

Appeal of 11 Galician rebbes and rabbis to establish the religious settlements in the Land of Israel

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English translation:

With God's help.

Appeal!

Our brethren, fearing God and keeping His Torah!

The time imposes on us, signed below, the holy duty to publish openly the following appeal.

It is almost two thousand years since we were expelled from our land. During all the time of our long exile we did not lose our hope to be redeemed by our righteous Messiah. And in each and every event that took place during this time we opened our eyes and looked for a sign of redemption, in each and every rumor heard in the world we tried to hear good news. All the troubles and the tortures that flooded us like a flow of mighty water could not extinguish the holy spark, the spark of hope in our salvation and the redemption of our souls; nor could it cut the tie that we are bound to Zion and Jerusalem, the places where we bore our eyes to. And as we maintained our hope, suddenly the Zionist idea appeared in the world, the idea that the obligation of all the people of Israel is to fulfill it in the holiest way. But we fear to expedite and to advance taking on our shoulder the holy work of settling in the Land on the principles of the Torah and religion and allow us, our sons and our daughters to take part in this work in the pure way; we retreated back and gave this great and holy commandment only to the Zionists, though they are national Jews, loyal to their people, but they are not concerned with keeping Torah and the commandments according to the tradition. The results of our doing nothing are frightening. In the Diaspora, our youth have left the Orthodox camp and we have no part in the new settlement in the Land of Israel! **And nowadays, the World War wreaks havoc on the land [Galicia] for almost four years. We suffered a lot and we still suffer in this horrible time. The War changed drastically outlooks and opinions in the whole world, and the question of the Land of Israel is now on the agenda. All the great powers and our government too, have recognized the existence of the people of Israel and agreed - in various ways - to the Jewish demand to be unified in the Land of our fathers.** At the same time the Zionist idea left the limits of fantasy and it makes great strides and fills hearts of all Jews at the speed of light. We see Russian and American Jewry and in all the countries of our Diaspora, and among them great rabbis and the righteous of the generation arise and prepare for the historical event and ready to sacrifice everything on the altar of this holy idea. And only we the Orthodox still sit, as in the past and now, in doing nothing, without seeing the necessity of our work. All this tremendous and holy work is done without us, without any of our influence and without our participation, and if even now we would stay outside of the movement, and it would move away from the religion, and a new generation would rise, the ways of the Torah would be alien to it, God forbid, those responsible for it would be anybody but us the Orthodox.

This and even more. The great and holy work of building the House of Israel in its Land requires the exertion of forces of all strata of our people, and if we the Orthodox stay aside in such great and responsible time, it will be an unattonable sin against our Land and our Torah! Our aspiration is that our Land will be the world asylum not only for our persecuted people but also for our Holy Torah. In the Diaspora, our physical existence depends on others, and therefore unfortunately many of our brothers are forced to turn their back on many Torah commandments and

to stray from the traditional Judaism. Only in the Land will we be able to live as we wish according to the Torah and the commandments without any interference from the outside; only there the eternal people of Israel will rise together, with the Torah, from which they draw the forces for their eternal life!

Our Orthodox brethren! We have to follow our greatest leaders, Ezra and his faction, to whom God promised through His prophets that after seventy years of Babylonian exile He would redeem Israel and return the people to their ancestors' Land. In those days, they did real work in order to restore the ruins; to purify the Land; to prepare it for true redemption. Then like now, when the anticipation of the Messiah was so close to being realized, the commandment of settlement in the Land of Israel was so close to us, it would be a pity to miss this opportunity; we have to remove stones from the path on which the footprints of the Messiah are seen; let us go all hand in hand in our way, the way of God and religion, and will not refer to those who weakens our hands.

For His great name and His Holy Torah we took upon ourselves to begin immediately the holy work; and after we have discussed it with due seriousness, we established an association named the Settlement of the Land of Israel.

Our program is the program of Ezra and Nehemiah - the unification of the people in its Land in the spirit of the Torah and the tradition of Judaism! Will the people wake up?

We assure everyone that unification of Israel, the redemption of the Land, and the return of the past glory of the Torah will strengthen feeble hands, will give new heart to all of us, and will awake the entire people for great acts; then all the world will see that there is God among us!

Gather and listen, Sons of Jacob! We ask, but we also warn, do not turn deaf ears to our appeal, do not retreat back, muster up the courage, strengthen yourselves and you will be strengthened; hurry and quickly join us because the holy work cannot spare even a moment of delay.

Our brethren! In our dreams and in our every day hope of the coming of the redeemer and the building of the Temple, we begin today in the name of God to undertake the practical work in favor of the holy idea, to the extent we are able; and may God make our desires successful, and rise our ruins and build our home quickly, in our days, amen.

Haim Meir Yehiel Shapira, the son of Rabbi Ezra Zelig, May his virtue protect us, [Drohobycz](#).

Yitshak Mordechai, the son of Rabbi Avi Ezra Zelig, May his virtue protect us, Gwozdiec.

Yaakov Yosef Tverski, the son of Rabbi Menahem Nahum, May he live good and long life, [Stanislav](#).

Shlomo Haim Friedman, the son of Rabbi Israel, May his virtue protect us, Sadigora.

[Nahum Uriyah Geles](#), the rabbi of the holy community of [Solotvin](#), May God protect it.

Moshe Leiter, the rabbi of the holy community of Zavalov, May God protect it.

Meir Meiersohn, the rabbi of the holy community of Vienna.

Zeev Nusenbaum, the author of the book "Kvod ha-levanon," [moreh tzedek](#) of the holy community of [Drohobycz](#).

Yosef Panzer, the author of "Pri yosef," the rabbi of the holy community of [Drohobycz](#), May God protect it.

Yitshak Tsif, the rabbi of the holy community of [Tlumach](#).

Moshe Kramer, Vienna.

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