

19 SEPTEMBER 2026 | 8 TISHREI 5787

VOLUME 40 | #2

DAF HASHAVUA

האזינו | HA'AZINU

SHABBAT ENDS:

London: 7.53pm
 Birmingham: 8.01pm
 Bournemouth: 8.02pm
 Cardiff: 8.08pm
 Dublin: 8.19pm
 Edinburgh: 8.12pm
 Glasgow: 8.16pm
 Hull: 8:01pm
 Leeds: 8.01pm
 Liverpool: 8:09pm
 Manchester: 8.04pm
 Nottingham: 8.02pm
 Sheffield: 8.04pm
 Southend: 7.49pm
 Southport: 8.11pm
 Jerusalem: 7:17pm

Shabbat Shuva

**Yom Kippur begins
on Sunday night**



*"May my teaching drop like the rain,
may my speech flow like the dew"
(Devarim 32:2)*

הַאֲזִינוּ HA'AZINU

10th Sidra in:

דְּבָרִים DEVARIM

By Numbers:

52 VERSES

614 WORDS

2,326 LETTERS

Headlines:

**THE 'SONG OF
HISTORY'**

HA'AZINU:

Artscroll p.1100

Hertz p.896

Koren Sacks p.1379

Soncino p.1159

HAFTARAH (SHABBAT SHUVA):

Artscroll p.1204

Hertz p.891

Koren Sacks p.1621

Soncino p.1155

SIDRA SUMMARY

DEVARIM 32:1-52

The first six *aliyot* are the Song of Ha'azinu, which starts with Moshe calling on heaven and earth to witness the warning that the nation will rebel after entering the Land of Israel, forsaking devotion to God for the pursuit of material possessions. This will lead to terrible consequences. Ha'azinu would then be read to the people, to remind them of the cause of their woes. The Song ends with God's promise to avenge those nations who would attack the Jews. In the seventh *aliyah*, God tells Moshe to view the Land from the mountains of Moab and reminds him that he will not enter the Land because he hit the rock (see *Bemidbar* 20:12-13).



HAFTARAH (HOSHEA 14:2-10, YOEL 2:11-27, MICHA 7:18-20)

This is a special haftarah, read on Shabbat Shuva, between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It is made up of three parts, from the Biblical prophets Hoshea, Yoel and Micha. The first part calls on Israel to return to God; even after sinning, their return will be lovingly accepted. The second part emphasises that our *Teshuva* (return/repentance) has to be sincere and heartfelt, not superficial. The last section states that God is unique in His readiness to pardon.



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United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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Editor-in-Chief: Rabbi Baruch Davis

Editorial and Production Team:

Rabbi Daniel Sturgess
Rebbetzen Nechama Davis
Shevi Grunewald
Jennifer Dorling

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This Daf can be recycled



RETURNING TO OUR TRUE SELVES

BY: **RABBI AKIVA ROSENBLATT**

Hampstead United Synagogue

There are a few *Shabbatot* throughout the year named after that particular week's *Haftarah*. This week, *Shabbat Shuvah*, is one of them, taking its name from the *Haftarah*'s opening words: "*Shuvah Yisrael ad Hashem Elokecha*" - "Return, O Israel, to Hashem your God." Read each year on the Shabbat before Yom Kippur, this *Haftarah* from the prophet Hoshea is a stirring call to the Jewish people to return to God. Indeed, the word *Teshuvah* (often mistranslated as repentance) is derived from this very word, *shuvah*, meaning 'return'.

Hoshea addressed the Jewish people as a nation and urged them to turn back to God, yet his timeless message speaks just as powerfully today to each of us as individuals, calling us to do the same. And this word 'return' which Hoshea uses in the context of rebuilding our relationship with God is profound, because it implies that we have been there before. We cannot *return* to a place we've never been.

At our core, we are spiritual

beings. Our true essence, the soul, is described in Kabbalistic writings as being '*chelek Eloka mima'al*' - 'a part of God Himself'. Knowing where it has come from, the soul knows its purpose and constantly yearns to reconnect with its source. There are times in our lives when we feel distant from God and perhaps even moments when we feel completely disconnected. But deep down the soul knows that it has been there before, and all it seeks is to return.

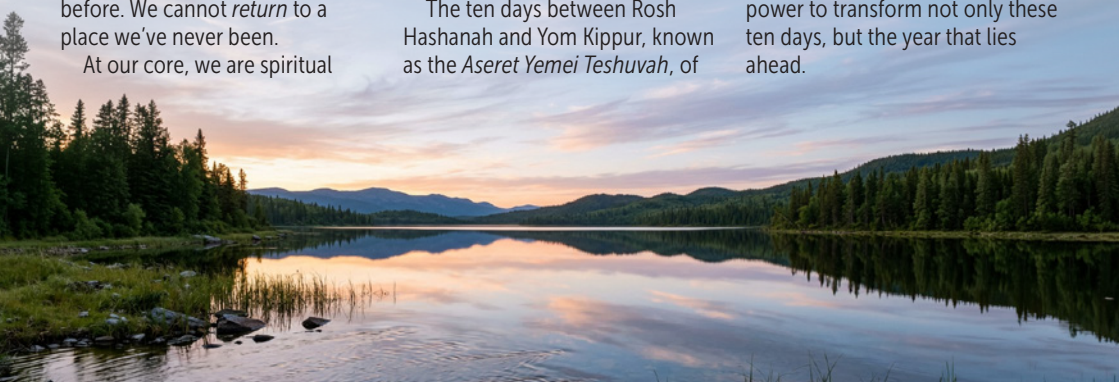
However, as physical beings in a physical world, it is often challenging to identify with our spiritual selves. In the second verse of the *Haftarah*, Hoshea adds: *kechu imachem devarim veshuva el Hashem* 'take words with you and return to God'. Our Sages teach us that these 'words' are the words of prayer and Torah study. When we pray with our hearts and when we study Torah to seek wisdom, we are able to find our truest self.

The ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, known as the *Aseret Yemei Teshuvah*, of

“ In a world filled with noise and distraction, these precious days allow us to quiet the external voices and hear the voice of the soul once again.

which *Shabbat Shuvah* is one, are a unique opportunity to draw close to God. In a world filled with noise and distraction, these precious days allow us to quiet the external voices and hear the voice of the soul once again. To lose sight of our spiritual identity is to lose sight of who we truly are and the extraordinary potential that lies within us.

The process of change is the process of returning to our true selves, and in doing so, we naturally return to God. This is the enduring message of *Shabbat Shuvah*, and one that has the power to transform not only these ten days, but the year that lies ahead.





EZRA-NECHEMIA: A RETURN TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL AND TO TORAH OBSERVANCE

BY: NA'AMAH ROSELAAR, ALEI TZION SYNAGOGUE

For the past year, I have been privileged to learn the book of Ezra-Nechemiah as part of the United Synagogue's Women's Beit Midrash programme. Taught by Rebbetzin Lauren Levin of South Hampstead Synagogue, we are a group of up to twenty women, ranging in age from early twenties to late sixties. We represent a wide range of synagogue affiliations, occupations, learning backgrounds and life experiences, creating a diverse learning environment.

Each week we begin with an hour of *chavruta* learning, where study partners explore the text using guided questions Rebbetzin Lauren has set for us. This is followed by a one-hour *shiur*, during which Rebbetzin Lauren brings the text to life. Key themes are highlighted, as well as their relevance to modern times. I present an overview of these which I hope will encourage you to study this challenging and fascinating book, which has enormous relevance to our contemporary situation.

The book Ezra-Nechemia chronicles *shivat Zion*, the

return of a group of Jews from Babylonian exile to re-settle Jerusalem and its surrounding area.

Upon their return to the Promised Land, Ezra and then Nechemia discover that there have been generations of intermarriage. This sparks a halachic problem: how to determine Jewish status and lineage, and therefore suitability for performing the service in the soon-to-be-rebuilt *Beit Hamikdash*, the Second Temple.

The dedication of the Second Temple brings *simcha gedolah me'od* - true and great happiness. This happiness is tempered by the tears of the older members of the group's memories of the First Temple, as they recall the much greater glory of King Solomon's Temple. The First Temple was much more elaborate and elegant than the second, but the critical difference between the two was that the *Shechinah*, God's Divine Presence, was present in the First and absent from the Second.

Ezra enacts decrees leading to a religious revival, with public Torah readings (with translation) instituted on Shabbat as well as Mondays and Thursdays (market days), thus ensuring that the Torah was heard frequently.

The Jewish people do *teshuvah* (repent) and return to God. They then witness a Covenant document signed by the teachers and leaders of the generation. This Covenant

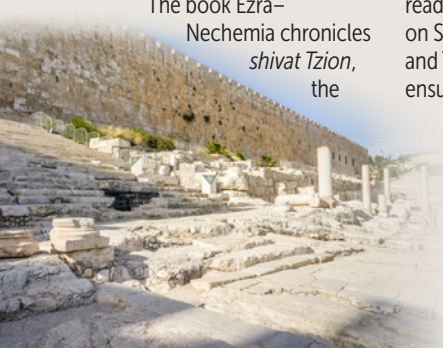
“ The wall does more than keep enemies out; it signifies a religious community within which *Shabbat* is kept, markets regulated, and courts function.

document seeks to ensure the permanence of the nation's return to Torah and their observance of the mitzvot.

There is also a national return to keeping the mitzvot of the Land: *Shemittah's* seventh-year rest, agricultural tithes for Levites, Priests and the needy, *challah* from dough, and *Bikurim*, the first fruits brought to the Temple.

Nechemiah spearheads a project to complete the wall around Jerusalem. The wall does more than keep enemies out; it signifies a religious community within which *Shabbat* is kept, markets regulated and courts function.

We noted the relevance of many of the themes in Ezra-Nechemia to today, including the return to Israel of some of the Jews but not all, the issue of intermarriage, the importance of the wall in providing security, and a *teshuvah* movement. It has been a pleasure learning with this group of women under the tutelage of Rebbetzin Lauren, and we look forward to continued learning.



ISRAEL IN THE PARASHA

This series is an adaptation of short ideas written by former Chief Rabbi Lord Jakobovits z"l in the 1960s, which were later reprinted in a compilation of his writings, 'Mishnat HaSar'.

HA'AZINU: THE ATONING POWER OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL

The Land of Israel remained at the forefront of Moshe's mind until his death. Just as the last instructions he received before his death conclude with a reminder of the decree that he would not enter the Promised Land (*Devarim* 32:49–52), so too his final song ends with a tribute to the Land: "and He will atone for His Land and His people" (v.43).

The Sages saw in this verse an allusion to the Land's unique power to bring atonement for

both the living and the dead. Rabbi Meir taught: "Whoever lives in the Land of Israel, recites the *Shema* morning and evening, and speaks the Holy Tongue is assured a share in the World to Come" (*Sifri*).

The Hebrew word for "Land" (*adamah*) in this verse is the same word used in connection with the Altar: "An Altar of earth (*adamah*) shall you make for Me" (*Shemot* 20:21). Drawing on this connection, the Sages taught that

"whoever is buried in the Land of Israel is considered as if buried beneath the Altar" (*Ketubot* 111a). The *Torah Temima* explains that just as the Altar brought atonement, so too the very earth of the Holy Land possesses the power to atone. This verse lies behind the custom of placing soil from the Land of Israel in a grave, even when burial takes place elsewhere (*Yerushalmi Kilayim* 9:3).

PHRASE OF THE WEEK

BY: **RABBI ALEX CHAPPER** | Borehamwood & Elstree United Synagogue

Each week, working our way through the alphabet, we explore a Jewish word or phrase, bringing clarity and deeper understanding to its meaning.

K
L
M

Does **LIFNIM MISHURAT HADIN** mean:

1. Beyond the letter of the law? | 2. Divine Justice? | 3. Day of Repentance?

Lifnim mishurat hadin literally means "beyond the letter of the law" and refers to a standard that is not strictly required but is desirable. It reflects the behaviour or mindset of a person who is not satisfied with just doing the minimum, but is instead striving to reach a higher level in the performance of mitzvot and ethical behaviour.

The basis of this concept is a verse in *Devarim* (6:18) which says, "You shall do what is right and good in God's eyes." Our

Sages derive from here that although *halacha* (Jewish law) may rule one way in a particular situation, and technically that is sufficient, a person should ideally choose to go beyond the letter of the law and do more than what is strictly required.

For example, the Talmud discusses the mitzvah of returning a lost article. *Halacha* defines when this is required and when the finder is not obligated to return the item and can instead keep it. However, going

lifnim mishurat hadin would be to return it even when, strictly speaking, the law would allow the finder to keep it.

This principle is also described as an attribute of piety, and this willingness to go the extra mile in Torah observance is a display of love for God and Judaism.



THE KOL NIDRE APPEAL: STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY, TOGETHER

BY: **ANNABEL RIES**

Kol Nidre Appeal Manager

Each year, our Kol Nidre Appeal is shaped by the quiet intensity of the Days of Awe and the solemn opening of Kol Nidre – a time that calls on us not only to reflect but to respond.

This Shabbat, known as *Shabbat Shuvah*, the ‘Sabbath of Return’, offers us a thoughtful pause between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It encourages us to take stock of the year that’s just passed and consider how we can move forward with greater intention.

In our tradition, reflection is inseparable from action. Alongside *tefillah* (prayer) and *teshuvah* (personal change), **tzedakah** (giving charity) is one of the clearest ways we turn intention into something meaningful – supporting others, repairing what has been strained, and reinforcing the ties that strengthen our

community, together.

On *Kol Nidre*, as the familiar tunes fill our synagogues, we will stand together, side by side, united in purpose. Our strength lies not in isolation, but in the way we care for one another. It is here that the call to collective responsibility feels most immediate.

The United Synagogue’s Kol Nidre Appeal sits firmly within this moment. It translates the themes of these special holy days into practical support. Through the Appeal, your donations provide vital assistance to those facing hardship, and strengthen the networks and communities that sustain Jewish life.

Giving *tzedakah* at this special time is not simply an act of charity; it is an expression of who we are as a community. It reflects a shared commitment to care for

one another, lift each other up and ensure no one is left behind. By donating, we do more than meet immediate need – we help to build a stronger, more connected future for us all.

This year that message feels particularly resonant. After all we have faced, there is a clear desire to come together with renewed purpose: to deepen our connections, support one another and move forward with confidence. The Kol Nidre Appeal offers each of us a way to play our part.

As we enter Yom Kippur, we do so not only through prayer, but through action. By generously supporting the Appeal, we affirm something simple yet profound: that together we can strengthen our community and ensure it remains compassionate, thriving and united for the year ahead.

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY, TOGETHER

KOL NIDRE APPEAL 2026/5787



THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT HA'AZINU

18-19 SEPTEMBER | 8 TISHREI

LET YOUR SOUL SING



BY: **SOPHIA GOLDMAN**

Tribe gap year student

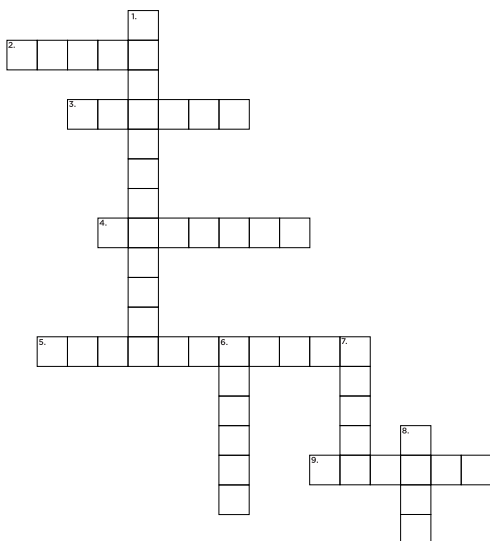
Parashat Ha'azinu is a long song recited by Moshe as we approached the land of Israel. It expresses our relationship to God and our future as a people, marking the end of his leadership of the Jewish people and the beginning of a new chapter in Jewish history. It is the last of three songs we find in the Torah – the other two mark miraculous events. First we have *Shirat Ha'yam* (Song of the Sea), sung by the Jewish people after

we emerged safely from the split sea, with our Egyptian pursuers vanquished. The second is *Shirat Ha'Be'er* (Song of the Well), a short song expressing gratitude to God after finding water in the desert.

Songs are a powerful tool; they take poetic words and a magical tune and combine them to create an emotional experience. In Judaism, we mark our special occasions with songs – at a wedding, a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, making kiddush or even simply in shul on Shabbat! As Rabbi Sacks writes, "words are the language of the mind, but music is the language of the soul." With that in mind, let's go back into the *parasha*.

Ha'azinu is more than just a moral lesson about our relationship with God. Moshe is teaching us, and every generation, about our covenant with God and the difficult future we will face when we betray this covenant, with a message of consolation at the end. This blunt overview of Jewish destiny is conveyed with emotion through song. The Talmud (*Megilla* 32a) explains that song endures - it turns words into more than just ideas; it becomes a fundamental part of our lives, with memory, meaning and passion. This is a powerful way to interpret *Ha'azinu's* song of covenant - and really all of Torah – something to be sung, felt and experienced.

Parasha Crossword (Leave out all apostrophes)



Down:

1. The 2nd song in the Torah, celebrating finding water in the desert
6. The 1st witness to Moshe's words
7. Person who sang this final song
8. Rabbi Sacks said 'Music is the language of the ____'

Across:

2. The 2nd witness to Moshe's words
3. The land the Jewish people were about to enter
4. The *Parasha* that is written as a long song by Moshe
5. The 1st song in the Torah, sung after crossing the sea
9. Ha'azinu was written as a song to help it stay in people's ____

THE TRIBE SCRIBE

You are the New Leader: Be Strong and Have Courage

HAVE YOU HEARD THE TRAGIC NEWS? MOSHE (MOSES) HAS PASSED AWAY.

THAT'S TERRIBLE!

THAT'S SUCH A DIFFICULT ROLE TO FOLLOW. TO TAKE OVER FROM THE GREATEST PROPHET AMONGST THE JEWISH PEOPLE. HE ALSO HAS TO LEAD US INTO THE LAND OF ISRAEL. WHAT A RESPONSIBILITY!

YEHOSHUA (JOSHUA) HAS BEEN APPOINTED OUR NEW LEADER.

So...

WE NEED TO TELL THE PEOPLE TO GET PACKING BECAUSE IN 3 DAYS, WE WILL BE CROSSING THE JORDAN RIVER INTO THE LAND OF ISRAEL!

SOON WE WILL BE CROSSING THE RIVER JORDAN. WE WILL TAKE POSSESSION OF THE LAND WHICH GOD HAS GIVEN US AS AN INHERITANCE, ALL THE WAY BACK TO OUR FOREFATHER AVRAHAM (ABRAHAM).

I'M SO EXCITED! AT LAST, AFTER 40 YEARS, WE ARE GOING TO BE GOING TO THE LAND WHICH GOD PROMISED OUR FOREFATHER AVRAHAM HE WOULD GIVE TO US AND ALL OUR CHILDREN AFTER US.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE STORIES ABBA (DAD) TOLD US ABOUT THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH IN CHEVRON (HEBRON) WHERE OUR ANCESTORS ARE BURIED?

BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS, FOR IT IS YOU WHO WILL CAUSE THIS PEOPLE TO INHERIT THE LAND THAT I HAVE PROMISED THEIR FATHERS TO GIVE THEM...

WE HAVE TO WAIT 3 DAYS? WOW, I'M GOING TO BE COUNTING DOWN THE DAYS!

YES. AND DON'T FORGET MOUNT MORIAH - THE TEMPLE MOUNT - WHERE YAACOV (JACOB) HAD HIS FAMOUS DREAM, YEARS AGO.

But **God** told the new leader, **Yehoshua**, "Be strong and have courage. Follow My commandments and do what is good in My eyes! Then all will be good in the **Land of Israel**."