



**“You Shall Dwell
Securely In Your Land”**



**The Torah’s perspective on the
safety of living in the land of
Eretz Yisroel and in the Diaspora**

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In light of the tragic situation that is going on in now in Eretz Yisroel, it is Important for us to remember that the natural place for every Jew is Eretz Yisroel. A wonderful depiction for this was given by Rabbi Shraga Feivel Mendelovitz zt"l (from book Shluchoi D'Rachmana) "The Land of Israel is the natural place of a Jew. It is his homeland from the very moment of his creation. While it is possible to be a Jew outside the Land, in the diaspora, it is only a state under artificial conditions. It is not a natural existence. This can be compared to the polar bear, whose natural habitat is in the Arctic near the North Pole. Some bring such a creature to New York and keep it in a padded cage with artificial ice to give it a 'homely' feeling. Or consider a tiger, which is native to warm regions in Asia, such as the jungles of India. There are those who take such a creature and relocate it to Scandinavia or Ukraine, where it is kept and raised in a cell with heated air to provide it with a comfortable 'homely' feeling. It lives there, the creature is capable of sustaining itself and even growing and developing, but it is not its natural place. The climate there is not its organic environment. Similarly, a Jewish person and the Land of Israel."

One of the feelings that seem to take root in the diaspora during such situations, is that we are safer here than in our homeland, these feelings are very poisonous, they distance a person from the place he really belongs, they motivate people to stay where they are and encourage others not to try to make their way back to their homeland the place they really belong. We may not let these feelings and thoughts take root in our hearts, and if they have started to take root we shall root them out of us. It is true that many people can't make their way back to our homeland for various reasons, but this should not be a reason for one to look for reasons of distancing himself from there, or chas v'shalom encouraging others not to go. Our hopes and our dreams are for each and everyone of us to return to our home land at the opportunity that comes our way.

There are many reasons why being safer in the diaspora should not come into account of holding us back from returning to our home land, one of them and probably the main reason is because **we have to be ready to sacrifice our lives away** in order to live in Eretz Yisroel.

Rabbi Yerucham Lebovitz zt"l writes in his book 'Da'at Torah' (Parashat Shelach): 'Like the secret of the Torah, so is the secret of the Land of Israel. It is not strengthened

except through its challenges; it is not sustained except through self-sacrifice. It only endures when we sacrifice ourselves to it, and when we do not sacrifice ourselves to it, behold, that is a sin and a deficiency against the essence of the land. This is the fundamental claim of the secret of the land, and its gift, as the Israelites said, "Why is the Lord bringing us to this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be as plunder." The Torah reveals to us that this fear comes from despising the cherished land. The fear of it is not against its nature, for from the secret of the land comes real self-sacrifice, even to die for it. Joshua and Caleb were not afraid at all; nothing stood in their way. They believed and were confident, that it is a cherished land. Cherish the land, and how could there be fear!. Disdaining the land is a sin; behold, this is a sin against all the gifts of the land. Surely, when they said, "And he raised his hand against them to strike them in the wilderness," it is without the dedication of life that we lose the land. And this is not a matter of punishment, like other punishments for transgressions. Rather, it is a sin and a deficiency in the essence of the gift of the land, and without dedication, how can it be upheld?"

These holy words of Reb Yerucham zt"l, were in front of our great masters and grandparents all the generation, how much sacrifice of life was given of the generations in order to live in the land of the cherished.

But this is not the intension of this pamphlet, our intension is with the help of Hashem to make clear from the teaching of our masters that **the safest place to live is in Eretz Yisroel!**.

"You shall dwell securely in your land"

In our Holy Torah, in the blessings to the children of Israel, it is written, "And you shall dwell securely in your land" (Leviticus 26:5). The Sifra commentary states, "You will dwell securely in your land and not outside of it."

In the book "Michtav M'Eliyahu" (Volume 3), it is written, "Even in our generation, we find a sense of rest and spiritual security in the land of Israel more than in any other place. In our eyes, we have seen that in recent years, in other countries, people have become anxious about the fear of a new world war, God forbid. Many have tried to escape from one country to another, seeking a place that appears safer, but they did not leave the land of Israel. Only those who seek the pleasures of this world in other places have done so. But no one fled out of fear of war, for fear does not have influence in the land of Israel. It is remarkable that even though there is a lot to be concerned about in Israel, there is much more fear in other places."

And behold, we see another remarkable thing: in the land of Israel, people trust in miracles. We can stand firm even against the multitude of our enemies, even those who have not merited the light of faith and wander in their beliefs. So, where does this trust come from? It is from the blessing of the land that the Lord has blessed.

The Gaon Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe zt"l, wrote, "In the natural course of events, there is no possibility of withstanding the sea of enemies in one's soul, and there is no doubt that all the inhabitants of the land, even if they neglect the commandments, have a deep and strong faith in the God of the land, which will not abandon them at the hands of our many enemies. Without such faith, such a stubborn establishment in the Holy Land would not be possible" (Alai Shur, Chapter 11, page 266).

The Gaon Rabbi Mordechai Gifter zt"l, in the book "Milei D'Agarta," said that the concept of security is a unique attribute found in the Land of Israel. He stated, "We see with our senses that a Jew who distances himself from the source becomes filled with fear of every passing shadow, broken and shattered within. But in the Land of Israel, we see courage and strength even in those who are distant from the source. This is due to the sanctity of the land, a place chosen by God, and the connection to it holds many blessings, even for those who do not understand the secrets of these matters."

Furthermore, the Gaon Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe zt"l, wrote in a letter dated Tishrei 5702 (1941):

"...I asked the Chazon Ish zt"l, today regarding the young people... if it is proper to bring them here as I described. He replied to me that considering the situation, there is no need to worry. The Land of Israel, he said, is called "Mistress," and the rest of the lands are "servants," and it is proper to bring them here."

The Gaon Rabbi Ezekiel Levinstein wrote in a letter (Reish Samekh Vav) in the year 5706 (1946): "...what he writes, that he sees some danger hovering over our holy land G-d forbid, know that the people of Israel do not think so, and they say that this is the house of our life, and why would "the servant" be safer than "the mistress."

He further wrote in a letter (Pei Tet): "...He should come here and we will receive him with joy and he will succeed in his learning, and maybe because of the fear of war he is having these thoughts, In our holy land, they think the opposite due to several reasons that I find difficult to elaborate on at this time."

And in another letter (Reish Zayin) he writes: "Know, my dear ones, that the fear and dread that we see and hear is only for those who are distant from our land. In our holy land, the spirit of tranquility and security prevails, especially for the residents of Jerusalem. If you ask me what the cause is, perhaps it is because the blessing of the Lord in His Torah, 'And you shall dwell securely,' prevails over them now, despite all the curses, God forbid, as there is not a day when His curse is not greater than His blessing. Perhaps it is similar to what they said, Leave it to them to Israel if they are not prophets, they are the sons of prophets. If they do not see there mazel sees.

Rabbi Ezekiel Sarna wrote in a letter (Diyot Yehezkel, Part 2, Letter Lamed Hei) in the year 5707 (1947):

"... And as our sages said in Midrash Shochar Tov on the verse 'And you shall lift up as a wild ox your horn' in fresh olive oil, they commented: 'The children of Israel in the Land of Israel is in great distress, but in their distress, they are as fresh olive oil.' Nevertheless, we see a remarkable thing regarding our situation in our Holy Land. In the diaspora, our brethren are filled with fear and trembling about our condition, and they are

right because aren't we standing on a volcano, and the danger is imminent? All the neighboring nations and even those who appear to be friendly surround us, yet they do not help us, and we have no one to rely on except our Father in heaven.

But specifically here on the volcano, there is no fear, no panic, and life goes on its normal course. We see with our own eyes how the words of our sages are fulfilled, that this is the unique attribute of our Holy Land. Even though they are in great distress, they are as fresh olive oil, deeply rooted like the roots of an olive tree and vibrant with their spirit. They await the salvation of the Lord, which will come in the blink of an eye."

Regarding the Ponevezh Rav, it is told that "First and foremost, he was accustomed to Point and illustrate this tranquility. There is no natural explanation for the peace that envelops the Jewish population in Israel, even in times of siege and danger, it is visible to the naked eye. It is indeed a wonder in our eyes. During times of distress and war, facing the clashing of swords and threats of seven enemy nations and their armies, the Jewish community was not seized by panic and remained remarkably composed to continue their daily lives. What is the meaning of this composure?

The Ponevezh Rav would say, "These are sparks of the Divine promise in Leviticus 26:5, 'And you shall dwell securely in your land.' This is the Jewish faith and trust in divine assistance that arises from deep within, as if the people heard the voice of God, echoing the words He placed in His prophet Isaiah's mouth, who spoke to King Ahaz when he feared the enemies who had come upon Jerusalem, 'Maintain calm, have no fear, and let not your heart be faint from these smoking firebrands' (Isaiah 7:4)." (The Ponevezh, Letters, Part 3, page 185).

From Rabbi Moshe Halevi Soloveichik zt"l, it is related in the book "VeHalsh Moshe" (page 38): "And he said... that the Land of Israel is the safest place in the world. He asked the person [he was speaking to] regarding the many 'incidents' there (this was in the years 1953-1954), and he replied, 'Nevertheless, when looking at the entire picture in its entirety, compared to everything that happens in the whole world, the Land of Israel is the safest place.'"

Rabbi Moshe Levi Soloveichik expressed the perspective that, despite the various challenges and incidents that may occur in the Land of Israel, when considering the overall situation in the world, it remains the safest place.

It is said that during the "Six-Day War" that took place in our Holy Land in the year 1967 (תשכ"ז), when the Arabs were firing shells and mortars on the residents of Jerusalem, the great scholar Rabbi Yechezkel Abramsky zt"l, went out and walked along the streets of the Beit V'Gan neighborhood. He radiated an aura of calm and tranquility.

A Jewish man he met inquired, "Teacher, please tell us, what should we do in the face of this great danger that all of us are facing?" Rabbi Abramsky immediately responded and said, "Lift up your eyes and see the hills and hillsides that surround our city, Jerusalem, Isn't it written by King David in his Psalms (125 :2), 'As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people from this time forth and forevermore.' The interpretation is as follows: Just as you see the living image of 'Jerusalem, surrounded by mountains,' and you don't need any proof, in the very same way, I see a sensory perception that 'the Lord surrounds His people from this time forth and forevermore,' and the believer shall not be anxious."

When Rabbi Yechezkel Abramsky visited the "Or Torah" yeshiva in Tiberias during the winter of the year 1965 (תשכ"ו), one of the students, Rabbi Shimson Margaliot, showed him the Golan Heights from the balcony, which was under Syrian control at that time. The student commented, "Over there, above, the enemy is sitting, and at any moment, they have the ability to shell us, God forbid."

Upon hearing these words, Rabbi Abramsky responded with a smile, saying, "Wow, and how they want to... and how they want to... but He doesn't allow them." By saying "He" without any additional clarification, he was referring to the Almighty, indicating his unwavering faith in divine protection.

When the Yom Kippur War, also known as the "War of Atonement," occurred in Israel, Rabbi Abramsky mentioned the adventures and difficult times he had experienced in his life, including days of turmoil and war. He highlighted the contrast by stating,

"Outside the Land, I sat with the Talmud and learned from under the table, but here, thank God, even in times of war, I sat with the Talmud and learned from above the table."

In the book "Megadlatecha U'Meromamtecha," which discusses the life of Rabbi Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg zt"l, it is mentioned that in the month of Iyar 5727 (תשכ"ז), in the days leading up to the outbreak of the Six-Day War, there was great tension. Jerusalem was under the threat of Jordanian Legion artillery shelling, and as the war approached, the danger from the Arab countries surrounding Israel became increasingly clear, with their intent to destroy the Jewish settlement in the land. Concerned parents in foreign countries were worried, and many of them wanted their children to return to their home countries, and indeed, some students did leave.

Rabbi Scheinberg spoke to the worried parents and assured them that no harm would befall their children. He also gathered the yeshiva students for a special conversation and told them that in Jerusalem, the holy city, they were in the safest place in the world.

One of the members of Rabbi Scheinberg's household expressed fear of the wars with the Arabs and asked if, due to this fear, it was permissible to leave the Land of Israel. Rabbi Scheinberg responded, "I understand that you want to flee. Just tell me, to where? What place is safer than the Land of Israel that you plan to escape to?!"

"One of the visitors to the home of the Chazon Ish came before him and expressed his fear of the conflicts with the Arabs. He asked whether it is permissible to leave the Land of Israel due to this fear. The Chazon Ish replied, 'I understand that you want to flee. Just tell me where to?' What is the place that you consider safer than the Land of Israel to which you intend to escape?" (עלינו לשבח פרשת אמור).

"And regarding Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Biderman, the Admor of Lelov, it is recounted in the book 'Moshe Ish HaElokim' about the time before the Six-Day War when some citizens who had come from abroad asked him whether it was permissible to leave the Land of Israel due to fear of the situation. The Admor responded, 'They should not rush to flee from the land because the safest place in the world is the Land of Israel'".

"And the Rabbi added, 'The Land of Israel is a place of miracles. It is the land about which it is said in the book of Deuteronomy, 'For the eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.'"

"A resident of Bnei Brak consulted with the Admor on what to do, and his relative living in France urged him to send his children away to protect them from the looming danger over the entire settlement. On the moment The Admor advised, "You would do good; if you advise your close relative who seeks your well-being, that he should hurry and send his children to you in the Land. Here, they will be safe, tenfold the place where he is located. I am confident that God will not forsake His people, and great refuge will be found on Mount Zion."

"Another Chassid, who was not counted among the Admor's Chassidim, made up his mind to escape with his family from the land. On one of the Shabbat nights before the war, he entered to the rebbis Shabbos table in the Lelov shul, and sat at the table, and blended in among the Chassidim. Unexpectedly, the Admor asked a question that did not seem related to the matter, 'Flee from the Land of Israel? We do not flee from the Land of Israel. On the contrary, we need to flee to the Land of Israel!'"

In a sermon that the Admor from from Kloisenburg zt"l, delivered at the setting of the cornerstone for Kiryat Zanz in the Land of Israel (from the book 'The Rabbi from Kloisenburg), he said, "It is clear to him that if Hitler, may his name be blotted out, had decreed death only upon the Jews, he would have been killed immediately because his evil only concerns Israel. All the troubles and destruction came upon us because Hitler waged a war against all of humanity together.

Today, the entire world is afraid of 'The Atom Bomb.' Here in the Land of Israel, we fear the surrounding Ishmaelite nations. Outside the Land, there is an equal danger for both Israel and the nations, so it is a real threat. But here in the Land of Israel, where the danger affects only Israel, the danger to these will certainly be annulled, and the situation will not be prolonged. We shall be preserved under the shadow of the Shekhinah (Divine Presence).

Therefore, I say to all those who ask me about my current situation over here, that I will flee to the Land of Israel to save my life and the lives of many other Jews, as it is the only place of protection..."

After the cornerstone-laying event, an American Jewish reporter named Nathan Gordon asked the Rabbi if it was correct that the Rabbi had stated that in these troubled times, the safest place in the world for a Jew is in the Land of Israel. In response, the Rabbi opened the Midrash Rabbah, Parshat Va'etchanan (Deuteronomy), and read with the voice of the sages of blessed memory: 'Rabbi Yochanan said: Any trouble that affects both Israel and idol-worshippers is a trouble, and any trouble that affects only Israel is not a trouble.' Rabbi Yochanan expounded: Like the trouble in Shushan the capital, which only affected Israel, as it says (Esther 4), 'But to the Jews, there was light and joy...'"

In another place he said "It is truly a wonder that the situation is as it is today, that the Land of Israel is the smallest of all lands, surrounded by numerous powerful countries with hundreds of millions of Ishmaelites who hate the children of Israel with a hatred that did not even exist during the time of the destruction of the Holy Temple. Nevertheless, Jews live there in peace and tranquility. Sometimes, when I ask Jews from the Land of Israel if they are afraid to be there, they burst into laughter and say that they place their trust in the Almighty. The confidence of Jews in the Land of Israel is beyond comprehension, and the secret of the matter is that, even though He does not see them, there mazel sees Him. They feel the divine providence from above, and thus, they are confident and assured that no harm will come upon them because the people of Israel, even if they are not prophets, are the children of prophets."

During the years of war in Europe, in every place where people heard that evil was about to enter, panic, fear, and terror gripped them, and they feared what each day would bring. They fled and wandered from place to place, from village to village, seeking to hide from the eyes of the wicked. In contrast, in the Land of Israel, even though it is surrounded by enemies on all sides, one does not see the Jews fleeing from there. Instead, they live in peace and tranquility. Each one realizes that they are under the protection of God, and while they must certainly pray to God at all times and in all places, there, the place itself is more conducive to trust in God.

I had already said that Jews outside the Land need more significant divine mercy than those in the Land of Israel because outside the Land is a place susceptible to misfortune due to the birth pangs of the Messiah. During my first visit to Kiryat Zanz in Netanya, (see "Tiferet Yehonatan" on Parshat Nitzavim, in the section titled "And Hashem, your God, will return your captivity..." (Chumash Drashot Rashi Vayeshev, Tav Shin Mem Aleph).

And Rabbi Leib Mintzberg zt"l, said, "Regarding the Charedim in the diaspora, certainly, anyone with common sense needs to know that on Mount Zion, they will be saved, and this is certain. They might worry about a bad situation here because there are Arabs here, and there they feel safer. However, the Holy One, blessed be He, promised through His prophet, 'On Mount Zion, they will be saved, and it shall be holy' (Obadiah 1:17). Only here is the safe place, and there is nothing to worry about at all. The reality has proven it. Whoever listened to the call of the desire for life and came to the Land of Israel was saved. As per the famous story about Rabbi of Ponevezh and the chofetz chaim, and as was written about the building of the Ponevezh Yeshiva, 'On Mount Zion, they will be saved, and it shall be holy,' 'And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy.'"

I remember how, leading up to the Six-Day War, they prepared ten or twenty thousand graves here. There were terrible fears, but the Holy One, blessed be He, truly granted heavenly assistance. It happened several times already. You can see that the Almighty shows favor. How did Rabbi from Brisk respond about the ingathering of the exiles? "This is a smile from the Holy One, blessed be He." For two thousand years, we did not see a smile, and now we see a smile, and it continues."

And this continues all the time. Rabbi Yaakov Edelstein zt"l said, "Regarding the Haredim in the diaspora, certainly, anyone with common sense needs to know that the Land of Israel is better than all other lands, and the residents of the Land of Israel are more beloved. The Holy One, blessed be He, loves them more than the Jews outside the Land... We have been living in the Land of Israel for seventy years, and if one opens their eyes, one really needs to feel that the Holy One, blessed be He, is so close, walking among us. 'God, your God, goes in the midst of your camp, to save you' (Deuteronomy

23:15). The Lord saves us every day, for many years. Every time, they say, 'The terrorists didn't manage to carry out their plans,' 'A terror attack almost happened.' And all of this is because the Holy One, blessed be He, is close to us and protects the people of the Land of Israel, for even though there are enemies who have so much power and a large number, we live in the Land of Israel to fulfill the verse, 'And you shall dwell securely in your land.' This is a true revelation of such divine presence. As the Rabbi of Ma'alot told me when I visited Ma'alot, which is a city close to the border, more than five hundred missiles were fired from Lebanon over the border onto the city, and they all fell and exploded, and no one was killed. Not a single Jew was killed. In contrast, one missile was accidentally fired, and it fell on a part of the city called 'Tarshiha,' the Arab part of Ma'alot, where many Arabs were killed by that one missile that fell on the settlement. But here, hundreds of missiles fell, some onto houses, and they fell at the exact moment when people had just left their homes. They fell on courtyards, on houses, but without any casualties, nothing. This is just one example of what we saw both from the north and from the south" (Yated Ne'eman, Friday, 6 Kislev, 5775).

Furthermore, Rabbi Yaakov Edelstein zt"l also preached "We are now in a period where, due to the holidays, we don't feel we don't feel for many years. We see that the Holy One, blessed be He, is so close to us and has spread over us 'a sukkah of His peace.' The Holy One, blessed be He, spreads over us a sukkah of His peace. Even though there are so many wicked nations explicitly saying that they want to kill Jews, every time we witness miracles" (Geon Yaakov, issue 48).

Rabbi Yaakov Edelstein zt"l also preached, "We are currently in a period where due to the excessive familiarity, we don't feel that for tens of years, we've been witnessing that the Holy One, blessed be He, is so close to us, spreading over us 'the shelter of Your peace', Despite the many wicked nations who explicitly say they want to kill Jews, every time we see miracles" (Geon Yaakov, Issue 48).

I also saw a wonderful article by Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe, zt"l, (Sefer Ruach Shlomo, Article on Eretz Yisrael, page 159) regarding divine providence over the entire Jewish people in the Land of Israel in this generation. We can learn from it how it relates to our current situation here.

"And it says in the Kuzari that the Land of Israel is called 'before God,' as it is written, 'And Cain went out from the presence of God' (Genesis 4:16)... and similarly, we find with the Prophet Jonah... and he fled from the Land of Israel... and it is written, 'For he is fleeing from the presence of God' (Jonah 1:17)... Is it not a wondrous thing that the essence of the Land of Israel is before God, truly life before God! It is written, 'A land that the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year' (Deuteronomy 11:12). In the Land of Israel, there is a special providence, and it is found in our Sages' words that divine providence over all of creation emanates from the power of the Land of Israel. The clarity of the providence seen in the Land of Israel is not seen anywhere else in the world. We perceive with our senses that the Lord watches over the Land of Israel and its inhabitants."

"We have also seen in recent times, during World War II, that the German army approached the border of Israel. The soldiers stood and waited, not seeing any opposing army approaching them. It was not clear to them why no one came to fight against them, and indeed, they withdrew without entering Israel, a miraculous turn of events. Another incident happened in the sweltering heat, and the German soldiers were thirsty and came to drink water, but the water was extremely salty, and they fell ill from it. A miraculous event occurred, and so they did not enter the borders of Israel.

Throughout the years, we have witnessed miracles and wonders in the divine providence of Israel, as well as recently. The situation is the same. We witnessed that Iraq threatened for an extended period to send missiles and launch attacks on Israel. Later, by divine counsel, they decided to conquer Kuwait, and the entire world stood against them, isolating Iraq. It is evident that God watches over and supervises the settlement of Israel. This is a unique providence here in Israel.

During times of war in Israel, the repentance movement began, and it all started during the Six-Day War. Thousands of soldiers returned from the frontlines, doing teshuvah. No one was there to lead them to repentance, but they witnessed miracles."

"After the Yom Kippur War, a similar phenomenon occurred. Thousands of soldiers who returned from the war did teshuvah. They were young and free, but they became baalei teshuvah during the war because they saw the unique and evident providence in

Israel after the Yom Kippur War. Jewish soldiers traveled to Egypt and witnessed a division of soldiers stationed in the Land of Goshen during the days of Hanukkah. There they saw a massive menorah, investigated the matter, and found that the commander had done teshuvah during the war. As a sign of this, he stood there with a giant menorah. There is a special providence in Israel, it is the 'Land before God,' and there is a unique divine guidance: 'The eyes of the Lord your God are upon it,' and God continuously watches over Israel from 'the beginning of the year until the end,' never abandoning Israel even for a moment.

No yeshiva in the diaspora can compare to the yeshivas in Israel because there is a unique Heavenly assistance here. I once asked the Gaon Rabbi Eliyahu Desler zt"l, how he felt in Israel compared to abroad. He answered that if he needed to understand a Torah subject abroad, it would take him months to comprehend it fully, but in Israel, it only takes a few days.

We study in Israel, even when the security situation is not simple, and even if it becomes more severe, we will strengthen our Torah study further, and we will be confident to merit the settlement of the Land of Israel... The Torah study is the weapon that guards us here, the learning in the yeshivas, and the children studying Torah.

We can be calm about this; with us, there is no panic, and we should not doubt it because we are living here with God. Here, it's not America; we live here 'before God.' And the way of worship is to keep the vessels according to the place. This is our service, and we will only be confident if we study the Torah. It seems that even the soldiers in the army know this, and that's why they are calm, for they know there is a great community of Torah scholars who, during the time of the Six-Day War, studied in the Yeshivat Chevron in shifts day and night, as they learned in the past in the Volozhin Yeshiva. They also learned this way during the time of the Liberation War, studying Torah at night as they did during the day. This is the proper and appropriate response in times of crisis.

During a time of war, God forbid, there should be no panic, and we should not be busy with the army. A clear mind does not see any danger, and even if there is talk of tension and danger in the streets, by us there is no panic and danger, we are not complacent, on the contrary, we even draw strength from our own weapons.

"The Almighty desires Torah in the Land of Israel, and we see the significant waves of Russian Jewish immigration. It is not coincidental; we see that God is building the Land of Israel and bringing tribes from Russia to live here under the Divine Presence's wings. Does He want to destroy it? Definitely not. We also need to strengthen those two hundred thousand Jews who have immigrated from Russia. They haven't heard about Moses or Abraham, peace be upon them; they know nothing. However, the Torah is flourishing in Israel, and we are bringing them back in teshuvah. This is the will of the Almighty, that in Israel, they should study Torah.

Strengthening, more strengthening, and even more strengthening—this is how we have gone through all the difficult times, and this is how all our adversaries have fallen, and the Torah in Israel will continue to thrive."

It is fitting to conclude with the words of Rabbi Yerucham zt"l, regarding the aspect of peace in the Land of Israel, even in times of danger. Besides being a unique spiritual place, it is also the secret essence of the Land of Israel. He wrote in his book 'Da'at Torah' (Parshat Shelach), 'Just as the secret of the Torah is the secret of the Land of Eretz Yisroel, that it only becomes strengthened through suffering, and it only thrives through self-sacrifice, it only exists when we die for it, and when we do not die for it, it is a sin and a deficiency regarding the essence of the Land. This is primarily the secret of the Land, and its true essence and its gift.

When the people of Israel complained about going into the Land and said, 'Why does the Lord bring us into this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and children will become prey', the Torah revealed that their fear came from what 'they despised the pleasant land.' One who desires the land is not afraid to give his life for it, as the essence of the Land is true self-sacrifice, even to die for it. Joshua and Caleb were not afraid; nothing stood in their way. They believed and had complete faith that it was a pleasant land, and how could they be afraid? One sins by disdaining the land, and this is a sin concerning the very essence of the gift of the Land. For this reason, it is assured that 'His hand was raised to them to cast them into the wilderness.' When they do not self-sacrifice, they lose the Land, and this is not a matter of punishment like other punishments for sins.

It is a sin and a deficiency in the very essence of the gift of the Land, and without it girted, how can they hold on to it."

"And among those nations, you shall not find rest"

It is written in our holy Torah, in the portion of the curses heaven forbid, 'And among those nations, you shall not find rest'. And it is written in the Midrash (Parashat Noach), 'She will dwell among the nations but will not find rest.' Rabbi Yudan, the son of Rabbi Nachemiah, in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai, said: If she had found rest, she would not have returned, as it is written (in Genesis 8). And the dove did not find rest, and it is written (in Deuteronomy 28), 'And among those nations, you shall not find rest, nor will there be relaxation for the sole of your foot'.

And in the Midrash Aggadah, it is stated, 'And behold, an olive leaf freshly plucked in its beak,' etc. ... For it was a sign for Israel, just as the dove did not find rest for the sole of her foot, so too, Israel will not have rest in exile, as it is said, 'And there shall be no rest for the sole of your foot,' etc. And just as the dove returned to the ark, so too, Israel will eventually return from exile to their land due to the oppression of the nations, which are likened to water, as it is said, 'Woe to the uproar of many peoples who roar like the roaring of the seas' (Isaiah 17:12)".

And we find that Rabbi Yehonatan Eybeschutz, zt"l (Ahavat Yehonatan, Parshat Ekev), directed his words in accordance with these words of our Sages, may their memory be a blessing, 'For your desolations and your devastations and the land of your ruin'... Or it may be said that in the future, when the time of Davidic redemption arrives, **the nations of the world will issue decrees against the children of Israel, and their hearts will bring them to return and dwell in the land of Israel.** At that time, a time of distress will come upon Jacob, and the Lord will hear their cry and have compassion on them. He will send His anointed one, who will go straightforward, and he will return the captivity of Zion as in the beginning...".

The Rebbe from Ruzhin zt"l, is quoted (in the book 'Megedolei HaChasidut,' page 159) as saying on the last Seder night of his life, 'Behold, a time will come when the nations of the world will be filled with hatred towards the Jews. When they see that they cannot destroy us, they will then drive us out from their lands to our holy land. In truth,

this will be a great disgrace for us that the beginning of our redemption will be in this manner. But however it will be, as long as we escape from their hands at once, and the rest will come to us afterwards automatically, just as it was in the exodus from Egypt when we were expelled from Egypt by force, as it is written, "For they were driven out of Egypt." He concluded his words with, 'Fortunate is the one who merits, in any case, to be expelled to the land of Israel, but not everyone will merit it'.

The Gaon Rabbi Shmuel Tzvi Dushinsky zt"l, the Rabbi of Jerusalem, expounded, 'This can be explained in a moral context. Previously, it did not occur to anyone to come to the Land of Israel, and even more so, wealthy individuals did not entertain the thought even for a moment about any contemplation of coming to the Land of Israel. **It is possible that on account of this, the people are now suffering so much, in order to awaken them to the Land of Israel.** Even those who prayed with tears while reciting 'Jerusalem, your city,' up until now, did not consider ascending to the Land of Israel, because of leaving behind even a single coin, and. This is what was meant by 'Previously, the holy stones spilled out into every street' (Lamentations 4:1). Israel's holy ones need to spill out into every street, and only through this will 'the outcasts of Israel will gather.'" (Writings of rav Dushinsky zt'l, year 1945).

Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler zt"l, wrote in a letter (Kuntres Chiddushei Aggadot, page 511), "In my opinion, the need for every Jew to hurry and make aliyah (move to Israel) is now essential. I have already considered that this is especially challenging for a doctor or lawyer. Nevertheless, isn't it better to make aliyah calmly, before the necessity compels you to go."

And in the responsa "Tzitz Eliezer" (Volume 7, Siman 48, section "Orchot HaMishpatim" Chapter 12), it is stated, "And let those who reside in their own lands know to be vigilant and guard their observance of the commandments. Besides the need to constantly consider the verse, 'And among those nations, you shall find no ease,' and this should disturb their tranquility."

In the Sefer "Otzerot Tzaddikim veGedolei HaDorrot" (Parshat Yitro, page 120): it states "The Rebbe from Kloiznburg zt"l, spoke extensively about the horrifying Holocaust in which six million Jews were annihilated by the Nazi Germans, may their name be

obliterated. The most 'cultured' nation in our generation, the Germans, would not have succeeded in this without the assistance of all the nations in Europe and some in America. Some actively helped in the physical destruction of our people, while others passively cooperated by their silence, which was interpreted by the Germans as consent. This event should serve as a strong lesson for us and for future generations of the Jewish people. There is no place in the world to live and exist among both good and evil nations, except in our Holy Land that the Holy One, Blessed be He, promised to our forefathers to give to us, as stated in 'Torat Kohanim' on the verse in Parshat Bechukotai, 'And you shall dwell securely in your land, 'in your land—you shall live securely, and you shall not live securely outside of it.'

In this context, the Admor of Modzitz, Rabbi Shaul Yedidya Taub zt"l, expounded: 'The relationships with nations in which many placed their faith and who eventually betrayed us is already quite clear that we have no one to rely on except our Father in Heaven, and our only place is our Holy Land.'

"In recent years before the terrible war, when he heard about the laying of a foundation or the construction of a courtyard that was based on the perpetuation of a community of Chassidut in the diaspora, he would express his displeasure about this by saying, 'A tree is planted only in the Land of Israel,' while now here in the diaspora, we are only 'temporary'.

Even before he reached America, he expressed his desire at all times to continue on his way to the Land of Israel. Likewise, he did not want to build a large and spacious central study hall, so that it should not be misunderstood as if he intended to establish a permanent foundation. In his writings, he even signed as 'from the Polish exiles in America'.

Furthermore, when he was asked to contribute to the establishment of the central Chabad house of Lubavitch in America, he unequivocally expressed without any reservation in front of the community and assembly, "A center and a house for Torah and Chassidut, we must place solely in Eretz Yisrael." (All of this is from the book 'Mishkamo Umaaloh' about the Admor of Modzitz, zt"l).

The Rabbi of Erlo zt"l, preached on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, 5700: It says in the torah (Leviticus 26) 'Even this, while they are in the land of their enemies, I will not despise, etc.' Any foreign land is called the land of their enemies, even benevolent kingdoms, and so on, all fall under the category of the land of their enemies, and our hearts should not find rest in any land other than the Land of Israel." (Kuntres Divrei Elokim Chayim, Year 11, Section 1, Page 70")

It is well known what it says in the sefer "Meshech Chochmah," (Deuteronomy 30:3.) "The manner of Divine providence is, that when they find rest for a period of close to a hundred or two hundred years, afterward, a stormy wind will rise, scattering their multitude. Everything they built will be destroyed, and they will be washed away without mercy. They will be dispersed like chaff, running and escaping to a distant place. There, they will unite and become a nation. They will strengthen their teachings and wisdom, until they forget that they were once strangers in a foreign land.

They will think that their new place is their original homeland and they will not anticipate divine spiritual salvation. At the appointed time, a stronger spiritual storm will come, reminding them with a voice and noise, 'You are Jews, who gave you your success , go to the land you do not know...' Soon, they will return to say, 'Our ancestors inherited falsehood,' and the Israelite in general will forget his roots and consider himself a natural citizen. He will abandon the study of his religion to learn foreign languages, He will adopt the corrupt and not the proper. He will think that Berlin is Jerusalem, they will learn act like their corrupted, and not like their righteous "Do not rejoice over the joy of the nations" then a stormy wind will come to uproot him from his deeply rooted place. He will be left to a distant nation that has not learned his language. He will realize that his true language is our holy tongue, and foreign languages will be as a garment they discard, and he is the offspring of Yisrael, and his consolation comes from the comforting words of the Lord's prophets who prophesied about the offspring of yishei in the end of days."¹

¹ In another place the "Meshech Chochmah," writes on the passage (Deuteronomy 30:3,) which states, "Then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you." As follows "He will say that the Israelites who are in captivity, longing for the land of Israel and wishing to escape from the land of their captivity, they will return

And Rabbi Moshe Soloveichik zt"l, is quoted "Once our Rabbi expressed himself in the 'Beis Medrash Agudas Achim,' to a fellow who was about to travel to the Land of Israel, as follows: 'Many times, I think of telling the Jews in Switzerland to pack their bags and move to the Land of Israel because I have a bad feeling about everything that will happen here.'

When that Jew asked him why he didn't say this to the Jews in Switzerland, Rabbi Soloveichik replied with humility: 'First, my feeling doesn't encompass everything, and second, the Jews here are deeply rooted in the European soil, and it's very difficult for them to uproot from it.'" ("In the book 'And the Man Moshe,' page 38).

In the sefer "Chafetz Chayim on the Torah" (Parshat Vayetze, page 69) it states as follows "Likewise, when the nations speak evil of the Jewish people, they plot against us and press us with the aspect of 'And he heard the words of Laban's sons,' since we see their faces are not as they were yesterday or the day before in the manner of 'And Jacob saw the face of Laban.' When those who lead the governments show us angry faces, we are then compelled to seek a refuge, and the safest refuge is to return to the land of our forefathers, to return to the land of your ancestors."

Similarly the esteemed Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin zt"l, writes as follows "According to the order of the verses, it comes out that after Laban and his sons began to speak ill and look at Jacob with an evil eye, God said to him, 'Return to the land of your fathers.' This serves as a sign for the children, that when the Almighty wants them to return to their borders, He puts it in the hearts of the nations to harm and harass Israel in their scattered lands. Fortunate is the Jew who sees the finger of God in this and hears the voice of the Lord calling to him, 'Return to the land of your fathers.'" (Ozneim LaTorah" Genesis 31:3).

first. 'And He will have compassion on you and will gather you from all the nations' - this refers to the Israelites who have found comfort in a foreign land, and their longing for the beautiful land has waned. He will also gather them and bring them back."

"The magnitude of the danger to live in the diaspora"

The entire nation of Israel is an ancient nation, more than three thousand years old, who have multiplied like fish at all times, through the blessings of the Lord upon them. They should have been the greatest nation. Indeed, we find astounding quantities numbers, as many as the sands by the sea, during the time of the Temple. Yet, despite all of this, we have remained a small people among the nations. The reason for this is as it is written in the rebuke (Leviticus 26:38-39), 'You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall consume you. Those who remain among you shall fade away due to their sins in your enemies' lands; and also due to the sins of their fathers they shall pine away with them.' It is self understood that for this reason those in exile should fear for their existence.

And so it was taught in Tractate Makkot (24a): Rav said, 'I am concerned about the following verse: 'And you shall be lost among the nations' (Leviticus 26:38). Rav Pappa raised an objection: Perhaps it is analogous to a lost object that is sought, as it is written (Proverbs 7:15): 'I sought you, my servant,' implying that like a lost object that is sought, so shall you, my servant, be sought. Instead, the second clause of the verse 'And the land of your enemies shall consume you' must be cited. Mar Zutra raised an objection: Perhaps it is analogous to the consumption of cucumbers and gourds, Rabeinu Gershom explains the gemara to mean that your enemies will eat you 'part by part,' meaning that they will not be consumed all at once. But in the conclusion of the gemara Rav was worried because of the second part of the pasuk and he disagreed with Mar Zutra.

The Sifra (Leviticus 26:38) provides different interpretations of the phrase "And you will perish among the nations" ("ואבדתם בגוים") Rabbi Akiva suggests that it refers to the ten lost tribes who were exiled to Media. Other sages argue that it ("ואבדתם בגוים") signifies exile, while the term "true loss" ("אבדן ממש") would apply when the verse states "and the land of your enemies shall consume you" ("ואכלה אתכם בארץ אויבכם").

Rabbi Levi Ben Gershon (Ralbag) zt"l writes (Numbers 23:10) "And as for what He said, 'You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up,'

it refers to the great calamities that befell our people, where many of them perished. From their midst, some of the holy congregations were killed, and Jews were expelled from the land of France. They died from various causes, like those who left Egypt due to famine and pestilence."

In the book "Gan HaSechel" (גן השכלים פ"ו). It states as follows "And know, my brothers, that the Lord will have mercy on us and fulfill His will. The subjugation we endure among the nations and the humiliation brought upon us by the nations, the Creator, may He be blessed, already foretold to our ancestors in ancient times. He proclaimed that there would come upon us troubles, and we would fulfill our destiny. The land will consume us, and the nations will oppress us, as it is written, 'And you shall be lost among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall consume you.'"

In the book "Netzach Yisrael" (נצח ישראל ספ"ט), the Maharal writes, "And corresponding to death is exile, for exile is a cause for death, as it is stated in the tractate Berakhot, they said to Rabbi Yochanan, 'There are old people in Babylonia.' He wondered why, as it is written, "So that your days may be multiplied on the land (of Eretz Yisroel)" for the place gives existence to its inhabitants. Therefore, it is called 'place.' And this matter is explained in Scripture in what it says, 'And the land of your enemies shall consume you,' and there is nothing that causes a decrease in Israel like exile."

In the Siddur of the great Rokeach zt"l in the portion of shema it states as follows," "On the land: This teaches us that all blessings depend on when the people of Israel are on their own land, but in exile, 'and the land of the enemies shall consume you.'"

And behold, apart from what we get consumed in exile by the evil nations through physical death, this also happens on a spiritual form through assimilation in several ways.

The esteemed Rabbi Yitzchak Yehuda Trank zt"l, who served as the leader of our community, and was the son of our teacher and judge of the holy community of Kotna, and was the son-in-law of the author of 'Shem MiShmuel,' wrote in the year 5685 (תרפ"ה) in a letter that efforts should be made to help him ascend to the Land of Israel in the pre-State era.

"The exile's captivity is weighing down my soul every day. The air here is stifling, and my concern for our future generations is even greater. Because there has never been another call, like the call of victory, to instill and assimilate in Poland as in those days, the days of national revival, and it seems that there is no person who can remain steadfast despite all the efforts of education. He tries to instill within his children, that the next generation, following him, may not be subjected to the curse, 'and the land will consume you, the enemies thereof.' This thought troubles my heart, and I find no rest in considering what will become of my descendants.

Regarding the first generation, I believe that the roots will endure, and no winds in the world will uproot them from their place. However, for the second and third generations, to whom my father's mercy and concern extended, what will become of them, and the mountain calls out, 'Escape...'

Did I not say back then to your father, the esteemed and holy Rabbi Shlita, that I desire one position, even if it be one of humility, but that I may save my generations after me from the curse of assimilation in the lands of the nations...

In the confidence that, for the sake of the honor of my forefathers, the souls of the illuminators of the diaspora who gave their bodies and souls for the triple covenant: Hashem, Israel, and His Torah, you will strive for the benefit of their descendants after them. May the tree not be cut off, and the spring not run dry, only for an eternal memory, 'The righteousness of Hashem is upon his descendants and his righteousness upon the children of children...' Yitzchak Yehuda" (Letters to HaRav 28).

Not only due to the influences of the nations of the world, which have greatly affected us through assimilation, but even the very nature of the land aids in this, and it requires significant heavenly assistance to overcome. As the Chasam Sofer expounded in several places.

The Chasam Sofer wrote, 'Does not the heart of man become heated, and passionate that because of our numerous sins we have been sustained from the impure land of the nations for such a long time? We may, Heaven forbid, blunder and lose our way, and all of us may be lost, and our nature and holiness and our blessings may turn

into curses and impurity, God forbid, through the foods and characteristics of the land of the nations. This is what is meant by 'and the land shall consume you, the enemies thereof' (Derashot, page 315).

He further wrote, 'And behold, since it is written 'and the land shall consume you, the enemies thereof,' due to the lengthy exile that the holy people have grown on impure soil, they have transformed from being pure and have adopted the nature of the people of that land. And this is what 'and the land shall consume you, the enemies thereof' means, to the point where one can hardly discern that they originated from a sacred source' (Derashot, page 331)."

He furthermore wrote, 'And I will bring you back to this land,' and it can be explained according to what is written, 'And the land shall consume you, the enemies thereof.' As I have elaborated elsewhere, due to the lengthy time that we have grown on lands of other nations we consumed the fruits of that land, and our nature changed to match the nature of that country. Our nature of the Holy Land was replaced with the nature of the land of the nations, but the Holy One, blessed be He, assured that we would not become defiled, and our nature would not change from the nature of the Holy Land. This is the meaning of 'And I will bring you back to this land,' that is, back to the nature of this land. This is what Jacob, peace be upon him, meant when he said, 'And I shall return in peace to my father's house,' as Rashi explains, in peace without sin. Where did the assurance come from? Only from what is mentioned, as explained above" (Torah Portion Vayetze).

It's worth bringing from Rabbi Samuel Eliyahu, may he live long, data (from several years ago) regarding the phenomenon of assimilation abroad compared to in the Land of Israel, may it be rebuilt and gathered. And he said, 'The phenomenon of assimilation is called a "silent Holocaust." Until 1970, only 17% of Jews in the United States intermarried. By 1980, the number had already jumped to 40%, and today it stands at 58%. Perhaps someone will say, 'I am not Reform, and my children are secure.' Well, 25% of Orthodox Jews have become Conservative. 30% of Conservatives have become Reform. 28% of Reform Jews have become identity-less. The percentage of intermarriage among Jews in the State of Israel is 5% compared to 58% in the diaspora.'

And it is worth concluding with what the Admor of Klossenberg expounded: 'The main troubles came upon the Children of Israel from the time they were exiled from their land as the Scripture says [see Leviticus 26:38], "And you will perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies will consume you." The meaning is that destruction only applies among the nations, and only in the land of your enemies could there be complete destruction, God forbid. In contrast, in the Land of Israel, even when wicked kings rose against them from time to time, as soon as they prayed and returned to the Lord, they immediately merited salvation. This happened several times when they sinned, were punished, repented, and then were saved, as seen in the verses of the prophets. On the other hand, in this bitter exile, we cry out and cry out, and there is no one who pays attention. We have been enduring relentless and cruel troubles for over nineteen hundred years without relief. And we have not seen fulfilled the verse of the Scripture, 'And you shall set a space between the flock and the flock'" [See Zohar Parshat Pekudei, Volume 2, 276a, and in the commentary of the Ramaz]. In contrast, in the Land of Israel, after three years of drought due to the sins of Ahab, the Prophet Elijah came and aroused the people to repentance until they confessed, saying, 'The Lord, He is the God!' Immediately, rain fell on the land. Indeed, outside the Land, there seems to be no end or limit to all our troubles. There is nothing worse than the punishment of "And you will be quickly lost from the good land' When expelled from the Holy Land, all troubles and calamities in the world can come upon us, just as when a father and mother expel their son from their home, he wanders outside among murderers, robbers, and ravenous beasts. In this punishment, all the troubles are included without measure and limit, God forbid. For this reason, whenever there is distress, we weep over the destruction of the Temple because the decree of exile that was decreed then is the cause of all the troubles that come upon us. It is clear to me without any doubt that in the Land of Israel, Hitler, may his name be erased, could not have come and killed six million Jews."

The same we find that after the wicked Nebuchadnezzar came upon the Children of Israel, as long as there was still a gathering of Jews in the Land of Israel, they had the ability to bring salvation. Indeed, a short time afterward, the Children of Israel were able to ascend again and rebuild the Holy Temple. Even during the destruction of the Second Temple, when the wicked Titus burned the Temple, the chain of Rabban Gamliel remained

(Gittin 56a), and Yavneh and its sages were there. The mother of Rabeinu Hakadosh was in friendship with the wife of the emperor; see Tosafot (Avodah Zarah 10a). They did not burn the great righteous leaders of Israel as happened when I was in Auschwitz, where every day dozens of rabbis were burned on the stake. After a few years following the destruction of the Temple, the Torah scholars flourished again in the Land of Israel."

This is in contrast to the countries of Europe, where close to forty years have passed since the destruction, and yet the place remains desolate of Jews as they are fleeing from there. They expelled the Children of Israel from Spain, and after several hundred years, Jews have still not settled there. Similarly in Poland, there were around three and a half million Jews, but in our time, there is hardly a Jewish presence there, neither in Krakow, nor in Warsaw, nor in Lodz. They did not murder the Children of Israel there because they had some power or army, but rather out of strong hatred of wickedness and murder."

"Only those whose eyes are dim cannot see this. It is like eyes that are covered and do not see, for the troubles outside the Land are much more severe than the troubles in the Land of Israel. For as long as they were in the Land of Israel, they could bring salvation by going to pour out their prayers at the holy site, even though it was desolate and in ruins because they were not contaminated by the dead. They knew where it was permissible to ascend to the Temple Mount, and since they cried out and wept to the Lord, they merited salvation. In contrast, during the years of exile, many troubles came upon them because they were no longer in the Land of Israel." (Drashot on Rashi's Commentary on Genesis, Vayeshev, 1951).