



TORAH 4 TEENS BY TEENS

NCSY ISRAEL



SHABBAT SHUVA - PARSHAT HA'AZINU



Gavriel Novick

Development Director, NCSY Israel

Hovering From Above

Before making Aliyah my parents threw me a goodbye party where my father quoted a Rashi from this week's parsha. The pasuk describes Hashem's relationship with the Jewish nation "as an eagle awakens its nest, hovering over its fledglings, it spreads its wings, taking them and carrying them." Rashi explains that the eagle "does not impose its whole body upon them. Rather, it hovers above them, touching them and yet not quite touching them."

Similarly, one opinion is that the Sukkah is supposed to represent the *ananei hakavod* which Hashem provided for Bnei Yisrael while they traveled through the desert. Clouds which hovered over the Jewish people and protected them, without being overbearing or pressuring. Hashem teaches us that this is the perfect way to inspire religious and personal growth.

As we educate our youth we try to strike that same balance. We try to inspire and motivate, to protect and influence, but ultimately to hover above and allow children, teens and young adults to make their own decisions.

Now starting my 5th year at NCSY Israel I honestly feel this is something which drives our youth movement. Our teens know that we are always there for them. Our programs are built to inspire and help them grow. Our staff guide and support them through their high school years and beyond. But we are always hovering, providing and acknowledging the teens' own independence. This is the crucial recipe that Hashem teaches us will affect real change and growth.



Daniella Goldfarb

11th grade, Jerusalem

Personal Responsibility in The Parsha

Parshat Ha'azinu is teaching us something very important about Tshuva and taking responsibility for our actions. The Parsha starts off with God telling the Jewish people to listen to what He is about to say through Moshe. Moshe starts by praising God. He then goes on to say that the new generation of Jewish people are ungrateful and unworthy of God. God gave the people everything they needed and more, but they started worshiping other gods. God punished them with famine, plague, and deadly pests and beasts. When

Moshe is done telling this to the people, he tells them to take these words seriously. If they think this is just a story, they are mistaken. It applies to every one of their lives.

As the עשרת ימי התשובה (the ten days of repentance) comes to a close, I want you to think about what Moshe said. Although you may not be living in famine or plague, maybe you're unhappy with something, or your friends seem to be drifting away. Instead of putting the blame on others, ask yourself what you are doing to cause these things. Maybe you haven't been on top of your schoolwork and are unhappy with yourself, or you said something rude by accident to a friend to cause them to move away from you. You need to recognize what you did wrong and fix your mistakes. This way you will be able to live a happy life like the one that God gave the Jewish people at the start of the Parsha. ■

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