



DIVREI MENACHEM

BY MENACHEM PERSOFF

Special Projects Consultant, OU Israel Center
mpersoff@ou.org

Give Ear to the Song

This week we read a song, although, in truth, the Torah itself is one all-embracing song. As Rabbi Jonathan Sacks recorded: When Moshe and Yehoshua were instructed to “write for yourselves this song,” the plain meaning referred to the song of “Ha’azinu” while following the Rambam, this is a directive to every Jew to write a Sefer Torah.

Either way, what is it about a song that its writing would represent the last act of Moshe? What is so particular to the song of Ha’azinu that it would reflect Moshe’s last testimony to the people he nurtured all those years?

For Rabbi Sacks, Ha’azinu, the song, represents our emotive aspect, through

which we “express, evoke, and share emotion... Music is the map of the Jewish spirit.” Sometimes, as noted in the past, we do not have sufficient words to express our thoughts. We are confounded when standing before the Infinite One or when, like the author of “Ha’azinu,” we contemplate our mission in this world.

No wonder then, we let the Shofar cry out for us; we let the words of poetry spill out and spread downwards to the Earth and upwards towards Heaven. The American poet, Julius Schemmer wrote:

*Poetry is the best form of medicine
Bringing hope to the weary and the sick
Revealing innermost thoughts
Of things left unsaid*

*Poetry is a song
Syllable by syllable
Verse by verse
Bringing forth the rhythm
Of life*

*Poetry is a journey
Of discovery in one’s self
Learning, growing, aspiring
All recorded in a poem.*

.....

Our poem “Ha’azinu” begins by invoking the Heaven and the Earth to give witness to the vicissitudes of Am Yisrael. As Israel



Florida Fund

Invest Like The Bank!

Own 1st Mortgages on USA Property

Low Loan-to-Value & High Returns

30 Years Experience in Safe Lending

Floridafund.co.il

058-599-9631

Adler would describe the song: “Ha’azinu gives a florid allegorical depiction of the condition of the Jewish people.” And Rashi tells us that the permanence of Heaven and Earth is what makes these two realms perfect witnesses to our (ongoing) trials and tribulations.

It is interesting. One would expect that our witnesses would be in harmony with each other. But is it not true that Heaven and Earth represent two opposite dimensions, two ends of the spectrum? It appears that each, in its own way, will serve to portray its message.

Heaven is the spiritual sphere, the abode of the Divine throne, the domicile of angels in the higher spheres, the repository of the hidden secrets of this world, the source of the holy emanations that direct the universe. Earth, by contrast, is that dark, material entity where good and evil play out their roles through the eons of time. Earth is where we, as the Chosen People, are to bring light to those dark areas, to fulfill the goals that God set for us on this planet, and to be partners in its redemption.

Einstein taught us that matter could be formed from energy and vice versa. In essence, however, the Torah taught us this notion in the very opening lines of the poem “Ha’azinu.” We are to give ear to both Heaven and Earth. We are to understand that there is not only a dialectical tension between these two dimensions but also that there is a beautiful dynamic interchange between them.

.....

Tomer Almekayis talks of “Ha’azinu” as ‘a sublime mode of expression.’ “Ha’azinu” incorporates a view of the world that includes all of history from the “days of old” to the end of time. “Ha’azinu” treats of a perpetual life-cycle of the Jewish people, one of its significant attributes being that our behavior as the Chosen People affects how Hashem relates to us.

Heaven and Earth interact. And despite our errant behavior, Hakadosh Baruch Hu, the loving Father, will never totally abandon us. And that is what gives us, His earthy creatures, the hope and strength to return to Hashem, thus to bridge the gap between Heaven and Earth. ■

Shabbat Shalom!

Menachem Persoff

 **ALAN R. DEUTSCH**
& ASSOCIATES CPA, MBA, APC
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

T 01

Trusted US/Israeli tax services for over 30 years

- U.S. Income Tax Returns
- Israeli Tax Returns
- Foreign Bank Reports (FBAR)
- IRS Audit Representation
- IRS Streamlined Program
- Corporate Tax Planning
- Estate and Trust Tax Planning
- \$1400 U.S. Child Credit
- Investment Planning
- Bookkeeping Services
- Other Accounting Services

It's never too late to file prior years' tax returns!

02-999-2104 | 09-746-0623 | 03-527-3254

052-274-9999

Email: alan@ardcpa.com

www.ardcpa.com