

The Pardes Center for Jewish Educators presents

# An Interactive PARSHA EXPERIENCE



**Parsha:** Haazinu

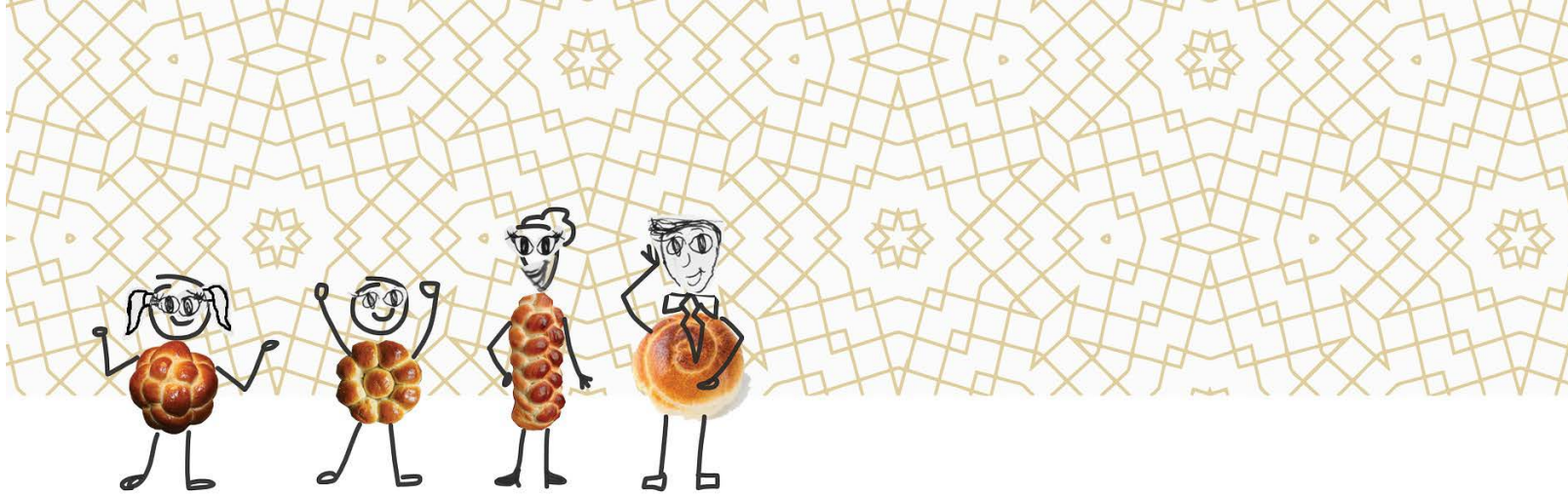
**Title:** Haazinu, The Prep Talk Poem

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Program Graduate '12-'14

## The Parsha at First Glance

### Spotlight on the Parsha:

*Parshat Haazinu* is a fiery poem delivered by Moshe in the ears of *Bnei Yisrael* (the Children of Israel) right before they cross into the Land of Israel. Moshe is to die soon up on a mountain with the land in his view. The name of this *parsha* has



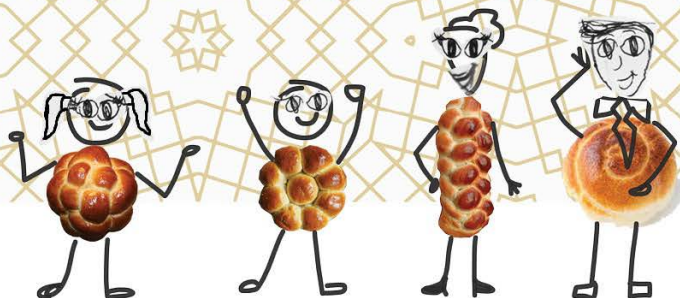
the root of נ-ט-א which means: "to give ear, to consider, to give obedience to." Moshe is getting in his final words to the people he has been leading all of these years. His final desire as he stands in front of them is to make sure it really *sticks in their ears* that it has not been a perfect journey to this point. It has been filled with some pretty low points and disregard for the rules. Even so, they are all - minus Moshe - at the point of crossing into the Land of Israel. I keep wondering why so much negativity is brought up in this final poem. How is this the best pep talk for a people who are just about to need a lot of courage and excitement as Yehoshua leads them across the Jordan River???

### Zooming In:

How is this a pep talk? I actually think it is more of a "prep talk for the future." Moshe is so worried about his words really sticking with the people that it says in 32:1:

1. ...Listen the land, the words that come from my mouth.	א...וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ, אִמְרֵי-פִי.
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Is Moshe speaking these words to הָאָרֶץ - *the land* - meaning the Land of Israel itself, which he is not going to be allowed to enter? Or, as Rashi suggests, is it really for all of the heavens and earth to hear just in case the people claim to never have heard it? Either way, there is clearly some worry coming from Moshe, as he stands there reciting his prep talk poem, that he is not being heard. We all know that that is not the best feeling to have. Especially when you know you aren't going to be there to follow up and remind people of what you said. We can see that Moshe desperately wants this journey to be remembered and the experiences along the way to be passed down. In 32:29 we get the clear reason why, as it says:



<p>29. Were they wise, they would think upon this, gain insight into their future.</p>	<p>כט לו חכמו, ישפילו זאת; ובינו, לאחריהם.</p>
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Moshe is just asking that the people be wise in this next step of their journey. That their mistakes are not forgotten as they move forward. He doesn't want those mistakes repeated! He wants to feel some control over what is to happen in this future that he is not going to be there for.

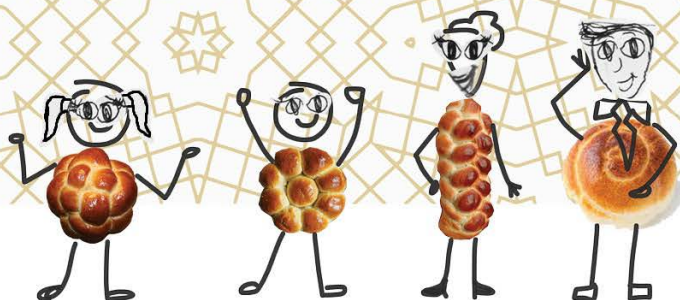
<p>46. He [Moshe] said to them: Take to heart all the words with which I have warned you/ witnessed to you this day. Enjoy them upon your children, that they may observe faithfully all the terms of this Teaching.</p>	<p>מו ויאמר אליהם, שימו לבבכם לכל-הדברים אשר אנכי מעיד בכם היום: אשר תצו את-בניכם לשמר לעשות את-כל-דברי התורה הזאת.</p>
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Here he implores the people who are listening to do that same thing he is trying to do - take to heart these things that we have witnessed and been there for and "command them" down to your children. So that they can guard and do all of the words of this Torah.

**Questions for Consideration:**

As we begin our new year of 5780 we too are on "הר העברים הזה *This mountain of crossing* (32:49)," upon which Moshe went and stood for his death as the people went into the Land of Israel. We cannot control everything that will happen in this new year. All we can do is think back and reflect on our year, our past, and gain insight from it for the future. *Were they wise, they would think upon this, gain insight into their future* (32:29).

- a) How do we give pep talks to others and even ourselves?
- b) What is important for us to reflect on and pass to the next generation or to our future self so they/we can do better?
- c) What are we worried about while giving this advice?



- d) How will our words stick with our listeners? What is our clear instruction, what examples are we using, what visual aids can we bring up?

## *The Parsha Through Another Lens*

### Prep Talk Poem

Let's give each other a pep/prep talk from our past year! Everyone should think about something from this past year that they can learn from and do better in the new year. How can you, like Moshe, pass along your experience in order to be wiser and more insightful in the future?

#### Use the following steps to prepare:

1. What is something from your past year that you can think about and learn from? Maybe it was something you or someone else did that wasn't really great. How can thinking about this help you be better in the future?
2. How are you going to present this to everyone listening? Moshe used a poem. Will you use a poem? Picture? Will you act it out? Sing it?
3. What is the Torah you are teaching? What is the bottom-line value you want people to learn after listening to you and carry on into the future?

\*For younger children I would suggest modeling this and passing down a lesson to them first. Then ask them to think about something that they learned and how they want to teach you about it.

## Shabbat Shalom!