



October 2 – 8, 2022 ז' - י"ג תשרי תשפ"ג



קָה בַּפָּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- ◆ Ha'azinu is a שִׁירָה (shira, song or poem) with features like parallelism and metaphor.
- ◆ **Parallelism** means saying the same idea twice, with different words:
- ◆ But God will also punish the enemies of Benei Yisrael and ultimately save Benei Yisrael.
- ◆ The Torah is the lifeforce of Bnei Yisrael.

הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֲדַבְרָה

Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak

וְהִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ אִמְרֵי־פִי

Let the earth hear the words of my mouth

- ◆ **Metaphors** often describe things that are difficult to understand, using images or demonstrations that are more familiar. For example, God is compared to a נֶשֶׁר (nesher, eagle) caring for its young.
- ◆ The shira tells a story. God finds Benei Yisrael in wild lands and cares for all their needs with kindness and affection.
- ◆ But Benei Yisrael forget about God, and they worship idols.
- ◆ God punishes Benei Yisrael with many bad things: famine, plague, beasts, and war.





מִדְרָשׁ • Midrash



Midrashim are ideas or stories that explain the Torah. They often come from listening very carefully to what the Torah says and how it says it. Here, we will look for what clues this midrash sees in the Torah's words, and try to understand its messages.

One great way to learn about your family's history, stories, and traditions is to ask questions to your parents and grandparents. Have you ever tried this? What have you learned? Or, what do you imagine you could learn?

In Ha'azinu, Benei Yisrael are told to consult their ancestors:

Devarim 32:7

Ask your father, he will inform you,
Your elders, they will tell you.

דברים לב:ז

שָׁאַל אָבִיךָ וַיַּגִּדְךָ
זְקֵנֶיךָ וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָךְ:

Here's an interpretation of this pasuk that appears in the Gemara, as part of a conversation about Hanukkah!

Talmud Bavli Shabbat 23a

What berakhah (blessing) should you say for Hanukkah candles? You say: "Who sanctified us with the mitzvot, and commanded us to light Hanukkah candles."

But where did God command this?! (We know Hanukkah is a holiday established by the Rabbis, way after the time of the Torah!)

R. Avya said: It's part of "do not turn aside (from what the leaders say)" (Devarim 17:11).

R. Nehemiah said: It's part of "Ask your father, he will inform you; Your elders, they will tell you" (Devarim 32:7).

תלמוד בבלי מסכת שבת דף כג עמוד א

מאי מברך? — מברך:
"אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו
להדליק נר של חנוכה."
והיכן צונו?

רב אוןא אמר: מ"לא תסור"
(דברים יז).

רב נחמיה אמר: "שאל
אביך ויגדך זקניך ויאמרו
לך" (דברים לב:ז).



Both R. Avya and R. Nehemiah quote pesukim that tell us to listen to our leaders. But the pasuk from our parashah, which R. Nehemiah quotes, might be saying a little more than that. Perhaps our pasuk means that there's something extra powerful about asking questions and staying connected to the teachers that came before us. By doing that, we are able to apply our tradition to our own time. Then listening to our elders can actually link us all the way back to the Torah, and is really an extension of listening to God directly.

This idea is sometimes called שְׁלִשְׁלֵת הַמְסוֹרָה (shalshelet ha-mesorah, the chain of Torah transmission).

- ◆ Why is a chain a good description of what's going on here?
- ◆ How do you make sure you're part of this chain? What force or power could this chain give us today?



פְּרָשְׁנוֹת • Commentary

If you wanted to compare God to an animal, what animal would you pick? Why?

See what Ha'azinu chooses:

Devarim 32:11

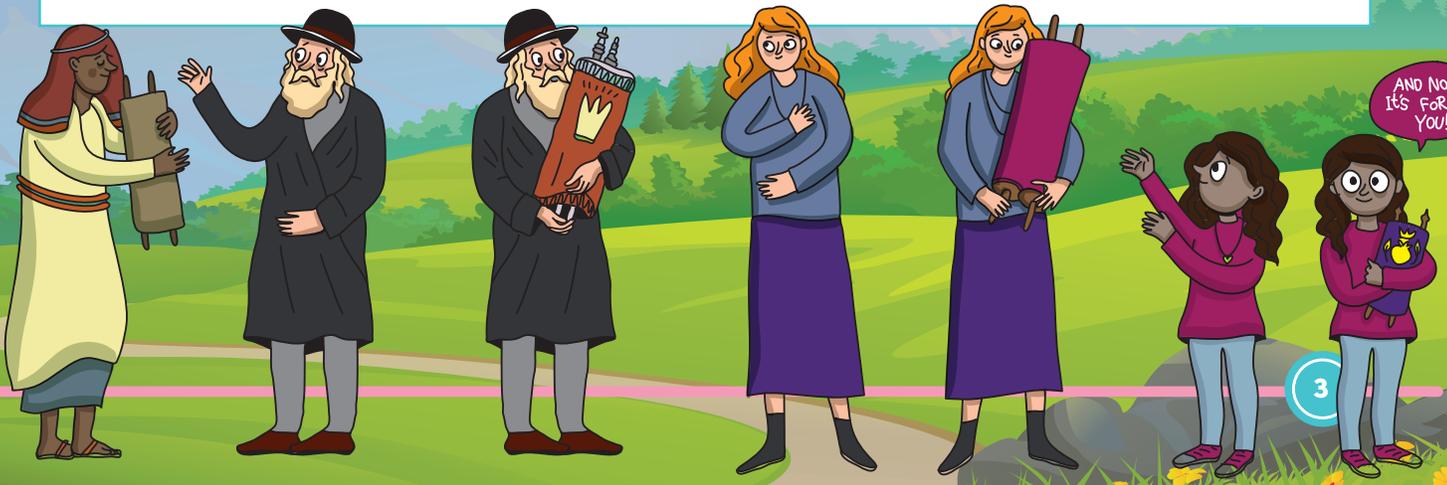
Like an eagle waking its babies,
Hovering above its young—

God spread God's wings and took them,
Carrying them on God's wings.

דברים לב:יא

בְּנֶשֶׁר יַעִיר קֶנֶן
עַל גּוֹזְלָיו יִרְחֹף

יִפְרֹשׂ בְּנִפְיֹו יִקְחֵהוּ
יִשְׂאֵהוּ עַל אַבְרָתּוֹ:



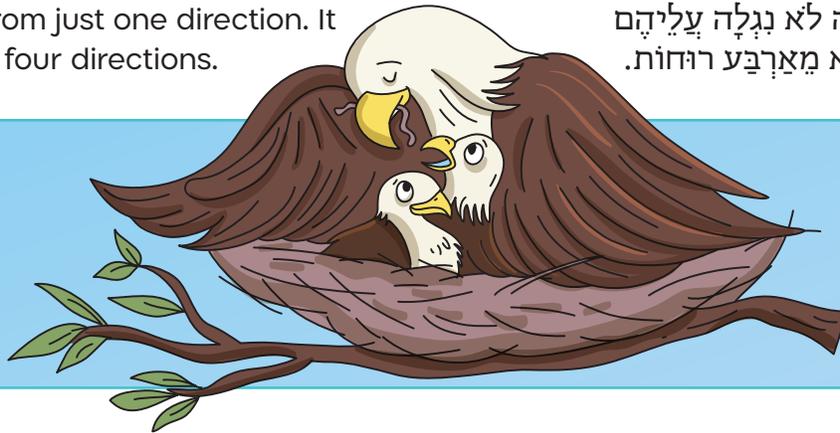
How is God like this eagle?

Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)

An eagle has compassion on its children and doesn't enter the nest suddenly. It flaps around first so its children can wake up and prepare themselves for its entry...

An eagle does not press heavily on its babies. It hovers above them, touching them and not touching them. So too...

When God gave the Torah, the revelation didn't come from just one direction. It came from all four directions.



רש"י

בְּנֵשֶׁר הַזֶּה רַחֲמָנִי עַל בְּנָיו וְאִינוּ נִכְנָס לְקִנּוֹ פְתָאוֹם עַד שֶׁהוּא מְקַשְׁקֵשׁ וּמְטַרֵף עַל בְּנָיו בְּכַנְפָּיו בֵּין אֵילָן לְאֵילָן בֵּין שׁוֹכֵה לְחִבְרָתָהּ בְּדֵי שְׂיֵעוּרוֹ בְּנָיו וַיְהִי אֵינּוּ כֹחַ לְקַבְּלוֹ...

אִינוּ מְכַבֵּיד עֲצָמוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם, אֶלָּא מְחוּפָּה, כְּנוֹגֵעַ וְלֹא נוֹגֵעַ. אֵף הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא...

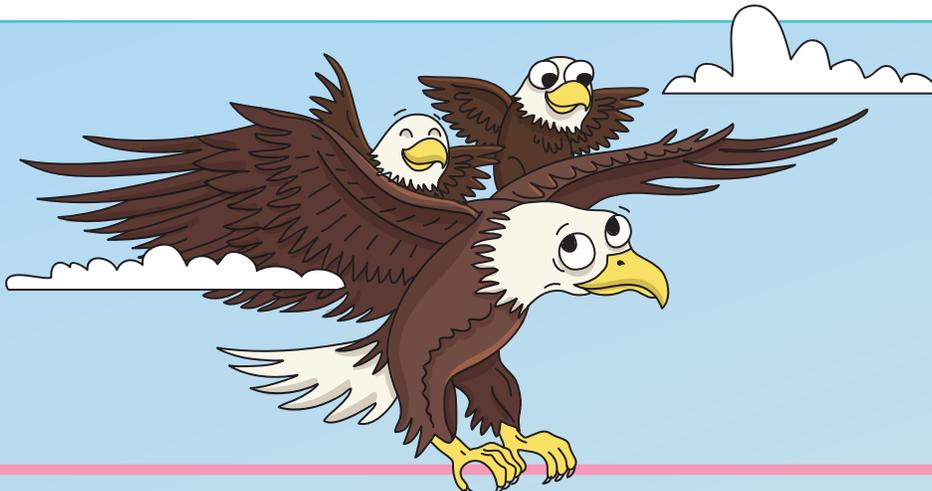
בְּשָׂבָא לְתַן תּוֹרָה לֹא נִגְלָה עֲלֵיהֶם מֵרֵיחַ אַחַת, אֶלָּא מֵאַרְבַּע רֵיחוֹת.

Ha'amek Davar (Eastern Europe, 150 years ago)

The eagle spreads its wings and carries its babies close to its body. This is because eagles fly really high in the sky, and are concerned that their baby birds might fall when they are so far from the earth. The eagle parent carries its young in order to teach them how to fly in the sky.

העמק דבר (נצי"ב)

פּוֹרֵשׁ בְּנִפְיֹ הַרְחָבִים וּמַעֲלָם עַל אֲבָרְתוֹ הַסְמוּךְ לְגוֹפוֹ, מְשׁוּם שֶׁמַּעוֹפֵף לְמַעְלָה מִן הָאָרֶץ הַרְבֵּה וְחוֹשֵׁשׁ שֶׁמֵּא יִפְלוּ בְּעוֹפְפוֹ עִמָּם לְמַעְלָה מִן הָאָרֶץ הַרְבֵּה, וְהוּא עוֹשֶׂה בֶן בְּדֵי לְהַעֲמִידָם עַל צוּרְתָם לְעוֹף בְּשָׁמַיִם.





- ◆ When can human parents be like eagle parents, in each of the ways that Rashi and Ha'amek Davar describe?
- ◆ How about you? Are you able to approach others gently, to avoid overwhelming them (Rashi)? Can you act as a supportive and careful teacher (Ha'amek Davar)?
- ◆ When you think about God, does one of these qualities seem more important, or more what you're used to? Why?

Send us your thoughts or questions from learning the parashah. We'll write back to you, and some will get published in future issues of Devash!
Write to us at devash@hadar.org



הלכה • Halakhah

The idea of saying בְּרָכוֹת (berakhot, blessings) over mitzvot comes from the Rabbis, but there is one mitzvah that the Torah tells us needs a berakhah before it, and that's the mitzvah of learning Torah!

According to the Gemara (Berakhot 21a), the source for saying a berakhah before learning Torah is this pasuk in our parashah (Devarim 32:3):

בִּי שֵׁם ה' אֶקְרָא הִבּו גְדֹל לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ

Before I call out God's Name (by learning Torah),
give glory to God (by saying a berakhah)

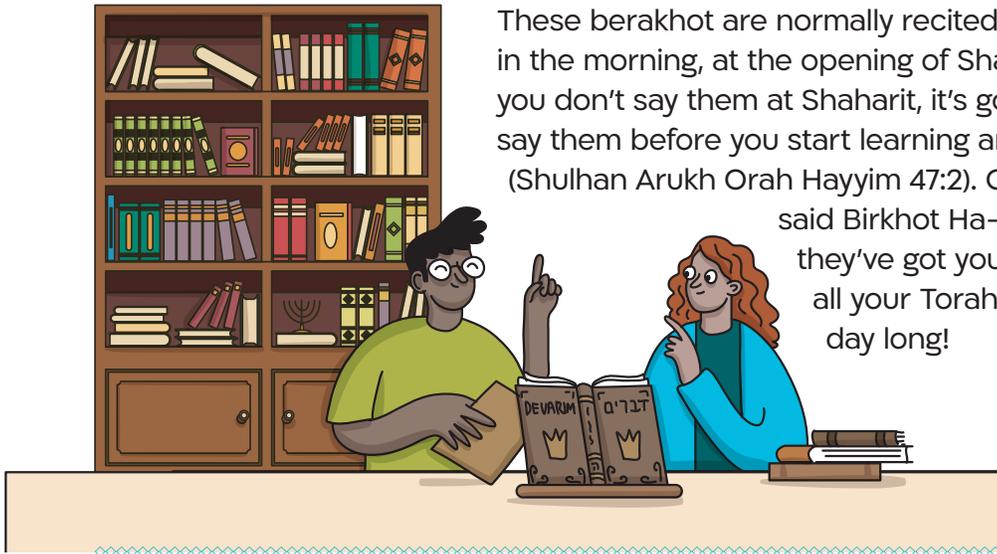
There are actually three berakhot that together form בְּרָכוֹת הַתּוֹרָה (Birkhot Ha-Torah):

1. First is a berakhah for the mitzvah of Torah study. There are slightly different versions. Ashkenazim say לְעֶסֶק בְּדַבְרֵי תּוֹרָה (la'asok bedivrei Torah) and Sefardim say עַל דְּבַרֵי תּוֹרָה (al divrei Torah).
2. Then we say a prayer asking for our Torah study to be pleasant and sweet, which ends with a berakhah praising God for teaching us Torah: הִמְלִמֵּד תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל (hemelamed Torah le'amo Yisrael).
3. The final berakhah thanks God for choosing to give the Torah to the Jewish people: נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה (notein ha-Torah).



When to say Birkhot Ha-Torah?

These berakhot are normally recited first thing in the morning, at the opening of Shaharit. If you don't say them at Shaharit, it's good to say them before you start learning any Torah (Shulhan Arukh Orah Hayyim 47:2). Once you've said Birkhot Ha-Torah once, they've got you covered for all your Torah learning all day long!



רגע של עברית • A Moment of Hebrew

Devarim 32:2

Let my instruction flow like rainfall, let my statements **drip** like dew; like showers on young growth, and like raindrops on grass.

דברים לב:ב

יַעֲרֹף בַּמָּטָר לְקַחֵי תִזְלַל בְּטַל
אִמְרָתִי כְּשִׁעִירִים עַלֵי דָשָׁא
וּכְרִבִיבִים עַלֵי עֵשֶׂב:

לְנֹזֵל (שֹׁרֵשׁ נ.ז.ל.)
◆ To drip or leak (linzol)



Find the Word!

שִׁירַת הַיָּם (Shirat Ha-Yam) is the song Benei Yisrael sing after God's miraculous splitting of Yam Suf. One line of Shirat Ha-Yam describes how the waters, which were liquid, became solid. Can you find the word from this שֹׁרֵשׁ (shoresh, root), that means liquid? (Hint: Look at Shemot 15:8.)



שאלות השבוע • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. **The answers to the last three are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah.**

aliyot:

- 1) Devarim 32:1 to 32:6
- 2) 32:7 to 32:12
- 3) 32:13 to 32:18
- 4) 32:19 to 32:28
- 5) 32:29 to 32:39
- 6) 32:40 to 32:43
- 7) 32:44 to 32:52

Good luck!

1 How many words are used in this aliyah for water that gathers on the ground? What are they?

2 What bird is God compared to?

3 What two edible items are said to have come out of rocks?

4 How many times does the root ט.ע.ב (referring to anger) appear in this aliyah?



5 What two wicked cities are mentioned in our parashah?

6 What object mentioned in our parashah is said to eat flesh?

7 What is the name of the mountain on which Moshe dies?

8 What two-word phrase is spelled out by the first letters of the first six aliyot in the parashah?

9 What letter is smaller than all the others in our parashah?

10 What letter is bigger than all the others in our parashah?

*
Look for the answers on page 12!





דְּקָה שֶׁל דִּיּוּ • One-Minute Debate

How to play:

Here is a topic for debate along with some suggested arguments, but feel free to come up with your own.

- ◆ Assign people to the "Agree" or "Disagree" sides.
- ◆ Each side gets 30 seconds to make their case.
- ◆ At the end, the group votes on a winner.



Debate: Poetry is the most powerful way to express ideas.



Agree!

- ◆ The imagery and metaphors in poetry allow you to feel the message much more strongly than regular words.
- ◆ Poetry is extra rich because words in poems can have many different meanings, all at the same time.
- ◆ Poetry is very smart. It treats words and thoughts like they're an art, and speaks somehow from heart to heart.

Disagree!

- ◆ It's so hard to understand poetry! If you want to make sure people know exactly what you mean, use plain language.
- ◆ Pictures are way more powerful than poetry. Haven't you heard that a picture is worth a thousand words? In Behaalotkha, God said that prophecy is taught to Moshe, the greatest prophet, "in images, and not in riddles." So when they make the movie, let me know.



בּוֹאוּ וְנִדְבֶר עַל זֶה • Tell Me More About This!

In our Midrash section this week (p. 2), R. Nehemiah highlights the importance of listening to זְקֵינִים (zekeinim, elders). But who is a zakein?

It could mean one of two things, and it's a מַחְלֹקֶת (mahloket, debate):



In Parashat Kedoshim we are told to stand before a zakein (Vayikra 19:32). The Talmud Bavli says that you only need to stand before someone who is learned in Torah (Kiddushin 32b).

But in the Talmud Yerushalmi, we hear about Rabbi Meir, who always stood before any elderly person (Bikkurim 3:3). He reasoned that this person must have done something right to have lived to an old age.



- ◆ What are different examples of zekeinim in your life? What else could a person be like for you to think they're worth listening to?

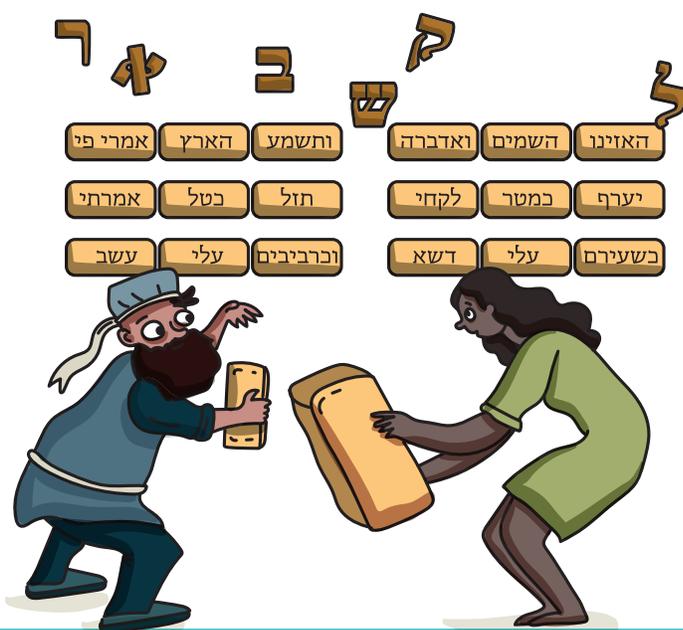
קְרִיאַת הַתּוֹרָה • Torah Reading

לְבִינָה עַל גְּבֵי לְבִינָה

Big bricks on big bricks

And now, time for another chance to see how the Torah looks.

Way back in Parashat Beshallah, we looked at the special shape of שִׁירַת הַיָּם (Shirat Ha-Yam), the section that is about how Moshe and Miriam led Benei Yisrael in joyous song after God split the sea for them. We saw how the design of that song was in a shape called אָרִיחַ עַל גְּבֵי לְבִינָה (ariah al gabei leveinah, small bricks on top of big bricks). This week, we have the Torah's other major song, שִׁירַת הָאָזִינוּ (Shirat Ha'azinu), the farewell poem of the Torah. And if you open up the Torah, you'll see right away that something different is happening here. It looks like this:



It looks like two stacks of bricks, doesn't it? A special book about how to write the Torah—Massekhet Soferim—tells us that we have to keep the shapes of these two songs distinct:

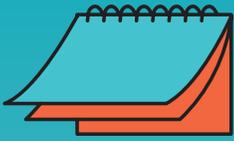
Massekhet Soferim 1:11

If you write Ha'azinu in the style of Shirat Ha-Yam, or Shirat Ha-Yam in the style of Ha'azinu...you should not read from that Torah scroll.

מסכתות קטנות מסכת סופרים פרק א הלכה יא

הָאָזִינוּ שְׁעֵשָׂא שִׁירָה, שִׁירָה
שְׁעֵשָׂא הָאָזִינוּ...אֵל יִקְרָא בָּהּ.

Why do you think this shape is so important? Do you think the shape of Ha'azinu has something to do with its message? Whatever you think, try to sneak a peek at it when it is read this Shabbat!



מַגֵּן דִּיּוֹקָא • The Calendar

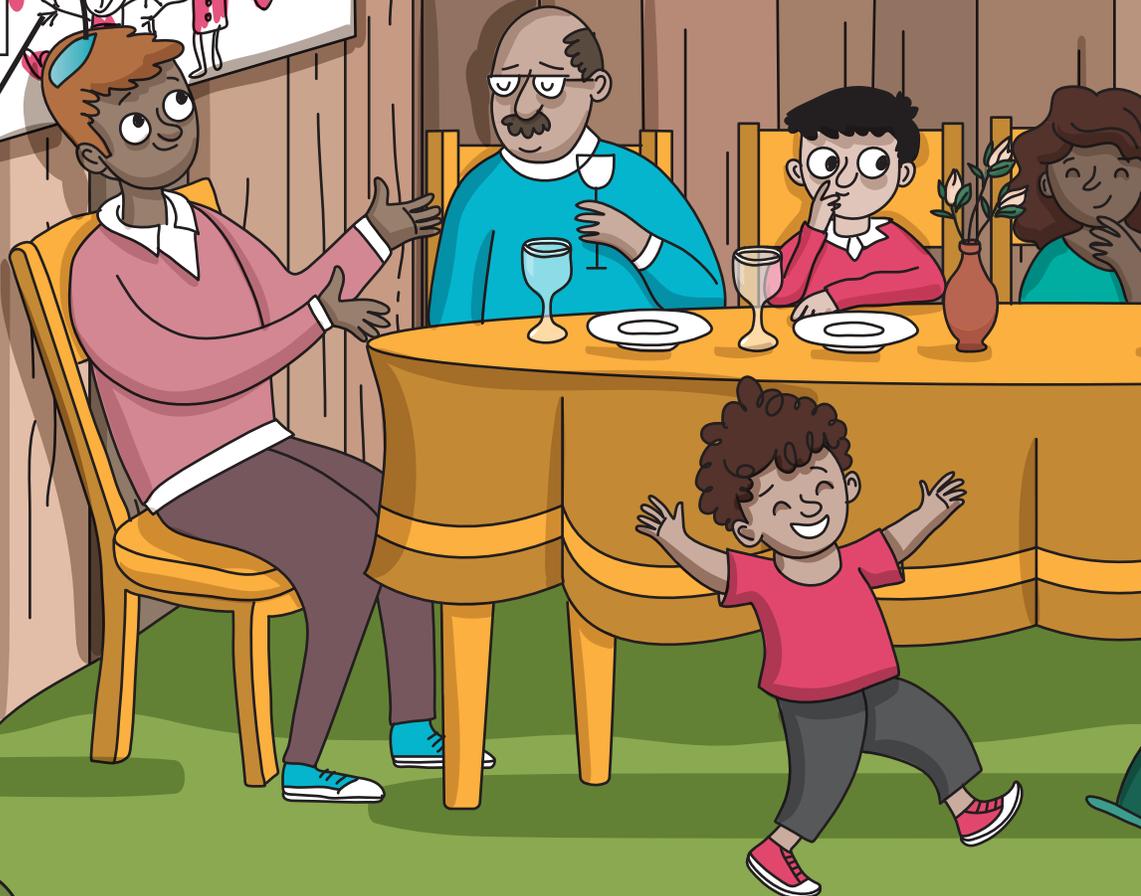
Sukkot is coming, time to get building! Here are a few rules for sukkah construction, from the Mishnah.

Should be more shady than sunny.

The Mishnah says that a sukkah can't be taller than 20 amot (around 30 feet), but the halakhah is: As long as you know that you're in a sukkah, it doesn't matter how high it is.

It should be big enough to fit your head and most of your body. (But if the table isn't in the sukkah—that's actually fine!)

A sukkah has to be at least 10 tefachim (around 30 inches) high.



The material of the roof, called סִכְּךָ (skhakh), has to fulfill these two conditions:

1. Made of something that grew from—but is no longer attached to—the ground.
2. The material can't have been made into a tool or vessel, which would make the material subject to the rules of טְמֵאָה (tumah, impurity) and טְהוּרָה (taharah, purity).

The walls have to fall within 3 tefachim (around 9 inches) of the ground and be within 3 tefachim of the skhakh.

You have to be able to see the stars—a common misconception! There is actually no such rule for sukkah building. But, the skhakh of the sukkah has to be the actual roof, there can't be something above it like a house ceiling, tree, or sheet.

Needs at least 3 walls (the last wall can be very small).

Fun fact!

You could build a sukkah on a moving ship or on the back of a camel!



מה זָה • What's Going On Here?

Ha'azinu warns us that when life gets comfortable, and people have everything they need, they could start to take things for granted and forget about God. This dynamic is captured in just three words (Devarim 32:15):

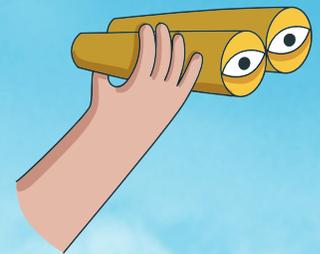
וַיִּשְׂמֵן יִשְׁרוּן וַיִּבְעַט

Yeshurun grew fat and rebelled

Who is Yeshurun? It seems to be another name for Benei Yisrael. (It even sounds a little like Yisrael!)

- ◆ Ramban says it's connected to the word יָשָׁר (yashar, straight or honest), and it describes Benei Yisrael when they are doing what's right.
- ◆ Rabbeinu Behaye connects Yeshurun to the שְׁרֵשׁ (shoresh, root) ר.ו.ש, which means to see. It describes Benei Yisrael, who saw God's revelation at Har Sinai.

In other places in the Torah, Yeshurun is a compliment. But not here! Ha'azinu seems to use this name in an ironic way. The Torah is saying: Yeshurun can fail to live up to its name.



Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. Four—מָטָר (matar), טַל (tal), שְׁעִירִים (se'irim), רְבִיבִים (revivim) (32:2)
2. An eagle (32:11)
3. Honey and oil (32:13)
4. Four – מִכָּאֵס (mika'as), בְּעֶסוּנִי (ki'asuni), אֶכְעִיסֶם (akh'isem), כָּאֵס (ka'as) (32:19,21,27)
5. Sodom and Amorah (32:32)
6. God's sword (32:42)
7. Har Nevo (32:49)
8. הַזִּיב לָךְ (haziv lakh, splendor is Yours) (See 32:1,7,13,19,29,40)
9. In תְּשִׁי, the letter yod (32:18)
10. In הָ לְהָ, the first hei (32:6)



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