

HA'AZINU

53rd of the 54 sedras;

10th of 11 in D'varim

Written on 92 lines, ranks 51st

3 Parshiyot; all open (extra open!)

52 p'sukim - ranks 51st (8th in D'va.)

614 words - ranks 52nd (9th in D'va.)

2326 letters - ranks 52nd (9th in D'va.)

P'sukim are relatively very short

MITZVOT

The Chinuch does not count any mitzvot in Ha'azinu.

Rambam counts one - YAYIN

NESECH. This is the only mitzva on Rambam's whole list of 613 mitzvot that the Chinuch does not count.

(And there is one mitzva on the Chinuch's list that the Rambam merges with another mitzva and doesn't count separately.)

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[P>] and [S>] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI; L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek & pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

Kohen - First Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 32:1-6

[P>32:1 (43)] Moshe Rabeinu begins his farewell "song" to the People by calling upon the heavens and the earth to be witnesses to what he will be saying. He asks the people (in a very poetic way) to listen well to his words. Moshe tells us that G-d is completely fair and just; it is we who are responsible for "messing things up".

"When I (singular) call G-d's Name, you (plural, minimum 2) praise G-d for His Greatness." From this pasuk we learn that when three people eat together, one calls to the other two to "bless G-d" - ZIMUN (benching m'zuman).

This pasuk is borrowed from here to introduce the Musaf, Mincha, and Ne'ila Amida. (for Shacharit and Maariv, it is considered to be an interruption between GEULA and T'FILA, because of its later inclusion in the davening.)

Levi - Second Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 32:7-12

Moshe asks us again to remember the "early history" of this unique nation of Israel and the special ancestors who established for us our close relationship with G-d.

There is no generation gap in real Jewish life; the older generation teaches the new one, the new

generation gains by asking questions of their elders and learning from them.

G-d structured the world in parallel to the developing nation of Israel, and granted us special protection and guidance - "like an eagle protects its young..."

SDT: The lessons of Torah are compared to dew, rain showers, and downpours. All water (oft-compared to Torah), but different intensities and speeds. So too Torah, for different people. Some need Torah in small, easily digested doses, or else they "overload". Others can handle a steady stream. Still others can learn Torah with the intensity of a downpour. Learning up a storm! The analogy between Torah and water has many levels.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 32:13-18

Notwithstanding the protection and nurturing that G-d provided us in the Wilderness, we rebelled. This happened and continues to happen. Moshe's words can be seen as a description of Dor HaMidbar as well as being a poetic prophecy of the people becoming too complacent in Eretz Yisrael and abandoning G-d from their positions of opulence and security.

R'VI'I - Fourth Aliya - 10 p'sukim - 32:19-28

Much of the content of Haazinu is a poetic formulation of ideas previously presented in the book of D'varim.

Moshe tells us that G-d's reaction to our disloyalty is HESTEIR PANIM - the hiding of "G-d's Face", so to speak. He also tell us that there have been several times when G-d had wanted to destroy the People of Israel but did not, so as not to give the nations of the world cause to doubt the power of the "G-d of Israel".

It is striking how similar are the words of reproach and how different the presentation.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 32:29-39

Our challenge is to contemplate the above and understand the many lessons contained in G-d's (and Moshe's) words. The bottom line is that although Israel strays from the proper path, G-d will not abandon us, and He will rally to our side in the face of our enemies. We must realize this and appreciate the awesome power of G-d.

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 4 p'sukim - 32:40-43

In this concluding portion of the song part of Haazinu, we see G-d's oath and Moshe assurances of G-d's eternal

nature and His promise to avenge Israel against the other nations.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya - 9 p'sukim - 32:-44-52

[P>32:44 (4)] The Torah goes back to prose, in the regular columnar format after a blank line for this last portion of the song of Haazinu.

Moshe, in front of Yehoshua, tells the people to heed the warning of this SHIRA and to keep the Torah, which in turn, will keep them.

An important point that has been oft-repeated in the book of D'varim is this: We did NOT receive the Land of Israel with "no strings attached". We must always be worthy of holding on to Eretz Yisrael. Sometimes that reminder is subtle; sometimes it is heavy-handed. Here it's: Take the Torah seriously, because it is the basis upon which we will have a long (everlasting) tenure in the Land.

[P>32:48 (5)] G-d then tells Moshe to ascend Har Aravim-Nevo, see the Land from there, and die there, as Aharon had done earlier (the Torah reiterates the reason that both Moshe and Aharon couldn't enter Eretz Yisrael - namely, the incident when Moshe hit the rock rather than speak to it, missing an opportunity to sanctify G-d's name), rather than enter the Land which the People of Israel will enter.

Haftara - 22 p'sukim Hoshei'a 14:2-10 and Yoel 2:15-27

There are various customs for this haftara - this one seems to be standard and is based on Luach Eretz Yisrael.

SHUVA YISRAEL AD HASHEM... These opening words of the Haftara give the Shabbat its name and basically say it all. Return to G-d. The following pasuk emphasizes the power of prayer in the T'shuva process. The command to repent is accompanied by wonderful promises (prophecies) of redemption and restoration of the former glory of Israel.

The passage from Yoel gives us a Shofar connection to T'shuva.

Another encouraging note as we face the task of returning to G-d, is His assurance that He is among us - even before our T'shuva. And that He will not shame His people ever.

The last pasuk in Hoshea states, "Who is wise who understands this, an intelligent person will know: G-d's ways are straight, the righteous will walk upon them and the sinner will trip on them." Very often it is the same activity or the same thing that people handle differently, with the result that one person succeeds and the other falters. It is often a matter of attitude.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Haftara was not "chosen" because of the sedra, they do have some points in common. One example: The sedra speaks of rain in a figurative, spiritual sense and the

Haftara mentions its more literal meaning in connection with prosperity. The prosperity angle is particularly interesting, since it appears in the sedra as a criticism and in the Haftara as a sign that G-d has forgiven His people. This fits with what was mentioned above about the last pasuk in Hoshea.