YOVEL
PUBLICATIONS
RESTORING THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

TORAH
PEOPLE
MESSIAH
NATIONS

A LIGHT
TO THE NATIONS

THE WEEKLY TORAH PORTION

HAʿAZINU

Give Ear

DEUTERONOMY 32:1–52

The Song of Moses

*"He who has an ear
let him hear."*
MATTHEW 11:15



SCRIPTURE · INSIGHT · PERSPECTIVE · APPLICATION

Welcome to the Weekly Torah Portion

◆ ◆ ◆

This Yovel Publications series is designed to make the weekly Torah portion easy to read as a continuous journey. Each booklet follows the Scripture itself and draws together its major themes, Hebrew insights, prophetic echoes and Messianic connections.

Ha'Azinu is one of the most concentrated passages in Torah. Moses is about to die, and YHVH gives Israel a song that will remain as a witness through rebellion, scattering, judgment and restoration. Its recurring images — the Rock, rain, the eagle, the hidden face, jealousy, vengeance and atonement — carry us from the wilderness to the Prophets, from the words of Yeshua to Romans, and finally to Revelation.

The purpose is not to exhaust every detail of Deuteronomy 32, but to help us hear its central message. Keep the chapter open beside you and follow the references that catch your attention. Above all, listen prayerfully for the faithful voice of the Rock.

WHY READ THE WEEKLY TORAH PORTION?

◆ ◆ ◆

For thousands of years, the people of God have gathered around the Scriptures to hear the words of Moses and the Prophets. The first followers of Yeshua did not regard these Scriptures as something belonging to a discarded religion or a bygone age. They were the Scriptures from which the Good News of Messiah was proclaimed.

The book of Acts gives us a wonderful glimpse of this practice. When Paul and his companions entered the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia on the Sabbath, we are told:

> *"And after the reading of the Torah and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, 'Men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.'" — Acts 13:15*

Paul then stood and proclaimed Yeshua from the story of Israel. The setting is important. The Torah and the Prophets were being read on the Sabbath, and it was from within that Scriptural framework that the apostles proclaimed Messiah.

Later in the same chapter, Gentiles also wanted to hear more:

> *"And the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God." — Acts 13:44*

The earliest proclamation of Yeshua was therefore not detached from the Torah and the Prophets. It grew naturally out of them.

MOSES WROTE ABOUT ME

◆ ◆ ◆

Perhaps no reason for studying Torah could be stronger than the words of Yeshua Himself. Speaking to those who searched the Scriptures yet failed to recognise Him, Yeshua said:

"For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" — John 5:46–47

MOSES WROTE ABOUT YESHUA.

That means Torah is not merely a collection of ancient laws and historical events. Within its pages are patterns, promises, shadows and prophetic pictures that point us toward Messiah.

The Passover lamb speaks of Him. The manna from heaven speaks of Him. The Rock in the wilderness speaks of Him. The tabernacle and priesthood speak of Him. The appointed Feasts speak of Him. The sacrifices, deliverances, covenants and great events of Torah continually prepare the reader to recognise the One who was to come.

Yeshua did not say that believing in Him should cause us to disregard Moses. He made the connection in the opposite direction: "If you believed Moses, you would believe Me." And then He gave the sobering counterpart: "If you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

This changes the way we approach the Torah. We are not returning to Moses instead of following Yeshua. We are reading Moses because we follow Yeshua, and because Yeshua Himself told us that Moses wrote about Him.

After His resurrection, Yeshua demonstrated precisely this way of reading Scripture. On the road to Emmaus:

> ***"Beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." — Luke 24:27***

Beginning with Moses, Yeshua showed His disciples the things written concerning Himself. That is the spirit in which these Weekly Torah Portion booklets are offered.

Each week we will walk through another portion of Torah, allowing Scripture to tell its own story while following the threads that run through the Prophets, the Writings and the Apostolic Scriptures. Along the way we will look for the patterns of redemption, covenant, Kingdom and restoration—and above all, we will look for Yeshua.

"HE WROTE ABOUT ME."

So open the Torah. Give ear. And let us discover what Moses has to tell us about Messiah.

A PRAYER BEFORE WE BEGIN

◆ ◆ ◆

The Psalmist prays directly to YHVH:

"Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your Torah."
— Psalm 119:18

And so, before opening this week's portion, let us make that prayer our own:

> *YHVH, open our eyes as we open Your Word. Give us ears to hear and hearts ready to receive. Show us the wondrous things in Your Torah, and above all, help us to recognise Yeshua, the One of whom Moses wrote. Lead us by Your Spirit into truth, understanding and faithful obedience. Amen.*

Give Ear

◆ ◆ ◆

Ha'Azinu opens with one of the simplest commands in Scripture: give ear. Listen. Moses is nearing the end of his life, Israel stands on the edge of the Land, and YHVH gives His servant a song that is to outlive the singer. Heaven and earth are summoned as witnesses: "Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth."

This is not merely poetry for an ancient generation. The song was given because Israel would need a witness when memory failed, when prosperity dulled the heart, and when scattering among the nations made the people wonder whether YHVH was still with them. The song would remember what they had forgotten.

That makes the title itself important. Ha'Azinu is an appeal to hear. The same appeal echoes through the words of Yeshua: "He who has an ear, let him hear." Revelation repeats it to the assemblies. Scripture is not asking for the passive reception of sound. Biblical hearing carries the sense of receiving the word, trusting it, and responding to it.

Moses had already told Israel that the word was not far away. It was near them, in their mouth and in their heart. Paul returns to that very language in Romans 10 and places hearing at the centre of faith. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Ha'Azinu therefore begins where covenant life must always begin: with an ear turned toward the voice of YHVH.

The setting gives the song added force. In Deuteronomy 31 YHVH tells Moses that after his death the people will turn aside, break covenant and go after other gods. Trouble will come, and YHVH speaks of hiding His face. Yet hiding is not abandonment. Earlier He had promised that He would not leave or forsake them.

That distinction becomes one of the great themes of the song. Israel may be faithless, but the Rock remains faithful. Israel may forget, but YHVH remembers. Israel may be scattered, but it remains His portion. Judgment is real, but it moves toward compassion, restoration and finally atonement.

A Song That Reaches to Revelation

◆ ◆ ◆

The Song of Moses does not disappear when Deuteronomy closes. Its language and themes continue through the Prophets, the Psalms and the writings of the apostles, until in Revelation 15 we meet "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb."

That scene is striking. Those who have gained victory over the beast, his image, his mark and the number of his name stand before God as the final judgments unfold, and the ancient song is heard again (Revelation 15:2). Exodus and Revelation begin to overlap: deliverance, plagues, the defeat of the enemy, the vindication of God's people and the glory of His Name.

Ha'Azinu itself prepares us for this. The song begins by calling heaven and earth to witness. Revelation is filled with signs in heaven and events upon the earth. Yeshua likewise spoke in the Olivet discourse of signs in the sun, moon and stars and distress upon the earth. The witness summoned by Moses remains on the stage of redemption.

There is also a beautiful detail at the close of the song. Deuteronomy 32:44 says that Moses came with Joshua — Yehoshua — and spoke the words of the song in the hearing of the people. Joshua's Hebrew name, Yehoshua, is the name from which Yeshua is derived. Moses and Yehoshua stand together; in Revelation, the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb are heard together.

This is why Ha'Azinu should be read as more than a review of Israel's past. It is a prophetic song. It describes the character of YHVH, the failure of His people, the consequences of rebellion, the folly of the nations, the certainty of divine judgment, and the final vindication of His servants.

The centre is not speculation but the character and covenant faithfulness of YHVH. The future is secure because the Rock does not change. The same God who carried Israel from Egypt will act again for the sake of His Name and His promises.

So when Revelation joins the Song of Moses with the Song of the Lamb, it is not introducing a different story. It is showing the destination of the same redemptive story. The Lamb does not erase the song of Moses. He brings the prophetic song to its fullest expression.

Teaching Like Rain

◆ ◆ ◆

"Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distil as the dew, as raindrops on the tender herb, and as showers on the grass." — Deuteronomy 32:2

Before the song speaks of rebellion and judgment, it gives us this beautiful picture of Torah. Teaching falls like rain. Speech settles like dew. The word of YHVH is life-giving, refreshing and fruitful.

The Hebrew word behind "teaching" here is leqach, carrying the sense of instruction or learning and belonging to a family of words associated with taking, receiving or laying hold. That language opens an intriguing Scriptural thread. Abraham takes Isaac, the wood, the fire and the knife in Genesis 22, and finally takes the ram YHVH provides. Enoch is taken by God. In Genesis 24 a bride is taken for Isaac. The repeated idea is not merely possession, but receiving and taking hold of what has been given.

The picture is worth lingering over. Divine teaching is not given merely to be analysed. It is to be received. The hearer takes hold of what comes from above just as the earth receives rain.

Rain also has a remarkable humility. Water seeks the low place. So does grace. The word descends from heaven and reaches those who will humble themselves enough to receive it. Isaiah later says that as rain and snow come down from heaven and do not return without watering the earth, so the word sent by YHVH will accomplish His purpose.

This protects us from a common misunderstanding of Torah. Torah is not presented here as dry legalism. Moses sings of instruction as rain and dew. It reveals the character of the Holy One and sets before His people the way of life. Even its warnings are merciful, because a warning heard in time can turn a person away from destruction.

Ha'Azinu therefore asks us not only whether we possess Scripture, but whether Scripture possesses us. Does the teaching remain on the surface, or does it soak into the ground? The weekly reading can become routine. Ha'Azinu interrupts that routine: Give ear. Receive the rain again.

Proclaim the Name

◆ ◆ ◆

"For I proclaim the Name of YHVH: Ascribe greatness to our God."
— Deuteronomy 32:3

The song moves from hearing the word to proclaiming the Name. In Scripture, the Name is far more than a label. It reveals character, reputation, authority and purpose.

Moses had already encountered this revelation dramatically in Exodus 34. YHVH passed before him and proclaimed His Name: merciful and gracious, longsuffering, abundant in lovingkindness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, yet not treating guilt as though it were meaningless. Mercy and justice meet in the revelation of His Name.

Ha'Azinu will display those same qualities. YHVH is righteous when He judges His people. He is faithful when they are faithless. He is compassionate when their strength is gone. He is just when He judges the nations. He is merciful when He provides atonement for His land and His people.

The verb translated "proclaim" is qara — to call or cry out. Joel declares, "Whoever calls on the Name of YHVH shall be saved" (Joel 2:32). Peter quotes this promise at Shavuot (Acts 2:21), and Paul uses the same words in Romans 10:13. The apostolic call of salvation is rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures.

For the believer in Yeshua this becomes especially rich. His very name announces salvation: YHVH saves. Matthew explains, "You shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). The apostolic witness then declares that salvation is found in no other name (Acts 4:12).

The point is not a magical pronunciation. To know His Name is to know the One whose character and saving purpose the Name reveals. Yeshua prayed that He had manifested the Father's Name to the disciples, and the evidence was that they had kept His word.

Before Moses describes everything that can go wrong in the human heart, he anchors the song in everything that is eternally right about the Rock.

He Is the Rock

◆ ◆ ◆

"He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He." — Deuteronomy 32:4

The Rock is one of the great recurring images of Ha'Azinu. Israel will later "lightly esteem the Rock of his salvation." Moses asks how Israel could be defeated unless "their Rock had sold them." He then declares, "their rock is not like our Rock."

For Moses, the image is deeply personal. His own history is tied to the Rock. At Horeb he was commanded to strike the rock, and water came out for the people. Later, at Meribah, he was told to speak to the rock but struck it instead. That act is recalled at the end of this Torah portion when Moses is told that he will see the Land but not enter it.

Paul gives the image its unmistakable Messianic dimension in 1 Corinthians 10: "that Rock was Messiah." The wilderness story becomes a picture of the provision of Yeshua.

There is a profound gospel pattern here. The Rock is struck and life-giving water flows. Messiah is smitten, but not repeatedly. His sacrifice is once for all. Moses' second striking of the Rock distorted the picture; the Rock did not need to be struck again. Now the invitation is to speak, to call, to come and drink.

At Sukkot Yeshua stood and cried, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." John explains that He spoke concerning the Spirit. The wilderness Rock, the living water and the indwelling Spirit come together.

Ha'Azinu calls the Rock perfect — tamim, whole and without blemish. The same language is used of the Passover lamb. He is also El Emunah, the faithful God. Human faith rests upon divine faithfulness.

Everything else moves: generations change, Israel prospers and rebels, nations rise, enemies boast, judgment comes. But the Rock remains.

His Portion and the Apple of His Eye

◆ ◆ ◆

"YHVH's portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance." — Deuteronomy 32:9

This is one of the most tender declarations in the song. Israel receives an inheritance, but Israel is also described as YHVH's inheritance. His people belong to Him. Paul uses strikingly similar inheritance language when he speaks of "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Ephesians 1:18). He is not quoting Ha'Azinu directly, but the resonance is beautiful: the people of God are not only recipients of inheritance; they are also spoken of as His inheritance.

The language of portion and inheritance speaks of something allotted, possessed and treasured. It is not the language of a temporary rental that can simply be discarded when difficulties arise. The covenant relationship lies behind everything that follows.

That becomes crucial when the song turns toward Israel's rebellion. If we begin with the assumption that discipline means rejection, we will misunderstand the entire story. Moses begins by telling us whose Israel is.

The next picture deepens the affection: "He found him in a desert land and in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye."

The familiar phrase points to the pupil — that vulnerable, intensely protected centre of vision. The image is one of nearness. Israel is pictured as held within the attentive gaze of the Holy One.

Then comes the eagle: "As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so YHVH alone led him."

The imagery reaches back to Exodus 19: "I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself." The destination of redemption was not merely escape from Egypt. It was relationship — "to Myself."

The eagle stirs the nest because the young cannot remain there forever. Divine care is not always comfortable. Sometimes the nest must be disturbed so that wings can be learned. Yet the same eagle that stirs also hovers, catches and carries.

This is the heart we must remember when Ha'Azinu becomes severe. The Judge is the One who found Israel in the wilderness. The One who disciplines is the One who carried them. The One who hides His face for a season is the One who calls them His portion.

Jeshurun Grew Fat and Kicked

◆ ◆ ◆

After the tenderness of the wilderness comes one of the saddest turns in Scripture: "But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked."

Jeshurun is a poetic name for Israel associated with uprightness. The tragedy is therefore sharpened. The upright one becomes crooked. The people who were carried, fed and established forget the One who gave them everything.

Prosperity itself is not condemned. The danger is what prosperity can do to memory. Israel eats, is filled, grows fat, and then forsakes the God who made him and scorns the Rock of his salvation.

The sequence described in the song is painfully recognisable. Blessing becomes self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency becomes forgetfulness. Forgetfulness becomes resistance. Resistance becomes idolatry.

Moses uses the language of kicking — the picture of an animal resisting the one who has fed and cared for it. The problem is not ignorance of YHVH's goodness. It is rebellion in the presence of remembered goodness.

Verse 18 exposes the deepest wound: "Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful, and have forgotten the God who fathered you." Sin is presented not merely as rule-breaking but as relational betrayal.

This is why Ha'Azinu belongs so naturally in the season of teshuvah. Teshuvah is the Hebrew idea of turning or returning — not merely feeling regret, but turning back to YHVH and His ways. For readers new to the Torah cycle, this theme is especially prominent in the season leading toward Yom Kippur. The remedy for forgetting is remembering. "Remember the days of old," Moses had said. Remember who found you. Remember who carried you. Remember whose portion you are. Remember the Rock.

The warning also reaches beyond ancient Israel. Comfort and religious familiarity can make any community dull of hearing. Revelation's message to Laodicea describes an assembly that says, "I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," without recognising its true condition.

Ha'Azinu asks a searching question: Has blessing made us more grateful, or merely more comfortable? The call "Give ear" is needed most when we think we already know the song.

Prosperity can quietly reverse the posture of dependence learned in the wilderness. In the desert Israel had to look upward for manna and water; in abundance it became possible to look inward and imagine that strength, security and increase had come from itself. Moses had already warned of this danger: "then you say in your heart, My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:17).

That is why remembrance is a spiritual discipline. Blessing is safest in the hands of those who remember the Giver. The answer to Jeshurun's forgetfulness is not to despise abundance, but to receive it with gratitude, humility and obedience. The more YHVH gives, the more reason there is to remember the One from whom every good gift comes.

I Will Hide My Face

◆ ◆ ◆

YHVH sees the rebellion of His sons and daughters and says, "I will hide My face from them; I will see what their end will be, for they are a perverse generation, children in whom is no faith."

The phrase is severe, but it must be read alongside the covenant promise. Hiding His face is not the same as ceasing to be faithful. Deuteronomy had already said that He would not leave or forsake His people. The song itself will end with compassion and atonement.

The Hebrew expression "no faith" — lo emun — takes us again to the issue of hearing and trusting. Hebrews 3 and 4 address "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling" and use Israel's wilderness failure as a warning to believers against unbelief. Psalm 95 says, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."

So the movement of the portion becomes clear. It begins, "Give ear." It later describes children in whom there is no faith. Between those statements lies the human decision: to hear, or to harden.

Yeshua uses the same shepherd language: "My sheep hear My voice." Faith is not detached from hearing. It is the response of the heart to the One who speaks.

The hidden face also explains something about Israel's experience among the nations. There can be seasons when the evidence of divine favour seems absent, when enemies triumph and the covenant people ask where God is. Ha'Azinu anticipated that question before the scattering occurred.

Yet the song was itself designed to answer it. The suffering was not proof that YHVH had forgotten the covenant. The song had warned of it. Even the discipline therefore became evidence that His word had not failed.

Ha'Azinu permits neither minimising judgment nor treating judgment as final rejection. The Holy One is righteous in discipline and faithful in restoration. The song is moving toward the moment when Israel's strength is gone and YHVH acts with compassion.

Provoked to Jealousy

◆ ◆ ◆

"They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God; they have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a people." — Deuteronomy 32:21

This verse becomes a major key in Paul's explanation of Israel and the nations. Romans 10 quotes the language of Ha'Azinu, and Romans 11 develops the mystery: through Israel's stumbling salvation has come to the nations, "to provoke them to jealousy."

The purpose is not replacement. Jealousy only makes sense if the original relationship still matters. If Israel had simply been discarded, there would be no covenant purpose in provoking Israel to jealousy.

Paul's olive-tree picture makes the same point. Some natural branches are broken off because of unbelief; wild branches are grafted in by faith. But the wild branches do not become a new tree that boasts against Israel. They share in the root and are warned to stand by faith.

Ha'Azinu had already placed the nations inside Israel's story. The nations become instruments in the discipline of Israel, but they are not free to boast. Later in the song YHVH judges the adversaries who misunderstand His discipline and imagine that their own hand is supreme.

This is one of the great balances of Scripture. Israel cannot boast in unbelief, and the nations cannot boast in their inclusion. All are shut up to mercy. The plan magnifies the faithfulness of God rather than the superiority of any human group.

The jealousy motif also reveals the passion of covenant love. Biblical jealousy is not petty insecurity. It is the proper zeal of exclusive covenant relationship. Idolatry matters because love matters.

Ha'Azinu thus anticipates the reconciliation later described in Ephesians 2. Those who were once "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise" are brought near by the blood of Messiah. Yeshua makes peace, creating in Himself one new man. The movement is toward reconciliation under Messiah, not the triumph of one people over another.

This is precisely why boasting is excluded. The wild branches do not support the root; the root supports them (Romans 11:18). Gentile inclusion is therefore a cause for humility and gratitude, not superiority. Those once far off have been brought near to Israel's Messiah and to the promises of the God of Israel.

The result is not replacement but enlargement: one reconciled people under one Messiah, sharing one hope and drawing life from the same covenant root. Ha'Azinu's strange promise to provoke Israel to jealousy thus becomes part of a much larger mercy in which Israel and the nations are drawn toward the faithfulness of the same Rock.

The song that began with heaven and earth as witnesses now reveals a redemptive drama involving Israel and the nations. Even jealousy and discipline are taken up into the purpose of restoration.

Their Rock Is Not Like Our Rock

◆ ◆ ◆

As judgment unfolds, the song turns toward Israel's enemies. Moses asks how one could chase a thousand, or two put ten thousand to flight, unless Israel's Rock had surrendered them. Defeat must not be misread as proof that the gods of the nations are stronger.

Then comes the declaration: "For their rock is not like our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."

The contrast is absolute. Idols may be called rocks, but they cannot save. Human powers may appear immovable, but they are temporary. Political strength, military strength and religious systems all fail when compared with the Rock whose work is perfect.

The danger for the nations is to mistake permission for superiority. YHVH may use an enemy as an instrument of discipline, but the instrument remains accountable to Him. Ha'Azinu specifically anticipates the enemy saying, "Our hand is high; and it is not YHVH who has done all this."

That boast brings judgment. The nations are not entitled to turn Israel's discipline into an argument for Israel's abandonment. The covenant Judge reserves the right to vindicate His people and avenge the blood of His servants.

This pattern appears repeatedly in the prophets. Human empire does not become righteous merely because God can sovereignly use it.

The song therefore strips away every false refuge. Israel's idols cannot save Israel. The enemies' power cannot save the enemies. When every false rock has failed, only the true Rock remains.

Verse 39 makes the point in the strongest possible terms: "Now see that I, even I, am He, and there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; nor is there any who can deliver from My hand."

The One who wounds is also the One who heals. Judgment and restoration are held in the same hand. This is not chaos; it is sovereignty.

Ha'Azinu asks each reader the same question in personal form: What is your rock? Moses' answer is uncompromising. There is only one Rock of salvation. And Paul has already told us how the wilderness pattern reaches its fulfilment: "that Rock was Messiah" (1 Corinthians 10:4). To trust Yeshua is not to leave the Rock of Torah behind; it is to recognise the One to whom the Rock was pointing.

When Their Power Is Gone

◆ ◆ ◆

"For YHVH will judge His people and have compassion on His servants, when He sees that their power is gone." — Deuteronomy 32:36

This is one of the turning points of the song. Human strength reaches its end, and divine compassion comes into view.

We naturally want rescue while we still retain enough strength to feel that we contributed substantially to it. Scripture repeatedly shows another pattern. YHVH acts when His people can no longer mistake salvation for self-salvation.

The Exodus itself follows this pattern. Israel is trapped between Pharaoh's army and the sea. The wilderness exposes dependence day after day. Gideon's army is reduced so Israel cannot boast. The prophets speak of deliverance arriving when no human helper is sufficient.

Ha'Azinu applies the same principle to Israel's condition. When power is gone, the covenant God has not disappeared. He rises to act.

This transforms the meaning of discipline. The goal is not annihilation but the destruction of false confidence. The idols are challenged: Where are the gods in whom you trusted? Let them rise and help you. Their silence prepares the people to see again that YHVH alone kills and makes alive, wounds and heals.

Compassion is therefore not sentimental indulgence. It comes after truth has exposed every false refuge. Grace does not pretend that rebellion was harmless. It brings the sinner back to the only source of life.

The same principle lies at the heart of the gospel. Messiah does not come to congratulate humanity on its spiritual resources. He comes because we need salvation. The Lamb is God's provision, not our achievement.

"When their power is gone" is not the final line. Compassion follows. The story is moving toward a final act that no idol, nation or human effort can accomplish: YHVH Himself will provide atonement.

Atonement for His Land and His People

◆ ◆ ◆

The Song of Moses ends on a note that gathers together judgment, mercy, Israel and the nations:

> *"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people." — Deuteronomy 32:43*

This is a remarkable ending. The nations are called to rejoice with His people, not instead of His people. Israel remains His. The land remains His concern. The servants are vindicated. The adversaries are judged. And atonement is provided.

The Hebrew root kaphar is the root behind Yom Kippur. Its first biblical use is connected with Noah's ark being covered with pitch. The idea of covering develops into the great sacrificial language of atonement.

Ha'Azinu is read in the season leading toward Yom Kippur, which makes its final word especially powerful. After a song filled with Israel's failure, the conclusion is not that Israel successfully repairs everything. YHVH provides atonement.

Repentance is vital. Teshuvah — turning back — is woven into the wider message of Deuteronomy. Yet the song places the decisive provision in the hands of God.

The sacrificial system teaches the same lesson. A substitute bears what the worshipper cannot bear. On Yom Kippur the centre of the ritual was the work of the high priest and the blood brought before YHVH. The people could not manufacture atonement for themselves.

For us, this points to Messiah Yeshua. The patterns of sacrifice, priesthood and atonement find their fulfilment in the One who gives Himself for sin. His death is not an afterthought added to Torah; it is the destination toward which Torah's redemptive patterns point.

Notice again how the song ends: not with Israel erased, but with His land and His people atoned for. Not with the nations excluded, but with the nations called to rejoice with His people.

Judgment has not defeated covenant mercy. Covenant mercy has brought the song to its appointed resolution.

It Is Your Life

◆ ◆ ◆

After the song is finished, Moses turns to Israel and gives one final appeal: "Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today."

That phrase brings us back to the beginning. Ha'Azinu started with the ear; it ends with the heart.

Moses tells the people to command these words to their children and to be careful to do them. Then he gives the reason: "For it is not a futile thing for you, because it is your life."

Torah is not presented as religious decoration. The word is life because it brings the people into the knowledge, ways and covenant purposes of the living God.

This is the Shema pattern in action. Shema means "hear" or "listen", but biblical hearing expects response: hear, guard and do. Hearing that never reaches the heart remains incomplete. A heart response that never reaches life is equally incomplete. Biblical faith listens and walks. James expresses the same principle when he says that faith without works is dead (James 2:17): works do not purchase salvation, but living faith becomes visible in an obedient life.

The final verses then return us to Moses himself. On that very day YHVH tells him to ascend Mount Nebo, view the Land, and die there. He will be gathered to his people, but he will not cross the Jordan because of what happened at the waters of Meribah.

The ending is poignant. The man who sang so beautifully of the Rock is reminded of the moment when he failed to hallow YHVH at the Rock. Moses sees the inheritance from a distance.

Yet even here the language of gathering carries hope. Death is not described as disappearance but as being gathered to one's people. The first Torah use of this language is associated with Abraham.

Ha'Azinu therefore closes with both sobriety and hope. Moses must die. Israel will fail. Judgment will come. But the Rock remains perfect, the covenant remains purposeful, the scattered will not be forgotten, the nations will be summoned, and atonement will be provided.

The song is not futile. It is life.

The Song We Must Still Hear

◆ ◆ ◆

Ha'Azinu is only one chapter of Torah, yet it contains an extraordinary sweep of the biblical story.

It begins with heaven and earth listening. It presents the word as rain, proclaims the Name of YHVH, and establishes the Rock as perfect and faithful. It remembers Israel in the wilderness as a treasured possession, the apple of His eye, carried on eagles' wings.

Then the music darkens. Jeshurun grows fat and kicks. The people forget the Rock who fathered them. The face of YHVH is hidden. Israel is scattered and disciplined. The nations enter the story, and jealousy becomes part of the mystery of redemption.

But the song refuses to end in abandonment. The enemies who boast are judged. False rocks are exposed. When Israel's power is gone, YHVH has compassion. The nations are called to rejoice with His people. Atonement is provided for His land and His people.

And beyond Deuteronomy, Revelation allows us to hear the song again — now as the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb.

Its warning is for us: do not allow blessing to produce forgetfulness. Do not exchange the Rock for substitutes. Do not mistake God's discipline for covenant failure. Do not boast against the natural branches. Do not trust human power.

Its encouragement is also for us: the Rock is faithful. His work is perfect. His word accomplishes its purpose. His covenant love is stronger than human failure. His redemptive plan reaches Israel and the nations. His atonement is His provision.

So the title becomes the invitation with which we finish: Give ear. Hear His voice today. Let His teaching fall like rain. Proclaim His Name. Trust the Rock. Remember that His people are His portion. Rejoice in His mercy. Set your heart upon His word, because it is not an empty thing. It is your life.

A Scripture Pathway Through Ha'Azinu

◆ ◆ ◆

Give ear: Deuteronomy 32:1; Psalm 95:7–8; Matthew 11:15; Revelation 2–3.

The word as rain: Deuteronomy 32:2; Isaiah 55:10–11; Proverbs 4:2.

Proclaim the Name: Deuteronomy 32:3; Exodus 34:5–7; Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13.

The Rock: Deuteronomy 32:4, 15, 18, 30–31; Exodus 17:6; Numbers 20:8–12; Psalm 95; 1 Corinthians 10:4.

His portion: Deuteronomy 32:9–12; Exodus 19:4; Psalm 17:8; Zechariah 2:8.

Provoked to jealousy: Deuteronomy 32:21; Romans 10:19; Romans 11:11–32.

Atonement: Deuteronomy 32:43; Leviticus 16; Romans 15:10; Hebrews 9–10.

The song fulfilled: Deuteronomy 32:44; Revelation 15:2–4.

Questions for Reflection

◆ ◆ ◆

1. What does it mean to 'give ear' rather than merely hear words?

2. Why does Moses describe Torah teaching as rain and dew?

3. What do the repeated references to the Rock teach about YHVH?

4. How does the eagle imagery shape our understanding of discipline?

5. Why is forgetfulness dangerous in times of prosperity?

6. How does Deuteronomy 32:21 illuminate Romans 10–11?

7. Why is 'their rock is not like our Rock' central to the song?

8. What is significant about compassion when Israel's power is gone?

9. Why is atonement such a powerful final note?

10. What does Revelation 15 add to our reading of Ha'Azinu?