them into your main focus, and your souls and spirits you treated like a secondary thing, therefore you remain physical, measure for measure. Rabbi Avraham Azulai Sefer Chessed LeAvraham, Maayan 3 Nahar 22

AND THE DOVE FOUND NO REST

It says in Bereshit Rabba, chapter 33: "And the dove found no rest." Yehuda bar Nachman in the name of Rabbi Shimon said, if it had found rest, it would not have returned and similarly: "she dwelled amidst the nations, she found no rest" (the Biblical book, Eicha/ Lamentations 1:3). If she had found rest they would not have returned. And similarly, "And amidst these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot find rest. (Deuteronomy 28:65) Behold it is so, if she had found rest, they would not have not returned.

And thus was it said in the Midrash of Aggadat Noah, section 8: "And he sent forth the dove." The dove- this is a symbol of the children of Israel. For just as the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, so too, the children of Israel... there would be no rest for them in the exile, for it is said, (Deuteronomy 28:65) "Neither shall the sole of thy foot find rest". And just as the dove returned unto the ark, so too the children of Israel, in the future, will return to their land from the exile, because of the burdensome yoke of the gentiles who are compared to water; for it is said, "Woe to the multitude of many people, who make a noise like the noise of the seas" and the verse continues "and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters!" (Isaiah 17:12).

Residence in Eretz Israel is equal in weight to all the commandments in the Torah.

Sifre Ree 12

It happened that Rabbi Eleazar ben Shamua and Rabbi Yochanan the Shoemaker were on their way to Netzivim (outside Eretz Israel) to study Torah under Rabbi Judah ben Beterah. They reached Sidon (on the border of the Holy Land) only to be reminded of Eretz Israel. Their eyes filled With tears, they rent their garments and recited this verse (Deut 12 : 29) : "And you shall possess them and dwell in their land" (understanding the text as imposing on every Jew the duty of living in the Holy Land), and turned and went back home.

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They stated : Residence in Eretz Israel is equal in weight to all the commandments in the Torah.

It happened that R. Judah b. Beteira and R. Matya b. Harash and R. Chanina and R. Jonathan were on their way out of Eretz Israel. They reached Palatium only to be reminded of Eretz Israel. Their eyes filled with tears and they rent their garments and recited this verse (Deut 12 : 29) : "And you shall possess them and dwell in their land," and went back home. They stated: Residence in Eretz Israel is equal to all the commandments in the Torah.

I have escaped one punishment Ketubot 112a

When Rabbi Eleazar emigrated to Eretz Israel he proclaimed : I have escaped one punishment ... as it is stated (Ezek 13: 2) "Thus saith Hashem, because you have spoken vanity. . . I am against you ... my hand shall be on the prophets that see vanity. . . and they shall not enter the land of Eretz Israel" (Thus we see it is a Divine punishment to be outside Eretz Israel).

A Land of Benison Yalkut Shimoni Ekev 858

The whole forty years during which the Israelites wandered in the wilderness the Canaanites were engaged in building houses and sowing fields and digging cisterns and planting vineyards so that when our ancestors reached Eretz Israel they would find benison.

When Israel do the will of the Omnipotent and are settled on their land rains descend from His Good Treasure

Baba Batra 25b

"Hashem shall open for thee His good treasure, the heaven to give you rain" (Deut 28 : 12 - part of the blessing for obedience) - When Israel do the will of the Omnipotent and are settled on their land, rains descend from His good treasure; when Israel are not settled on their land the rains do not descend from His good treasure.

The Worldly Goods of Eretz Israel are blessed Bereshit Rabba 74:1

"Return to the land of your fathers and to your homeland and I shall be with you (Gen 31 : 3)." R. Ami said in the name of Resh Lakish : No blessing attaches to worldly goods outside the Land, but once you return to the land of your fathers I shall be with you.

The Third Redemption is Final Tanchuma Shoftim 9

"But the third shall be left in the Land" (Zech 13 : 5). This refers to Israel who are a third of the world - the descendants of the three patriarchs. Another explanation: They will only settle down in their land in the third redemption. The first was the redemption from Egypt, the second that of Ezra and the third has no end.

The Tidings of Redemption Yalkut Shimoni Yeshayahu 475

When the Holy One Blessed be He redeems Israel, three days prior to the advent of the Messiah, Elijah will come forth and stand on the hills of Israel and weep and mourn over them saying to them: O hills of Israel! How long will you remain in an arid and desolate land?

The Wars of the Redemption in the Latter Days Yalkut Shimoni Yeshayahu 421

The sons of Ishmael are destined to wage- three wars of confusion in the latter days, one on the sea, one on land and one with Rome . . . and from thence will come forth the son of David and show us the destruction of the wicked and from thence he will come to Eretz Israel, as it is stated : "Who is this who comes from Edom:(Rome) (Isaiah: 63.1).

Living in exile is like marrying a heathen woman Ketubot 111a

There was a certain man (in Eretz Israel) whose brother died and left him a childless widow at Be Hozae (a district in Babylonia). He came to consult Rabbi Hanina and asked him : Is it my duty to leave Eretz Israel and marry her? (as demanded by the Torah in Deut 35: 5). He answered: His brother went and married a heathen and died (living outside Eretz Israel is regarded as marrying a heathen). Blessed be the Omnipotent for slaying him! Shall he then go down after him?

The brother of that person left Eretz Israel; blessed the Omnipotent for striking him down Yerushalmi Moed Katan 83:1

A certain priest came to consult Rabbi Hanina, asking him: Have I to go abroad to Tyre to perform the precept of *halitza* or *yibbum* (ceremonial rejection or marriage respectively of a brother's childless widow as prescribed in Deut 35: 5). He answered him. The brother of that person left Eretz Israel;

blessed the Omnipotent for striking him down; yet you seek to do like him? Others reported Rabbi Hanina's answer as follows : The brother of that person left the bosom of his mother and embraced a strange woman; blessed be the Omnipotent for striking him down: yet you seek to do like him?

**One glorious plant we had in Erczt Israel and yet you
allowed it to leave the country!
Yerushalmi Moed Katan 83:1**

Shimon bar Ba came to ask R. Hanina for a letter of recommendation to help him earn a livelihood outside the Land. R. Hanina refused saying: When I die they will say to me - one glorious plant we had in Erczt Israel and yet you allowed it to leave the country!

**Faith in Hashem's power to sustain everyone in Eretz israel
Tanchuma tazria 6**

A story was told of a certain Kohen who used to examine plagues (the diseases mentioned in Leviticus which it was the prerogative of the priest to pronounce clean and unclean). He became destitute and sought to leave Eretz Israel for foreign parts. He called his wife and said to her: Since people are so used to visiting me to examine their plagues, I find it difficult to leave them in the lurch. So come and I shall teach you to examine plagues. If you see that the fountain of a person's hair has dried up, know that it is diseased, since the Holy One blessed be He created for each individual hair its own fountain from which to drink. Once the fountain has dried up, the hair withers. His wife thereupon answered him: Now if for every individual hair the Holy One blessed be He has created its own fountain from which to drink, you who are a human being with numberless hairs and your children being supported by you, how much more will the Holy One blessed be He provide sustenance for you! Consequently she did not let him leave.

**Punishment for Leaving Eretz Israel
Tanchuma Behar 2**

Elimelech (Naomi's husband) was the leader of the generation. What did he do as soon as famine arose? He left Eretz Israel and went to Moab. Whereupon the Holy One Blessed be He was angry with him, him being the prince of the generation. The Holy One said: Were all my children to act thus, they would leave Eretz Israel desolate !

Leaving Eretz Israel is considered Idolatry Tosefta 77:85

Whoever leaves Eretz Israel in time of peace and emigrates has committed what is tantamount to idolatry, as it is written: "And I will plant them in this land in truth with My whole heart and My whole soul" (Jer 32: 41). So long as they remain in it, it is as if they are planted before Me in truth with My whole heart and with My whole soul. But if they do not remain in it, then they are not planted before Me in truth ... (implying they are divorced from G-d). So long as you remain in the land of Canaan, behold I am your G-d; if you do not remain in the land I am no longer your G-d.

**If your children enter the Land, they receive my Divinity;
otherwise they do not receive it.**

Bereshit Rabba 46:7

"And I will give you and your seed after you ... all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession and then (i.e. only after the gift of the Land) I will be their G-d" (Gen 17 : 8) if your children enter the Land, they receive my Divinity; otherwise they do not receive it.

**When possessions are more important than Mitzvot
Bamidbar rabba 22:6**

The sons of Gad and Reuben who were wealthy and had much cattle and loved their money and settled outside Eretz Israel were the first to be exiled of all the tribes ... What brought it on them? Because they separated themselves from their brethren for the sake of their possessions.

**The Jews in the Diaspora are
unconscious worshippers of idols
Avoda Zara 8**

The Jews in the Diaspora are unconscious worshippers of idols. How so? If a heathen invites all the Jews in his city to a banquet in honor of his son, even though they (i.e. the Jews) bring with them their own food and drink and their own waiter, Scripture still regards them as having partaken of idolatrous sacrifice, as it is stated (Exodus 34 : 15) : "And he will invite you and you shall eat of his sacrifice". But surely the text only condemns him when he actually eats, but not before! (the attendance at an idolater's feast not being criminal). Rava observed: If so the text should have read: "and you shall eat of his sacrifice". Why the preamble: "And he will invite you? - the invitation being included under the prohibition. (Similarly residence in the Diaspora - on

heathen soil - is to be condemned, however strictly the Jew adheres to the Torah).

**Eretz Israel is equal in importance to circumcision
Yalkut Shimoni Ekev 860**

It is written (Lev 26: 112): "Then will I remember My covenant (*brit*) with Jacob ... and I will remember the Land". From this text you derive two lessons: Eretz Israel is equal in importance to circumcision (the covenant); and just as circumcision overrides the Sabbath so does the conquest of Eretz Israel override the Sabbath'

**The merit of Eretz Israel
Yerushalmi Sota 8**

If a man being tried for murder fled from Eretz Israel to outside the Land we do not give him a retrial but if he fled from outside the Land to Eretz Israel, we give him a retrial on account of the merit of Eretz Israel.

**Whoever does not allude in his Grace after Meals to "the
Land and the sustenance, the goodly and pleasant Land,
the Covenant, the Torah and Life"
has not fulfilled his obligation
Bamidbar rabba 23:7**

Our Rabbis taught : Before they (the Israelites) entered the Land their Grace after Meals consisted of but one benediction "who sustains all'. After they had entered the Land they added the benediction "for the Land and the sustenance". When it was laid waste, they added "who builds Jerusalem" ... and there is no benediction more beloved than that for the Land and the sustenance; for thus stated our Sages: Whoever does not allude in his Grace after Meals to "the Land and the sustenance, the goodly and pleasant Land, the Covenant, the Torah and Life" has not fulfilled his obligation.

**All are compelled to go to Eretz Israel
Ketubot 110a**

The Mishnah states: "All are compelled to go to Eretz Israel but not all may be sent forth from it" . . . What does the phrase "not all are sent forth from it" include? It includes the case of a slave who fled from the Diaspora to the Holy Land. (We are not allowed to send him back to his master) but we say to him: sell your services here and go (free) in order to promote the settlement of Eretz Israel.

**To promote the settlement of Eretz Israel.
Baba Kama 80b**

He who purchases a town in Eretz Israel is compelled (by court of law) to purchase also right of way from all four sides in order to promote the settlement of Eretz Israel.

**To encourage the settlement of Eretz Israel
Menachot 44a**

If one rents a house in the Diaspora he is exempt from fixing a *mezuzah* for the first thirty days, but in Eretz Israel he must fix a *mezuzah* immediately in order to encourage the settlement of Eretz Israel (he will be more loathe to leave and a new tenant will be more easily come by, if there are *mezuzot* ready fixed).

**Because Eretz Israel is dear to us
Bereshit Rabba 47:12**

He who purchases a courtyard in Eretz Israel (and it is a Sabbath or festival) may say to the Gentile vendor: Tomorrow I shall let you have such and such a sum for it. This he may do (although it violates the spirit if not the letter of the Sabbath) because Eretz Israel is dear to us.

**Better to build than to plant
Tosefta Arachin 5**

A man should not demolish his house to make way for a garden nor plant in a ruin with a garden (better to rebuild it) because that is tantamount to destroying Eretz Israel.

**The Shechina (Divine Presence) does not
manifest itself outside the Land
Mechilta Shmot 21**

You may know that the Shechina (Divine Presence) does not manifest itself outside the Land from the text (Jonah 1: 3); "And Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish". Did he expect then to run away from Hashem? But Jonah argued thus: I shall go outside the Land where the Shechina does not dwell and manifest itself.

**Jonah ran away from the Land of Israel, since the Divine Presence rests only in the Land of Israel
Zohar Shemot 170b**

"Then Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from before Hashem" (Jonah 1: 3). Now can one flee from before the Holy One blessed be He? But what was meant was that he ran away from the Land of Israel, since the Divine Presence rests only in the Land of Israel. So that the Divine Presence should not rest on him he fled from the Holy Land. We know that the Divine Presence rests there from the text (Ps 128: 3): "Your wife is like a fruitful vine in the innermost parts of your house". "Fruitful vine" refers to the Divine Presence.

**On account of the provision He makes for her He provides for all other countries too
Sifre Devarim 11**

"A Land which Hashem thy G-d continually provides for" (Deut 11:12). Is it only for her that He provides? Surely He provides for all countries? He, as it were, only provides for her and on account of the provision He makes for her He provides for all other countries too.

**He created countries and chose one of them - Eretz Israel
Bamidbar Rabba 3:8**

Said Rabbi Levi: You find that the Holy One blessed be He created many things in the universe but chose for Himself one of them. He created the seven days and stated (Gen 2: 3): "And G-d blessed the seventh day and chose for Himself the Shabbat from all of them, as it is stated (Gen 2: 3) : "And G-d blessed the seventh day and sanctified it". He created countries and chose one of them - Eretz Israel, as it is stated (Deut 11: 12) : "Continually the eyes of Hashem are upon it". Likewise the Holy One blessed be He calls it, My land, as it is stated (Joel 4: 2) "They have parted My land". He created nations and chose one of them -- Israel, as it is stated (Deut 14: 2) : "You, has Hashem chosen to be His people, His very own treasure".

**This shows the worth of the Land
Derech Eretz Zuta 2**

This shows the worth of the Land - that the Holy One blessed be He stood in its midst and created all the other countries, setting apart Eretz Israel as a heave-offering from all the countries, setting apart Jerusalem as a heave-offering from all the Land of Israel, setting apart the site of the Temple as a heave-offering from the whole of Jerusalem. Similarly, the Holy One blessed be He created all the peoples and set apart Israel as heave-offering from all of

them, bringing Israel who are the heave-offering of all the peoples to the Land of Israel, which is the heave offering of all the lands (the choice part, set aside as sacred to G-d, like the Teruma or heave-offering the Israelite has to give the priest).

**Eretz Israel because it was dearer than all
else was created before everything else
Sifre Devarim 7**

And so you find among the ways of the Omnipotent that whatever was especially dear to Him took precedence over other things. The Torah because it was dearer than all else was created before everything else ... the Temple: because it was dearer than all else was created before all else ... the Land of Israel because it was dearer than all else was created before everything else...

Yalkut Shimoni Devarim 860

Eretz Israel is equal in weight to all that was created during the six days of Genesis.

**Rabbi Meir used to say: Whoever resides in Eretz Israel,
Eretz Israel atones for him
Ketubot 111a**

Rabbi Meir used to say: Whoever resides in Eretz Israel, Eretz Israel atones for him, as it is stated: "The people who dwell in it, bearing iniquity" (Isa 33: 24). But we still do not know whether the text implies they are rid of their iniquities through it or bear their iniquities upon it (i. e. the Land). The text (Deut 32: 43) : "And His land shall atone for His people" indicates that what is meant is that they are rid of their iniquities through it and do not bear their iniquities upon it (i.e. the Land bears or takes away their iniquity). Rabbi Eleazar stated : Whoever lives in the Land of Israel enjoys freedom from iniquity, as it is stated: "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity" (Isa 33: 24).

**Because he was born in Eretz Israel whereas all the other
tribes were born outside the Land
Yalkut Shimoni Devarim 947**

Why did Benjamin merit the dwelling of the Shechina in his portion (Jerusalem the site of the Temple)? Because he was born in Eretz Israel whereas all the other tribes were born outside the Land.

Mechilta Yitro 19

Why did the Holy Spirit reside in the portion of Benjamin (the Temple was built in his tribe's portion)? Because all the tribes were present at the sale of Joseph and Benjamin was not. Furthermore all the tribes were born outside the Land whereas Benjamin was born in Eretz Israel.

Though there are righteous men and sages outside the Land and mere shepherds in Eretz Israel Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 8a

Though there are righteous men and sages outside the Land and mere shepherds in Eretz Israel, though there are prophets outside the Land and mere laymen in Eretz Israel, we may only intercalate the year (regulate the Hebrew calendar in the days when the new moon was sanctified on the evidence of witnesses) through laymen from Eertz Israel.

Even the mountains of Eretz Israel are beloved by the nations of the world Hullin 60a

"Mount Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion and the Amorites call it Shenir". (Dcut 3: 9) what prompted the Torah to give us this information? (to tell us what other nations called an Israel mountain?) But Shenir and Sirion are Israel mountains ... and the text comes to teach you that each one of the nations of the world built itself a city and named it after the mountains of Israel, impressing on us that even the mountains of Eretz Israel are beloved by the nations of the world.

My ancestors the elders of Benjamin were born in Eretz Israel. Midrash Esther 8

Rabbi Levi said: Thus said Mordechai to the servants of Achasverosh (in explaining his refusal to bow to Haman): Moshe our teacher warned us in the Torah: "Cursed be the man who makes a graven or molten image" (Deut 27: 15) yet this villain sets himself up as an idol! ... Furthermore I am a knight of the king (i.e. G-d) since whereas all the tribes were born outside the Holy Land, my ancestors the elders of Benjamin were born in Eretz Israel.

They longed to drink water From Eretz Israel Bamidbar Rabba 23:7

"And give you a delightful land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations" (Jer 3:19), You find that when Joshua slew the kings (of Canaan) there

were sixty two of them there, thirty one in Jericho and thirty one in the days of Sisera when he went to fight with Israel, they also being slain along with him. 5',liy (did they join Sisera)? They longed to drink water From Eretz Israel and they begged of Sisera as follows: Please let us come with you to battle. Every king he asked to join forces with him he paid and hired labourers to help him, whereas they said to Sisera : We do not ask of you anything, merely to be able to go along with you, for no consideration of any kind, ,incc we wish to fill our bellies with the water of that land, as it is stated (Ju 5 : 10): "The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanaclx by the waters of Megiddo : they took no gain of money" indicating to you that there is nothing so favored as Eretz Israel.

**A king or potentate who has not acquired palaces or estates in Eretz Israel has not achieved anything
Sifre Ekev 7, 2a**

Did all the thirty one kings (that Joshua vanquished in the conquest of Canaan) then live in Eretz Israel? But they did as they do in Rome today. No king or potentate who had not acquired palaces or estates in Rome did not consider he had achieved anything. Similarly A king or potentate who has not acquired palaces or estates in Eretz Israel has not achieved anything.

**A Land desired by all kings
Shemot Rabba 32:2**

A desirable land" ---- desired by- all the kings. For between Jericho and Ai there are only three miles and yet each one had a king!

**A land coveted by all the kings of the nations of the world
Yalkut Shimoni Jerusalem 271**

"The goodliest heritage of the nations" (Jer 3: 19 describing Eretz Israel). A land coveted by all the kings of the nations of the world, as it is stated : "the king of Jericho, one, the king of Ai, one" when there are only three miles separating Jericho and Ai (and yet they bath had a separate king!) The explanation of this phenomenon is that he who acquired land outside Eretz Israel and did not acquire anything in Eretz Israel itself was not called a king.

**"For from Zion shall go forth the Law and the word of Hashem from Jerusalem".
Berachot 63a**

When Hanina the nephew of R. Joshua went down into the Diaspora he intercalated the years and fixed the months from the Diaspora, There were

dispatched to him two scholars R. Jose ben Kipar and the grandson of Zechariah ben Kevutal... they began to declare. clean what Hanina declared unclean, forbid what he permitted ... He asked them why they declared clean what he had declared unclean. They answered : Because you are intercalating years and fixing months outside Eretz Israel. .. Why did they go to such extremes (in combating Hanina's measures)? on account of the text: "For from Zion shall go forth the Law and the word of Hashem from Jerusalem".

**The currency of Eretz Israel is superior
to those of all other countries
Yerushalmi Ketubot 13**

If one took a wife in Eretz Israel and divorced in Cappodocia he must pay her marriage settlement in Eretz Israel money, since the currency of Eretz Israel is superior to those of all other countries.

**In order to endear Eretz israel to him
Bereshit Rabba 39:12**

Rabbi Jochanan stated: [Hashem said to Abraham:] "Go forth from your land" implies your district; "from your birthplace" - your neighborhood; "and from your father's house" - your father's house; "to the land which I will show you". Why didn't He reveal it to him there and then? -in order to endear it to him and give him reward for every step he trod on it.

**Said R. Levi: Even the reed for arrows
was not lacking in Eretz Israel.
Vayikra Rabba 25:4**

"I have built me houses, planted me vineyards, made gardens and orchards, pools of water to water the wood that brings forth trees" (Eccl 2 : 4) : Said the Holy One blessed be He to Moshe: Go and tell the Patriarchs that I have done great things and fulfilled to the letter all I promised them. I built houses, as it is stated: "And houses full of every good thing" (Deut 6 : 11). I planted vineyards, as it is stated: "Vineyards and olive groves that you planted not". I made pools of water, as is stated: "Cisterns hewn out" for you to water the wood that brings forth trees. Said R. Levi: Even the reed for arrows was not lacking in Eretz Israel.

**You are right to sing the praises of your land
Ketubot 112a**

A certain Sadducee said to Rabbi Hanina: You are right to sing the praises of your land. My father left me a quarter of an acre, from which I have oil, wine, corn and pulse and pasture for my livestock.

**He found the only country worthy of being
given to Israel was Eretz Israel
Vayikra Rabba 13:2**

"He stood and measured the earth" (Hab 3 :6). The Holy One blessed be He measured all the nations and found the only one worthy of receiving the Torah was the generation of the wilderness ... He measured all the cities and found the only one worthy of housing the Temple was Jerusalem. He measured all the countries and found the only country worthy of being given to Israel was Eretz Israel.

**When Israel are worthy, the Land is
called after them -- Eretz Israel
Zohar Noach 73a**

When Israel are worthy, the Land is called after them -- Eretz Israel; when they are not worthy the Land is called by another name --- the Land of Canaan.

**So Israel still make pilgrimage to the site
of the Temple though it is destroyed
Yalkut Shimoni Shir ha Shirim 985**

"Your eyes are like doves" (Song of Songs 4: 1 -symbolically understood as a description of the virtues of Israel in relation to G-d). Just as a dove will never forsake her cote even if her young are snatched from under her, so Israel still make pilgrimage to the site of the Temple though it is destroyed.

**Israel however are admirably fitted to Eretz Israel and Eretz
Israel is admirably fitted for them,
Bamidbar Rabba 23:5**

One man may be good-looking but spoilt by his clothes, another may have beautiful clothes spoilt by his looks; Israel however are admirably fitted to Eretz Israel and Eretz Israel is admirably fitted for them.

**Because he did not speak badly of Eretz Israel
Sanhedrin 94a**

Why was the wicked Sennacherib given the title of "great and honorable"? Because he did not speak badly of Eretz Israel, as it is written (2 Kings 18) : "till I come and take you to a land like yours".

**How much more so does this apply to
one who wishes to praise Eretz Israel
Sifre Devarim 7**

"And I shall take you to a land like your own land" (2 Kings 18: 32). So you find that when Sennacherib wanted to tempt the Israelites (out of Eretz Israel) what did he say to them? "till I come and take you to a land like your land". To a land finer than your land, was not said, but "to a land like your land". Now if someone who wished to praise his own land did not speak disparagingly of Eretz Israel, how much more so does this apply to one who wishes to praise Eretz Israel!

**Whose greatness and distinction derives from Eretz Israel
Sifre Devarim 1:7**

"To the great river, the river Euphrates" - whose greatness and distinction derives from Eretz Israel. The popular saying goes: The servant of a king is a king; stick close to the chief and they will bow to you.

**It ascended and encompassed the
whole of the Land of Israel
Bereshit Rabba 16:5**

"And the fourth river is Euphrates (Gen 2: 14). Rav stated: Euphrates is the prince of rivers ... But surely at creation it was not called "Great"? But what happened was that it ascended and encompassed the whole of the Land of Israel, about whom it is written: "For what great nation is there that has a G-d". The popular saying goes: The servant of a king is a king, keep close to the heat and you will get warm too.

**The good which is Eretz Israel
Mechilta Yitro 1**

"And Jethro rejoiced over all the good which Hashem had performed for Israel" (Ex 18: 10). R. Eliezer stated: The text is referring to the good which is Eretz Israel. They said to him: The Holy One blessed be He is destined to give us six good things: Eretz Israel, the world to come, the kingdom of the house of David, the priesthood, the Levitical order and a new world ...

**Prophecy cannot be recorded outside Eretz Israel
Baba Batra 15a**

The Men of the Great Assembly (who assembled in Eretz Israel after the Babylonian Captivity and reorganized Jewish religious life under the Second Temple) wrote down the Book of Ezekiel, the Minor Prophets, the Book of Daniel and the Book of Esther. Why didn't Ezekiel write down his own book? He prophesied in the Diaspora, in Babylon, and prophecy cannot be recorded outside Eretz Israel. So they were written down after the return to Zion. The same applies to Daniel and Esther (Rashi).

**Our Master was worthy that the Divine Presence should
have rested upon him; only Babylon deprived him of that
honor (since the Divine Presence
only rests in the Holy Land)
Moed Katan 25a**

When Rabbi Huna passed away...R. Abbahu eulogized him saying: Our Master was worthy that the Divine Presence should have rested upon him; only Babylon deprived him of that honor (since the Divine Presence only rests in the Holy Land). Rabbi Nahman bar R. Hisda objected, citing the text (Ezek 1: 3) : "the word of Hashem came to Ezekiel the son of Buzi the priest in the land of the Chaldeans"? His father nudged him with his shoe and said to him: Haven't I told you not to bother people with your questions. The text implies that the Divine spirit had already come to rest on Ezekiel whilst he was still in Eretz Israel and simply did not leave him when he was exiled. But the prophetic mantle originally descended on him in the Holy Land.

**Blessed be the G-d of the Jews who
does not leave or forsake them
Yerushalmi Peah 3:7**

It happened that one who left his stack of corn [To go up to Yerushalaim for the Shalosh Regalim] came back to find lions surrounding it (to guard it from thieves). Another left his house open and came back to find a snake curled round the door lock. Rabbi Pinchas told this story: Two brothers in Ashkelon had Gentile neighbors. The latter said: When these Jews go up to make their pilgrimage to Jerusalem we shall take all they have. As soon as they left for Jerusalem the Holy One blessed be He sent angels to go in and out of their house in their likeness. The neighbors seeing this said: Blessed be the G-d of the Jews who does not leave or forsake them.

Pesikta Rabbati 15

Come and see the very dust of Eretz Israel gives rise to repentance.

**Eretz Israel is destined to extend its borders
Sifre Devarim 1**

Eretz Israel is destined to extend its borders upwards on all sides and the gates of Jerusalem are destined to reach to Damascus and the Diaspora shall come and encamp in its midst.

**What saved them from the sentence of Gehinnom? Burial in
Eretz Israel, as it is stated: "And His land will
atone for His people" (Deut 32 : 43).
Yalkut Shimoni Pslams 116**

"I will walk before Hashem in the land of the living" (Ps 116: 9)-Kin; David is presumed to be referring to his homeland). Is then Eretz Israel the land of the living? Surely people die therein as well? Said Resh Lakish in the name of R. Eleazar Hakappar: It is so called because its dead come to life in the days of the Messiah. Rabbi Jose asked Resh Lakish: Even Jeroboam the son of Nevat? He answered him: "brimstone and salt" (Deut 29: 22 where the Divine retribution for the idolatrous sinner and misleader of Israel is outlined). Said R. Judah bar Ilai: For seven years Eretz Israel burned with brimstone and salt, as it G-d stated:"and the whole land thereof is brimstone and salt". Whatever punishment G-d had to exact from Jeroboam and his friends he exacted from them during those seven years. Thus even Jeroboam and his friends will be resurrected in the days of the Messiah. What saved them from the sentence of Gehinnom? Burial in Eretz Israel, as it is stated: "And His land will atone for His people" (Deut 32 : 43).

**The dead of Eretz Israel meet their death at the hands of an
angel of mercy who reigns in Eretz Israel
Zohar Shemot 151**

Those who die in the Diaspora meet death at the hands of an angel of destruction who is the Angel of Death, whereas the dead of Eretz Israel meet their death at the hands of an angel of mercy who reigns in Eretz Israel, since Eretz Israel belongs exclusively to the domain of the Holy One blessed be He.

**I have destroyed a precious stone in an unclean land
Yerushalmi Kilaim 9:3**

Ulla was on his deathbed in the Diaspora. He began to weep. They asked him: Why are you weeping. We shall take your remains to Eretz Israel. He answered them: What good is that to me? I have destroyed a precious stone in an unclean land since one cannot compare ejection from the bosom of the mother (Eretz Israel) with ejection from the bosom of a strange woman.

**R. Judah said: Happy the portion of him to whom it was
granted in his lifetime to reside in the Holy Land - he has
thereby gained access to the supernal Holy Land.
Zohar Ha Kaddosh III 72b**

The Holy One blessed be He is destined to shake the Land from all the defilement that the heathens have defiled it will just as one shakes a garment and gets rid of the dust. All those who were buried in the Holy Land will be cast outside to cleanse the Land from all defilement. R. Judah said: Happy the portion of him to whom it was granted in his lifetime to reside in the Holy Land - he has thereby gained access to the supernal Holy Land. Whereas he to whom it was not granted to reside there in his lifetime but is brought there after death, to him the text applies : "My inheritance you have made an abomination". His spirit went forth in an alien domain, his body entered the domain of the Holy Land, making as it were the holy profane and the profane holy. To whomever it is granted that his soul departs in the Holy Land has his sins forgiven and comes to shelter under the wings of the Divine Presence ... and furthermore merits the continual enjoyment of the Holy Spirit; and whoever resides in a foreign domain is at the mercy of an alien and strange spirit.

**He whose soul departs in a foreign domain, his body
being buried in the Holy Land is referred to in the text "they
come and defile My land"
Zohar Vayechi 226a**

We have learnt that he whose soul departs in a foreign domain, his body being buried in the Holy Land is referred to in the text "they come and defile My land". Yet Yaakov said: "Bury me in their sepulcher" (in Eretz Israel), and his soul had departed in a foreign domain? Said R. Judah: Yaakov was different because the Divine Presence had united with him and clung to him. This is implied in the text (Gen 46: 4); "I (G-d) shall go up with you" to be joined with your soul and have your body buried in the grave of your fathers, though your soul departed in a foreign domain.

**Whoever is buried in Eretz Israel is buried,
as it were, beneath the altar
Ketubot 111a**

Rabbi Anan stated : Whoever is buried in Eretz Israel is buried, as it were, beneath the altar. It is written here (Ex 20 : 24) : "An altar of earth shall you make for Me" and it is written there (Deut 32 : 43) : "And its earth shall atone for His people".

**It is a good omen for the world when most
of them reside in Eretz Israel
Yerushalmi Avoda Zara 2:1**

"And they weighed for me thirty pieces of silver" (Zech 12: 12). The Rabbis interpret this to mean that only thirty righteous men were found who were willing to do the will of G-d and that these are the thirty righteous men that the world is never without. Sometimes the majority are to be found in Eretz Israel, the minority in the Diaspora and sometimes the other way around. It is a good omen for the world when most of them reside in Eretz Israel.

**The residents of Eretz Israel come before
those of foreign places
Sifre Devarim 15:7**

"When there shall be among you a needy person, of one of your brethren, in one of your gates, in your land" (Deut 15 :7) . . . "in one of your gates" indicating that your own fellow-citizens come before others; "in your land" indicating that the residents of Eretz Israel come before those of foreign places. . .

**the Holy One blessed be He transplant them from an
unclean land to a pure land
Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 19**

The Holy One blessed be He is destined to gather all Israel from the four corners of the whole earth. Just as a gardener transplants from one bed to another so will the Holy One blessed be He transplant them from an unclean land to a pure land.

**The holiness of the Land is Mine
Gittin 47a**

Rabbah stated : Though the heathen's exercise of ownership over Eretz Israel does not free it from the priestly tithes on account of the text: "For the Land is Mine" (Lev 25 : 23) implying: the holiness of the Land is Mine, yet the

heathen may exercise his ownership to the extent of digging cisterns, trenches and caves therein.

**If you go outside the Land, are you disqualified.
Bereshit Rabba 64:3**

"Dwell in this Land" (G-d commanded Yitzchak). Said R. Hoshaya: You (Yitzchak) are an unblemished burnt offering (having been dedicated as a sacrifice to G-d). Just as a burnt-offering is disqualified if it is taken out of the Temple precincts, so if you go outside the Land, are you disqualified.

**"The light of the living" is Eretz Israel
Shocher Tov 56**

"For you have delivered my soul from death: will You not deliver my feet from falling; that I may walk before G-d in the light of the living" (Ps 56: 14). "The light of the living" is Eretz Israel.

**Strength means Eretz Israel
Shocher Tov 21**

"Strength" (in Ps 29:11 "Hashem give strength to his people") means Eretz Israel, as it is stated : "And He delivered His strength into captivity (referring to the overrunning of the Land Ps 79:61).

**Eretz Israel lacks nothing
Sifre Ekev 12**

"The highest part of the dust of the world" (*Prov 8 : 26*). Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai stated : The world here means Eretz Israel, as it is stated: "rejoicing in the world of his Land" (*ibid 31*). Why is it called world ? Because it has a bit of everything in it. As far as other countries are concerned, one has what another lacks, whereas Eretz Israel lacks nothing, as it is stated (*Deut 8 : 9*) : "you shall have not lack of anything in it" (referring to the good things of Eretz Israel).

**I only gave them Eretz Israel for them to study the Oral
and Written Law and busy themselves with Torah
Tanna debe Eliyahu Rabba 11**

Said the Holy One blessed be He: I only gave them Eretz Israel for them to study the Oral and Written Law and busy themselves with Torah, each subject at its appropriate season and learn good conduct and manners.

**Blessing exclusively hinges on Eretz Israel
Sifre Ree 15:14**

"For Hashem will surely bless you in the Land" (Deut 15 : 14). This text indicates that blessing exclusively hinges on Eretz Israel.

**A heathen may not be sold anything in Eretz Israel that is
attached to the ground
Avoda Zara 19:20**

The heathen may not be sold anything in Eretz Israel that is attached to the ground but it may be sold when it has been detached . . . houses may not be rented to them and certainly no fields.

**Come and see how much the Holy One blessed be He
esteemed the entry into Eretz Israel more than the
departure therefrom
Ruth Rabba 2:13**

"And a certain man went (i.e. Elimelech who left Eretz Israel to sojourn in Moab-Ruth 1: 1). Did he then go empty handed? (the text makes no mention of him taking anything with him save his wife and sons). But come and see how much the Holy One blessed be He esteemed the entry into Eretz Israel more than the departure therefrom! Further (in Ezra 2: 66 giving details of the returnees to Zion from Babylonian exile) : "their horses. .. their mules ... their camels" (omitting no details) whereas here it is simply stated : "and a certain man went" - empty handed' But we must conclude that since they (Elimelech and his family) were leaving Eretz Israel for the Diaspora, the Holy One blessed be He attached no importance to their goods.

**It was the merit of Eretz Israel from which he benefited
Rosh Ha Shana 16b**

Four things rend the evil judgment on man: charity, prayer, change of name, change of deed. . . , and others add: Change of place too, on the basis of the text: "And Hashem said to Abraham, Go forth from your land and birthplace" after which it states : "And I shall make you into a great nation" (indicating that a change of place was responsible for transforming Abraham's fortunes). How then will the first authority (who does not accept the view of the "others") explain the text? - It was the merit of Eretz Israel from which he benefited (but in the ordinary way change of place does not rend the evil judgment on man).

**In virtue of what did Israel merit all this honor? In virtue of the settlement of Eretz Israel, because they dwelt and suffered (the pangs of longing for Eretz Israel) among the Gentiles in this world
Pesikta Rabbati 1**

"All flesh shall come to worship before Me, said Hashem" (Isaiah 66 :23) even heathens ; but not all the heathens, only those who did not subject Israel - the Messiah will welcome them. In virtue of what did Israel merit all this honor? In virtue of the settlement of Eretz Israel, because they dwelt and suffered (the pangs of longing for Eretz Israel) among the Gentiles in this world. Similarly you find that the patriarchs suffered on account of their longing to be buried in Eretz Israel.

Midrash Zuta Ruth 5
Whoever purchases four cubits of ground in Eretz Israel is assured of being deserving of the world to come.

**Moshe lacked the merit of Eretz Israel
Arachin 32b**

"And they dwelt in booths; for they had not done so since the days of Joshua son of Nun" (Nehemiah 8: 17) ... that was why the text expresses disapproval of Joshua. For everywhere Joshua is spelt in full -- *Jehoshua* - except here where it is spelt *Joshua* (without the *heh* -- a sign of Divine disapproval). Moshe's conduct in not interceding for his generation (to protect them from the temptations of idolatry) can be understood, because he knew it was useless, since he lacked the merit of Eretz Israel (he died before entering the Land), but why didn't Joshua pray for them knowing he possessed the merit of Eretz Israel?

**Because he wanted to emigrate to Eretz Israel
Ketubot 110b**

Rabbi Zera evaded Rabbi Judah, because he wanted to emigrate to Eretz Israel and Rabbi Judah had stated: Whoever leaves Babylon for Eretz Israel violates a positive command, as it is stated : "They shall be carried to Babylon, and there they shall be until the day I visit them says Hashem" (Jer 27: 22). What was Rabbi Zera's answer to this? The text cited by Rabbis Judah referred only to the Temple vessels (and not to the people as well; they would remain in Babylon till G-d came and restored them ; but there was no ban on the people leaving Babylon for Israel).

**The latter because it displays the worth of Eretz Israel
Nedarim 22b**

"For in much wisdom is much grief" (Eccl. 1: 18). Said Rabbi Ada the son R. Hanina: Had Israel not sinned, there would have been given to them the five books of the Torah and the book of Joshua only, the latter because it displays the worth of Eretz Israel; (i. e. had Israel not sinned the prophets would not have needed to reprove them and write the rest of the books of the Bible. But this would not apply to the book of Joshua which is a history of the conquest of Eretz Israel). What is the reason? "For in much wisdom is much grief" (the multiplicity of holy books - wisdom - is a sign of grief - a symptom of the bad turn Israelite history took as a result of the people's sins).

**In your land you dwell in safety but you do
not dwell in safety in the Diaspora
Sifra Bechukotai 26:5**

"You shall dwell in safety in your land" (Lev 26 : 5). In your land you dwell in safety but you do not dwell in safety in the Diaspora. Should you argue, We have food and drink -- if there is no peace, there is nothing. The text adds : "I shall give peace in the Land".

**All the nations of the world are destined to enter Eretz
Israel and to do battle with Israel
Pirke De Rabbi Eliezer 28**

"You have screened my head in the day of battle" (Psalm 140: 8). Thus exclaimed the Holy One blessed be He: In time to come all the nations of the world are destined to enter Eretz Israel and to do battle with Israel, as it is stated (Zechariah 14 :2) : "I shall gather all the nations to Jerusalem for battle". What will the Holy One blessed be He do? Go forth and fight with the nations.

**Whoever speaks favorably of Israel ascends,
unfavorably descends
Bereshit Rabba 68:18**

"And behold the angels of Hashem ascended" (Gen 28 : 12). The angels that accompany man in Eretz Israel do not accompany him outside the Land. Above, whoever speaks favorably of Israel ascends, unfavorably descends; below, whoever speaks unfavorably descends, unfavorably ascends. "Ascended and descended" --- ascended those that accompanied him in Eretz Israel; descended, those that accompanied him outside the Land.

To bless, praise, exalt, magnify and sanctify the name of the king of kings, the Holy One Blessed be He for bringing them to Eretz Israel which is called the delight of the world
Tanna debe Eliyahu 14

It may be compared to a mortal king who said to his slave, You are invited to one banquet with me for thirty days and I shall also give you a fine gift. He dined with him for fifteen days and then the slave said to the king. I don't want to dine with you any longer and you can have your gift back, destroying it to his face. That slave was thereby guilty of ingratitude to the king. Was that the way for him to behave? What henceforth did it devolve on the slave to do? -- to placate the king and bless and praise him. So does it devolve on the seed of Jacob to bless, praise, exalt, magnify and sanctify the name of the king of kings, the Holy One Blessed be He for bringing them to Eretz Israel which is called the delight of the world. He invited them to a banquet of the manna for forty years, from the bread which the ministering angels partook, but they disparaged the manna and as if said they did not want the gift of Eretz Israel

***FOR ZION'S SAKE I WILL NOT HOLD MY PEACE,
AND FOR JERUSALEM'S SAKE I WILL NOT REST,
UNTIL HER RIGHTEOUSNESS GOES FORTH LIKE
RADIANCE, AND HER SALVATION LIKE A BURNING
TORCH. AND THE NATIONS SHALL SEE YOUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND ALL KINGS YOUR GLORY;
AND YOU SHALL BE CALLED BY A NEW NAME,
WHICH THE MOUTH OF HASHEM SHALL EXPRESS.
ISAIAH 62: 1-2***

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