

A Thought for Shabbat

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Shabbat Shalom

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In this week's Torah portion, *Ha-azinu*, Moses shares a poem with the people about God's role in their lives and the power of Torah for them. What an appropriate message for the High Holy Day period.

Religion is a means to an end, not an end in and of itself. The Torah and Jewish tradition is our path way to experiencing God in meaningful and significant ways. How we choose to live our lives is an individual choice for each person. However, if you are like me, you need some direction, some inspiration, and a push at times to better yourself. Torah can help us be more kind, more thoughtful, and more generous. Judaism helps us achieve all these goals. The Torah portion says that Torah is like the morning dew on the ground. It nourishes us from Heaven. Through these acts we bring the Divine spirit to this world.

The word *Shana*—meaning “year” like in *Shana Tova* has a three Hebrew letter root in which its actual essence means “change.” During this New Year, let's turn back to our tradition and change that which we feel needs work. Let's use our heritage as direction for the days and months to come. Judaism is there as our guide book for life. Let's read it together this year.