

English Abstract

The Journey of the Jews of North Yemen to Israel under the Leadership of Rabbi David Zadok Halevi

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Rabbi David Zadok Halevi was born in the Hebrew month of Adar in 1884 in the city of Alghagar in the Khidan district of northern Yemen and passed away in Kiryat Ekron, in Israel, during the Hebrew month of Sivan in 1966. In Yemen, he was recognized as the spiritual authority for the Jews of the province of Khidan, and in Israel he was ordained as a rabbi by Chief Rabbi Ben Zion Uziel, serving as Chief Rabbi of Kiryat Ekron. In 1944, three groups organized themselves in an attempt to emigrate to Israel. One group was from the district of Bart, the second from Sa'dah, and the third from Hidan. They numbered approximately 500 people and at their head stood their revered rabbi, rabbi David Zadok Halevi. They specifically selected the year 1944, as it was the year of "ברנה", which the immigrants associated to the verses that related to the return of Israel to their land. The verse in Psalms (126, 6): "shall doubtless come again with rejoicing...", and the verse in Isaiah (51, 11): "... They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads...". The hardships that the members of the group underwent, despite being financially staple, were greater than others. This was evident by the distance they had to cross, as they dwelled in northern Yemen they had to travel through Sana'a, the capital, and through the community of D'mar to Eden at the southern tip of the country. Delays in the way resulted in their economic impoverishment due to of the province of Eden being put on lock-down, which was under British control, and their eventual wait until they could cross through. Consequently, they were forced to extended their stay at Camp

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Geulah, as they awaited immigration to Israel. Five years later, they emigrated to the State of Israel in 1949, during the operation "On the Wings of Eagles". The picture of the migration headed by Rabbi David Zadok Halevi has been examined through a variety of material: manuscripts written by the rabbi, letters he sent to acquaintances in Israel, poems he composed, memoirs written by members of the group, and the impressions of people who spent time with him when he served as a rabbi in Yemen, on his way to Israel, and when he finally settled in Israel.