

HaAzinu 1980

In the Torah portion HaAzinu we learn about Moshe Rabbeinu's last speech to the Jewish people. His last words were in the form of a song because we must give a song to people, a vision in order for them to lead happy lives. In this song the Torah is compared to dew. Dew occurs when the plants are warmer than the air around them. The purpose of the Torah is to create warm personalities. Many times the Torah is compared to water. Pure water is odorless, tasteless, and transparent. You do not even know it is there but without it we cannot live. It does not have tang but it gives life. In this poem, too, we have the image of the eagle hovering over her young. This is the way G-d hovers over us. We are His children. To have children is considered the greatest blessing in Judaism. Those people who do not have children are considered to be missing a great deal in life. Unfortunately today so many young people do not want to have children. They do not know what they are missing. We, therefore, applaud this young couple who have chosen to be parents. The Rabbis say that the parents must do six things for children. They must circumcize them, redeem them, teach them a trade, teach them Torah, marry them, and teach them to swim. These six obligations of course, refer to more than themselves. Circumcision means that you should teach them how to perfect themselves. You should teach them that they have a mission and purpose in the world, that each one of them is needed and important in the world. Redeeming them means that each one of them must be loved, that each one of them has self-worth irregardless of their achievements. Teaching them a trade means that they must learn how to be independent, how to have self-respect. Teaching them Torah means that they must have character. So many people today do not have character. Having them get married teaches them that relationships are the most important thing in life, not money but good relations with people. And finally, teaching them how to swim, teach them that life has many problems and that they may have many failures but that they can always recover. Life will not defeat them if they learn how to swim. There are many risks in life

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but we can overcome. If we teach the children that they are important, that they have self-worth, that they have self-respect, that relationships are what is important, and not to be afraid of failure then we will have prepared them for this world and they will be able to have the warm, loving, compassionate personalities we want them to have.