

Hebrew Education

We have a long standing tradition, proven through historical experience: the Jewish spirit can exist only within the Jewish scenery and language. Many books of Jewish wisdom that were written in foreign languages in the diaspora by great authors, poets and philosophers – either because they didn't know Hebrew or because they wanted to have an impact on their neighbors - were lost. They had an influence on the following generations only when they were translated into Hebrew. For example: Kuzari by Rabbi Yehuda Halevi, Moreh Nevuchim (The Guide of the Perplexed) by Maimonides, and more. Therefore, this is the rule: anyone who writes can choose the language that is easier for him. But if he wishes that his ideas last, he has no choice but to write in Hebrew.

There are things that unite each and every nation and the first one is speaking in one language. When God confused the language of the people of Babel, they stopped being one nation and were dispersed all over the world, had no communication among them and stopped being creative.

There are three things that unite the Israeli Jewish nation: the Bible, language and territory. Language means the Hebrew language. Many people say: "Why do we need the Hebrew language which is foreign to many? Let Yiddish be our language." But they forget, or do not know, that most of the Jews in Asia, Africa, Spain, don't know this jargon language. When a German Jew meets a Sephardic Jew in Israel they cannot understand each other unless they speak Hebrew.

Many people in this country say that learning the Hebrew language is a waste of time, and that it's possible to educate a generation without Hebrew. It's possible to teach the Bible in English, as it's done here in Sunday Schools. A child can easily learn our history in English, the prayers can be read in a foreign language. All in all, why should the children bother to learn a language that will give them no benefit? And eventually, they will forget it.

True, it's possible to educate a generation without Hebrew; but this generation will not remain Jewish. History has shown us that wherever the Jews abandoned Hebrew they ceased to be Jews and were cut from our nation. For example, the French Jews who thought they could be Jews while praying in a foreign language – history shows that they were wrong.

Our sages told us the Israelites were saved from Egypt, because of three things, and one of them is that they didn't change their language. We can hope that learning the Hebrew language will hasten our deliverance. Let it be!

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