



# ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY

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SHABBAT SHUVA - PARSHAT HA'AZINU

## PARSHAT HA'AZINU

Ha'azinu is the second to last parsha in the Torah. It is one chapter of 52 verses, making it one of the shortest in the Torah.

All but 8 verses consist of the song of Ha'azinu. The song is written in the Torah in the form of a poem with 2 parallel columns. The Torah itself calls it Hashira Hazot, this song; 5 times in last week's parsha and one time again this week.

The poem of Ha'azinu was the song the Leviim sang in the Beit Hamikdash during the Mussaf offering on Shabbat. We know the Leviim sang a psalm from Tehillim as the Shir Shel Yom – the daily song, sung accompanying the morning daily offering. They also sang a song during Mussaf of Shabbat and that song is Ha'azinu.

But they did not sing the entire song each week. Ha'azinu was divided into 6 sections – exactly the way we divide the aliyot. One section was read per week, the entire song in 6 weeks. Perhaps it was spread out over 6 weeks to express its theme, Jewish history. Jewish history spans millenium, hence it is sung over 6 weeks in the Temple.



### 1ST ALIYA (DEVARIM 32:1-6)

Listen heavens, listen earth.  
G-d is Just, Faithful. I will call in the name of Hashem, ascribe greatness to our G-d.

The song is a rhythmic poem of couplets,

or at least begins that way. These 6 verses are the introduction. What we are saying in this song is cosmic – give ear, heavens and earth. He is Great and Just. We, his children, are twisted.



### 2ND ALIYA (32:7-12)

Remember those days. While nations were arranged, you, Jewish people became His lot. He found you, the apple of His eye. Spread His wings over you. He Himself cares for us.

These 6 verses introduce the dawn of Jewish history. These are tender, wistful remembrances. This capsule of Jewish history and how G-d relates to us must begin with tenderness. This aliya is a smile, a description of those carefree days of faithfulness.



### 3RD ALIYA (32:13-18)

He placed you in the heart of the Land, fed you honey, olive oil, butter, with livestock aplenty and wine. Yeshurun got fat and kicked. Left Him and sought others – demons, new powers and forgot Him.

The song is written in the Torah in 2 parallel columns. All the verses in the song are couplets; either one line of one couplet or 2 lines of 2 couplets. One couplet is in one column, the second in the second column. Hence every verse ends at the end of the column. Except this verse. The verse of Yeshurun getting fat, verse 14. It has 5 phrases. Too many. It ends not at the end of the column but now in the middle of the

column.

Things start to go awry. The verses no longer end symmetrically, at the end of the second column. Now they begin to end in the first column, in the middle of the line, off balance. The song is off kilter now. The plenty in the Land turned us fat. And rebellious. It is beautiful poetry – the fat of the Land is a verse of 5 phrases (the only verse not of 2 or 4 phrases), too many phrases, too much consumption, too much good.

Leave Him. Forget Him. Look to demons and other powers. This is not your forefather's beliefs.



#### 4TH ALIYA (32:19-28)

I will hide my Face from them and see what happens then. They angered Me. I will send aggressors to anger them. My anger burns. I will take it out on the Land. I will scatter them, with no trace of their memory. They won't even understand that I am behind this, for they lack all insight.

This is no longer a 6 verse aliya like the first 3, but 9. The verses no longer end symmetrically, at the end of the second column. Now they end in the first column – off balance. As if to say, the world is not working the way it ought to, off kilter; things have gone awry. The song switches now from Moshe's voice to G-d's voice. Moshe no longer describes Him – G-d speaks now in the first person. Moshe can't describe this for once G-d hides his Face, no man can understand His ways; G-d needs to describe the hiding of His Face Himself.

The Ramban comments that this is actually a prediction of the exile of the 10 tribes, the Kingdom of Israel. Their

memory is gone. A full 10 tribes of the Jewish people have been lost forever. With no happy ending. While the history of the Jewish people will have many tragedies, the loss of 10 tribes of our people, with no trace is a tragedy of, well, Biblical proportions.



#### 5TH ALIYA (32:29-39)

Oh, would the people understand the consequences. One could not pursue 1000 nor 2 pursue 10000 were it not for our G-d. The oppressors drink the bitter vintages of Sodom and Gemorrah. G-d will eventually relent of this abandonment of His people, while the nations have none to their rescue. I am the one who gives life and takes it; none escapes My hand.

The song turns back to Moshe's voice. The plain meaning of some of the verses in this aliya is apparent, others quite obscure. The last verse, with the return of G-d's voice, also returns to ending in the second column. Structure has returned, order is back. This aliya is striking in referring both to the Jewish people and to the others, what we have been referring to as oppressors. While we have been disappointed, we have an end of reconciliation. But when

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from this issue of Torah Tidbits  
be לזכר and in loving memory of**

**ISAAC COHEN ז"ל  
יצחק בן דוד ז"ל**

**beloved husband, father,  
grandfather and father-in-law  
on his 10th yearzeit - כ"ב תשרי**

***Cohen, Eliaz and Aharoni families***

it comes to the other nations and their evil and rebelliousness, Moshe cedes the floor back to G-d. It is not for us to speak of the justice due others. That is His work not ours.



#### 6TH ALIYA (32:40-43)

Arrows of blood, a flesh consuming sword, the payment of the enemy. Sing nations of His people, for in the end there is retribution and the Land atones for His people.

3 verses are in the first person with G-d speaking of ultimate justice, vengeance against My enemies, those that hate Me. This aliya is not for the faint of heart. We squirm at the notion of a vengeful G-d. As we squirm at “Shfoch chamatcha”, pour out Your wrath on the nations, the verses we say when we open the door at the seder. But Moshe insisted that we recite this song, seeming to feel this song will guide us in history. Divine justice, reward and yes, punishment is part of the order of the world. We repeat it at the seder when we look to the culmination of history and we repeat it in *Akdamos* that we say on Shavuot in looking to the future. We don’t delight in His meting out justice. Though

we acknowledge that justice, Divine justice is to be part of the end of days. But the song does not end with the retribution. It ends with all peoples singing – a universal end of days.



#### 7TH ALIYA (32:44-52)

Moshe brings this song, together with Yehoshua to the people. He instructs them to take it to heart and to command it to their children. It is not empty words but rather it is your life. Then Moshe is told to ascend Har Navo where he is to die.

The verse states that Hashem spoke to Moshe of his impending death “b’etzem hayom hazeh”, on that very day. The simple meaning is that on the very day that this song was complete, Moshe’s life too had served its time and was too to be completed. But Rashi quotes the Midrash that prefers to translate this as meaning “in broad daylight”. Moshe’s ascension to the mountain and his death is to be public, in full view. As if to avoid the objections of the people. As much as the people would want to prevent this – Moshe’s death is inevitable. As devastating as the loss of Moshe’s leadership is, it is a part of life. The covenant is with our people, transcending any one leader.

May the Torah Learned from this TT  
be in loving memory of

**Morris (Zaidie) Galitzer ז"ל**

לע"נ ר' משה ב"ר חיים ז"ל

י"א תשרי

**Walter Lilie ז"ל**

לע"נ ר' יצחק ב"ר צבי ז"ל

כ"ב תשרי

*Shimon & Chana Galitzer and family*

**HAFTORAH: HOSHEA 14:2-10,  
YOEL 2:11-27, MICHA 7:18-20**

The Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is known as *Shabbat Shuva* or “Shabbat of Return (Repentance).” The name is a reference to the opening words of the week’s *haftorah*, “*Shuva Israel* — Return O Israel.”

The prophet Hoshea exhorts the Jewish people to “Return, O Israel, to the L-rd your G-d,” encouraging them to repent sincerely and ask for Hashem’s forgiveness. Hosea urges the Jews to put their trust in G-d, not in Assyria, powerful horses or idols. At that point, Hashem promises to remove His anger from Israel, “I will be like dew to Israel, they shall blossom like a rose.” The prophet then goes on to foretell the return of the exiles and the cessation of idol-worship amongst the people.

The *haftarah* concludes with a brief portion from the Book of Micha, which describes Hashem’s kindness in forgiving the sins of His people. “He does not maintain His anger forever, for He is a lover of kindness. He will have mercy on us, He will grasp our iniquities and cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.” ■

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YOM KIPPUR

## YOM KIPPUR

The Torah reading for Yom Kippur is the description in Chapter 16 of Vayikra of the entire service in the Mikdash for Yom Kippur. The Kohen Gadol himself read this exact Torah reading in the Mikdash on Yom Kippur. We are reading what he read.



### 1ST ALIYA (VAYIKRA 16:1-6)

One may enter the Holy of Holies with the following elaborate procedure. For I, G-d, appear there in a cloud. Aharon is to bring a bull for a sin offering, along with a ram. The Jewish people bring 2 goats for sin offerings and a ram. Aharon wears 4 unique white garments for this service.

The goal or purpose of the elaborate ceremony of Yom Kippur is stated clearly; For I, God will appear in a cloud. G-d appearing in a cloud is a recurring theme in the Torah, the most dramatic of which is at Mt. Sinai. The pinnacle moment of Yom Kippur is just you and Me, in My most private place, the Holy of Holies. You, Aharon, as the representative of My people. And Me, in the cloud. The image is dramatic – G-d promising to join us on earth, albeit in private, in His most private place. But here on earth. Yom Kippur is the most intimate moment of Divine-human contact in the year. Atonement is achieved through the Divine descending, as it were, in a cloud in the Holy of Holies. Atonement is achieved through the

intimate, close encounter of G-d with man.



### 2ND ALIYA (16:7-11)

Take the 2 goats of the people. Through lots, identify one as an offering and the other to send to the desert for atonement. Aharon offers the offering for himself and his household.

In this moment of intimate contact of the Divine and us, we achieve atonement through pageantry. The pageantry of the 2 goats is rich; identical in appearance, their roles achieved through lots, their fate radically different. One will be an offering to G-d. The other will be sent to the barren desert.



### 3RD ALIYA (16:12-17)

Aharon is to take a pan of coals and of incense into the Holy of Holies, with the smoke of the incense enveloping the covering of the Aron. Aharon takes the blood of his sin offering and sprinkles it 7 times in the Holy of Holies and 7 times in front of the curtain, outside of the Holy of Holies. He repeats this with the blood of the people's sin offering, the goat.

This moment of entry into the Holy of Holies happens only once a year. The Torah does not say that the smoke from the incense fills the Holy of Holies. It says it covers the Aron. The incense smoke covering the Aron is reminiscent of Mt. Sinai, where the thick cloud covered the mountain when G-d spoke. The Aron holds the 10 commandments, the concrete representation of the experience of Mt. Sinai. It

is like a re-enactment of that moment. Not the content of the Torah, its mitzvot. But the descent of the Divine into this world. That is the essence of Sinai. And it is the essence of this moment; the Divine is joining us on this earth. This is the pinnacle moment; the Shechina joining us here on earth.



#### 4TH ALIYA (16:18-24)

He then takes the blood of his bull and the goat of the people and both places it on the incense altar and sprinkles it 7 times, purifying it. He thus completes the atonement of the holiest places. Aharon then places his hands upon the head of the other goat of the people, confessing all their sins, placing them on the head of the goat. The goat, bearing the sins of the people, is led out to the desert. Aharon now changes from the special white garments to his regular ones and offers the more conventional offerings for himself and the people.

With the smoke still in the Holy of Holies, meaning the Divine Presence on this earth, the atonement can occur; the confession of sins upon the goat that is then led to the desert. Rav Soloveitchik captured the drama as a metaphor. This goat is pushed over a cliff, falling to its death. The fall, the pull of gravity is a metaphor for man who allows himself to be pushed and pulled by his nature, failing to exercise will. Man can choose to assert his will. Or choose to be subject to the whims and forces of his nature, like the goat unable to break his fall. In a word, when man allows himself to be pulled down by his nature, failing to assert his will, gravity pulls him down to his demise. Such is the sinful one, allowing forces to dominate, failing to assert his will.



#### 5TH ALIYA (16:25-30)

The one who led the goat to the desert need be purified upon his return as do the ones who burn the sin offerings of Aharon and the people out of the camp. All of this is to be done every year on Yom Kippur accompanied by fasting. For on this day, He provides you with atonement and purity; you become purified before G-d.

While the drama of this day was punctured by the destruction of the Temple, the atonement persists through the day of Yom Kippur itself. Rabbi Akiva noted: you become purified through the day and its rendezvous with G-d. He is the purifier.



#### 6TH ALIYA (16:31-34)

This procedure atoning for the Holy of Holies, the outer area, the altar, the Kohanim and the people shall be done once a year.

This atonement and purification are humbling, overwhelming, ennobling. For the Holy One reaches for mankind, descends in a cloud as it were to the Holy of Holies, granting atonement. It is His reach for man; His kindness, generosity, and love.

Yom Kippur is a gift, an affirmation of man, a chance to begin anew, a smile from the Holy One, appreciating our desire and passion, even if we err. Yom Kippur is the faith of the Holy One in us, giving us a yearly clean slate. That is a gift.

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### MAFTIR (BAMIDBAR 29:7-11)

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The maftir describes the extra mussaf that is brought in addition to the unique Yom Kippur offerings.. ■





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SUKKOT

## SUKKOT VAYIKRA 22:26-23:44



### 1ST ALIYA (VAYIKRA 22:26-33)

An offering may not be brought in the first 7 days of the animal's life. An animal and her offspring may not be killed on the same day. A thanksgiving offering must be eaten within one day. Do not profane My Holy Name, rather sanctify My Name, the One who brought you out of Egypt to be Your G-d.

The Torah reading for the first day of Sukkot is the whole of Chapter 23 in Vayikra, which lists the entire yearly cycle of holidays. Curiously, we begin 8 verses before that chapter with a paragraph describing various rules concerning offerings. But it is the last line that is the connection to Yom Tov. Sanctify My Name because I brought you out of Egypt to be Your G-d. That is a perfect intro to the holidays. While each holiday has its own meaning, they all share an overarching meaning: connecting with our G-d.



### 2ND ALIYA (23:1-3)

Here are the holy days: Shabbat is a holy day to G-d.

Shabbat differs from the other holidays in that it is not a once-a-year occurrence as the others are. However, it shares the broader theme as a holy day of connecting with G-d.



### 3RD ALIYA (23:4-8)

Pesach is on the 14th of the 1st month. For seven days consume Matza. Day 1 and Day 7 are holy, no work is to be done.

The holidays are all called “mikra’ei kodesh”, holy gatherings. The Ramban understands this to mean that we endow the day with holiness by gathering. In shul. For tefilla and for Hallel. There is a special element of communal gathering on the holidays.



### 4TH ALIYA (23:9-14)

On the day after the Yom Tov, bring a measure of the first harvest of barley as an Omer offering, accompanied by a sacrifice. The new grain may not be consumed until this Omer is offered.

The description of the Omer offering seems out of place; it isn't a holiday. Though each holiday has an offering, the emphasis of this section is not offerings but holidays, chagim. The day the Omer is brought is not a yom tov. But, similar to the holidays, it has a specific calendar date. Hence this section would more accurately be called, not a list of chagim, or holidays, but a list of special national events that occur on a specific day in the calendar; calendric events.



### 5TH ALIYA (23:15-22)

Count 7 full weeks from this offering and on the next day, the 50th bring 2 baked breads of chametz accompanied by sacrifices. The Kohen shall

wave these 2 bikkurim breads. That day is a yom tov, no work is to be done. When harvesting your fields leave the corners and gleanings for the poor and foreigner.

The 2 breads brought on Shavuot are the bookends of the Omer. The Omer was barley, brought the 2nd day of Pesach. The 2 breads on Shavuot are wheat, chometz bread, the first wheat offering of the new crop. The Omer offering on Pesach allowed consumers to now be able to use the newly harvested grains. But in the Temple, the new grain cannot be used until 7 weeks later, with the offerings of the 2 breads on Shavuot.

The contrast of the matzah that we eat on Pesach and the chametz of this bread offering on Shavuot invites our curiosity. Why matza and why chametz? Perhaps, it expresses 2 qualities but that need to be in their proper time. Pesach is the holiday of history. In history you need to move, move fast. Don't let the dough rise. Seize the moment; don't miss it. Speed. But on Shavuot, in the context of holy offerings, patience is king. Wait. 7 weeks. Patience. Let the dough rise, become chometz. Wait. While history demands speed, holiness inheres in restraint.



#### 6TH ALIYA (23:23-32)

The first day of the 7th month is a day of Teruah, a yom tov. But the 10th day of the month is Yom Hakipurim. Afflict yourself for it is a day of atonements. It is a holy day; no work may be done. Afflict yourself from the 9th in the evening, evening to evening.

Rav Soloveitchik pointed out that in spite of the fasting on Yom Kippur, there is still a mitzvah of simcha. How can one

feel simcha when the Torah itself says we are to afflict ourselves? True simcha is a deep feeling of joy, not fleeting moments of pleasure. Simcha is the profound sense of meaning, of standing before G-d. Our greatest joy is the knowledge that G-d reaches for us and infuses our life with ultimate meaning. And that is the atonement of Yom Kippur.



#### 7TH ALIYA (23:33-44)

The 15th of the 7th month is Sukkot for 7 days. The first day is a yom tov as is the 8th day. Take a lulav and etrog and rejoice for 7 days before G-d. Dwell in Sukkot for 7 days so you will know that G-d had your ancestors dwell in Sukkot when leaving Egypt.

Sukkot rounds out the year of chagim. It is the end. As such, it is a celebration not only of itself but a celebration of the completion of the chagim of the year. The satisfaction of completing the cycle of chagim is expressed through the Lulav. This notion that Sukkot is the end of the cycle of chagim is further expressed through linking the cycle of Torah reading with the conclusion of Sukkot. End of the chagim; end of the Torah readings. ■

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SHMINI ATZERET/SIMCHAT TORAH

## SHMINI ATZERET / SIMCHAT TORAH

We read the parsha of V'zot Habracha, a short parsha of 41 verses. And the beginning of Breishit which itself is 34 verses.

Moshe blesses the tribes of the Jewish people, pointing out the qualities that a variegated society will need. Leadership, consistency, legislature, judges, business, agriculture, warriors, minerals. In this Moshe speaks mostly to G-d, not to the people, illustrating to Him the greatness of the people he is to take leave of.



### 1ST ALIYA (DVARIM 33:1-7)

Moshe blesses the people before his death. G-d approached us at Sinai, although He has all nations; we were the ones who received His utterances. He is the King over Israel. Reuven endures as does his progeny. Yehuda, G-d hears his voice, he is powerful, and be his help.

Moshe does not bless the tribes in a way that we think of blessing. A blessing would be: may you have success or may you have peace. Rather, Moshe describes the unique quality of each of the tribes. Perhaps the blessing is: be as you are, continue as you are.

Reuven is the consistent one. Enduring. Always at the ready. Yehuda is power and leadership, the eventual monarch.



### 2ND ALIYA (33:8-12)

Levi, He is Your pious one, withstanding trials by listening

to Your covenant. They will teach Your Torah and serve You. Bless him and gird him in the face of adversaries. Binyamin, the beloved of G-d, He protects him, while he dwells on His chest.

The Jewish people need religious leaders and that is Levi. Binyamin is the seat of the Mikdash, the physical partner to Levi's religious service.



### 3RD ALIYA (33:13-17)

Yosef, his land is blessed, from the sweet of the land, mountains and hills. He has power through both Ephraim and Menashe.

Yosef is agricultural bounty, strength in economy and strength in numbers.



### 4TH ALIYA (33:18-21)

Zevulun is pleasing in his journeys, Yissachar in his dwellings. People gather at the mountain, enjoying the bounty of the sea and of the earth. Gad is blessed, dwelling as a lion. His portion is legislation, leadership, righteousness and justice.

Zevulun is the merchant marine, Yissachar the philosopher prince. Gad is the backbone of national institutions, of justice and the rule of law.



### 5TH ALIYA (33:21-29)

Dan is a lion cub, enjoying the Bashan. Naftali, satisfied, full of blessing, the sea and the south. Asher, blessed more than children, beloved by brothers, feet of oil, shoes of iron and copper. None is like G-d, riding the heavens in your aid, splendidous.

Dan protects the northern border, while Naftali the west and the south. Asher is the peacemaker, with “soft oiled feet but shoes of iron”, a metaphor for stepping softly but with principles when needed. The peacemaker.



#### CHATAN TORAH (34:1-12)

G-d of ages surveys, under Him strength, repelling enemies. The Jewish people dwell safely, wheat and wine, oil like dew. Fortunate are you Israel to have such a Protector. Moshe ascended Har Navo, looking out over the Land. G-d told him, this is the Land I promised to you, though you will not enter it. Moshe died, buried, though his burial spot is not known. His strength was with him to the end. The people mourned 30 days. Yehoshua was filled with Divine spirit, though none will ever be as Moshe, knowing G-d, face to face, performing all the

wonders which he did in front of all Israel.

Moshe's life comes to an end. Perhaps a tinge of tragedy, failing to enter the Land he worked toward his whole life. But, in mentioning Yehoshua, and in following his poetic description of the spectrum of talent the Jewish people display, he leaves the world satisfied. His goal was not to enter the Land; his goal was to successfully lead his people to enter the Land. He leaves the world satisfied that all that is needed for success is right there in front of them. His life's mission was accomplished.



#### CHATAN BREISHIT (1:1-2:3)

So as to continue the lifelong learning of our Torah, following the conclusion of the Torah we jump right in and continue with the beginning of the Torah, reading the story of Creation from day 1 through Shabbat. ■



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