



כולל רבנים
רבינו צבי אשכנזי

An Initiative of Amsterdam Community Kollel

THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

2 Tishrei

- First Shabbos of Creation.
- Refugee Jews in France deprived of civil rights, 1940.

3 Tishrei

- Gedaliya, governor of Judea, was assassinated and the remnant of the Jewish population in Eretz Yisrael was exiled.
- Yahrzeit of the Magen Avraham, 1682.

4 Tishrei

- First Jewish congregation established in Stockholm, Sweden, 1775.
- Blood-libel in Galatz, Rumania, 1867.
- Yahrzeit of the Chayei Adam, 1820.

5 Tishrei

- Birthday of Naftali ben Yaakov.
- Rabbi Akiva imprisoned by the Romans.

6 Tishrei

- Jewish community of Berlin was organized, 1671.

7 Tishrei

- It was decreed that the Dor Hamidbar would die in the desert and not enter Eretz Yisroel. Some observe as a fast day.

8 Tishrei

- The Chanukas Hamizbeach for the First Beis Hamikdash began, 825 BCE.

AFTER THE HIGH

RABBI YISROEL MEIR INGLIS



The Parsha begins with the words, ותשמע הארץ אמרי פי, "Listen, O heavens, and I will speak, and let the earth too hear the utterances of my mouth."

Rashi explains the opening verse to mean that Moshe appeals to the heavens and earth to bear witness to the acceptance of the Torah by the Jewish people. Rav Pinchos Roberts zt"l suggests that these words can be understood in a new light.

This parsha is read around the period of the Yamim Noraim, during which we have stood in shul for many hours pouring our hearts out to the Almighty in tefillah. We have improved our ways to the best of our ability and committed to acting better in the future. The question is: how long will this improvement last? Will this spiritual high stay with us as the memory of the Yamim Noraim fades away? Or as the winter progresses and the inspiration of the Yamim Noraim no longer reverberates in our minds, will we slip back to our old ways? Was the inspiration but a flash in the pan? In the famous words of Dovid HaMelech, מי יעלה בהר ה', who can climb the mountain of Hashem, and having done so, ומי יקום במקום קדשו, who will be able to maintain this new height of holiness?

With this in mind, the opening of the parsha, which follows the Yamim Noraim, assumes a new and important meaning. Moshe Rabbeinu wanted to make the Jewish people aware of the risk of sudden spiritual improvement that is not sustained. Therefore, he prefaced his message accordingly. האזינו השמים, whilst it is important to find inspiration and commit to improvement whilst you are still in a heavenly state and spiritually elevated, that alone is insufficient. ותשמע הארץ אמרי פי, one must be sure to maintain that inspiration, even as he returns to normal earthly activities. Even after the stimulus of the Yamim Noraim begins to wear off, our improved standards must be maintained.