



כולל רבנים
רבינו צבי אשכנזי

An Initiative of Amsterdam Community Kollel

THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

12 Av

- The famous disputation between the Ramban and Pablo Christiani began, 1263.
- Russian army liberated the city of Kovno, 1944.

13 Av

- Jews of Wurzburg were massacred, 1298.
- Yahrzeit of Sir Moses Montifiore, 1885.

14 Av

- Arabs took control of Eretz Yisrael from the Byzantines, 636.
- Pope Nicholas III requires compulsory attendance of Jews at conversion sermons, 1278.

T"U B'AV

- Jews of Great Poland were authorized to elect a Chief Rabbi, 1541.
- Baron Lionel de Rothschild became the first Jew in the British Parliament, 1858, after a new version of the oath of office was agreed upon, without reference to Christianity.

16 Av

- The British government ordered the removal of all illegal immigrants from E. Yisrael to Cyprus, 1946.

17Av

- Arabs attacked Jews throughout Eretz Yisrael, among whom were students of the Yeshiva in Hebron, 1929.

18 Av

- The Ner Maaravi was extinguished during the reign of King Achaz. The date was observed as a fast day.

IT IS LIFE!

In Parshas Eikev, Moshe continues to encourage and warn Bnei Yisrael as they prepare to enter Eretz Yisrael. The Netziv says that Parshas Vaeschanan deals with the *mitzvos* that apply in Eretz Yisrael, while Parshas Eikev deals with the *mitzvos* that apply everywhere.

The *parsha* begins with **והיה עקב תשמעון את המשפטים האלה... אשר נשבע לאבותיך** "And it will be because of your listening to these ordinances, and your observing and performing them; then Hashem, your God, will safeguard for you the covenant and the kindness that He swore to your forefathers."

The Netziv explains this *passuk* by saying that the blessing of the Jewish economy was dependent upon *korbanos*. The animals, which people would bring as *korbanos*, would bring blessing to the nation's animals, and the wine and the produce brought as *korbanos* would bring blessing to their wine and produce.

However, during times of war, the Jewish People were limited in their ability to bring *korbanos*. He explains that although the People at large would be engaged in war, there would be certain people designated to remain behind to sit and learn Torah. During such times, the People would receive these blessings in the merit of the Torah that was learned.

The Netziv explains that **עקב תשמעון את המשפטים** refers to delving into Torah. He is telling us that, like the *korbanos*, learning Torah also brings us blessing. This is a *segulah* that we also find regarding *Tefillah*, which today replaces the *Korbanos*.

Torah is the key to all blessing. The Netziv writes elsewhere that we continue to rely on this blessing in our time as well. *Korbanos* used to be accompanied by *Tefillah*. Today, *Tefillah* replaces the *korbanos* and it needs to be accompanied by Torah. When a person learns Torah regularly, we see how it impacts his life and his personality. We see how it enters into his being and transforms him. In the famous words of Rav Boruch Ber Leibowitz, Torah is not just a *segulah* for life - it is life itself!

When we learn Torah, we enhance our lives. Furthermore, we become more alive, because Torah is life: **כי הם חיינו וארך ימינו ובהם נהגה יומם בלילה**

(Based on 'A Moshol for the week...' by Rav Sinowitz Parshas Eikev 5782 Vol.26 No.44)