

Let My teachings drip like the rain, may My utterance flow like the dew. (32:2)

The Torah is compared to rain which descends from the heavens, reviving the seeds buried within the earth. The *Sefas Emes* notes a relationship between *adamah*, earth, and rain *vis-à-vis* Adam *HaRishon*, primordial man, his offspring, and the Torah which is compared to rain. The earth filled with seed is potential vegetation, grass, etc. It is only when rain descends on the *adamah* that this potential is released and the seeds begin to sprout and produce. Likewise, *adam*, man, created from *adamah*, is filled with tremendous potential. Will he realize his potential, or will it continue to lay dormant? *Torah Sheh'Baal Peh*, the Oral Torah, represents the concept of *Chayei Olam nata b'socheinu*, "Eternal life 'planted' in our midst." With the proper rain new spiritual life can emerge – the pure teachings of the Torah. The word "pure" prefaces "teachings," because, while there is a lot of Torah available, unless it is pure and unadulterated Torah that is taught by a bonafide Torah teacher who exemplifies the Torah's perspective, it is regrettably missing its life-sustaining properties.

Yeshayah *HaNavi* says, *Ki kaasher yeireid ha'geshem v'ha'sheleg min ha'Shomayim v'shamah lo yashuv, ki im hirvah es ha'aretz v'holidah v'hitzmichah... kein y'heyeh Devari*, "Like the rain and the snow that come down from heaven and will not return there, until they have soaked the earth and brought forth its bounty and made it grow... so shall be My words" (*Yeshayah* 55:10,11). Hashem's Word descends to the Jewish People like rain and snow benefitting the people, just as these elements enhance the earth's ability to produce its bounty.

In Moshe *Rabbeinu's* homily to the people, he compares the Torah to various forms of precipitation: rain, dew, storm winds, mist, drizzle. *Sefas Emes* explains the connotation to Torah. Some types of rain soften the earth; others such as drizzle, are particularly good for some grasses, since they soak the ground and slowly seep into the earth, while heavy showers improve certain other types of grass. Likewise, there are parts of the Torah which, like heavy rain, address the heart of man, softening it by transforming "stone" into a soft substance, which allows it to absorb the Torah's teachings and lessons. Other parts of the Torah are similar to drizzle, which slowly penetrates the heart's core. Then there is Torah which is geared to the entire collective of the Jewish People, as well as Torah which addresses the life of the individual. In conclusion, at each and every stage of a person's life, there is a portion or passage of the Torah that is specifically designed to address and treat his issues.

In *Sefer Tehillim* 19:8, David *Ha'melech* says: *Toras Hashem temimah*, "Hashem's Torah is complete/perfect." This *pasuk* describes the all-encompassing nature of the Torah. The *Sefas Emes* quotes the *pasuk* in *Shiras Haazinu*: *Ha'tzur tamim paalo*, "The Rock, Whose works are complete/perfect" (*Devarim* 32:4). He interprets the word Rock as a reference to Hashem Who used the Torah, which is referred to as complete/perfect (*tamim – temimah*) to culminate His word of (*paalo*) Creation. Since the Torah preceded the Creation of the world, and, in effect, is the

source for Creation, every facet of the world – both physical and spiritual – has its origins in the Torah. The Torah also is referred to by the term *aish*, fire, and is also known as *Toras chesed*, Torah of kindness, as well as *Toras emes*, Torah of truth. Thus, each character trait of man in some way finds its corresponding part in the Torah.

Torah is also compared to water. *Chazal* teach that the rain designated for the world – which is determined on *Rosh Hashanah* – will fall in consonance with man's actions during the year: If they are righteous and thus deserving, the rain will fall where it is needed at a propitious time and engender prosperity in the world. If not, the rain will fall in the desert where it is not needed, where it brings no benefit. The same idea holds true with regard to the spiritual *shefah*, flow, of Torah. In accordance with its recipient's preparation and meritedness, the Torah will come at a time and place where it can be of greatest spiritual benefit. Regrettably, one who is undeserving will see the spiritual flow in others. He will just stand there and wonder, "Why not me too?"

Based on the foregoing, I think we can now explain why the Torah is referred to as a *shirah*, song. In *Parashas Vayeilech* (*Devarim* 31:19), the Torah commands us *mitzvah* 613: the *mitzvah* of writing a *Sefer Torah*: *V'atah kisvu la'chem es haShirah ha'zos, v'lamdah es Bnei Yisrael, simah b'fihem*, "So now, write this song for yourselves, and teach it to *Bnei Yisrael*, place it in their mouth." *Chazal* derive from here that every Jew is commanded to write a Torah scroll – a *mitzvah* that can be fulfilled by writing a single letter. Since the lack (or error) of even one letter invalidates the Torah, writing or correcting one letter is tantamount to completing the entire scroll. Why is the Torah called a song?

A song is a musical score of high and low notes perfectly coordinated in harmony with one another. Each individual note in its own right may seem inconsistent with the next, but in context of the greater song, it all meshes together, with the "highs" and "lows," all becoming "straight" in a perfect blend of harmony. The word *shirah* may be derived from *yashar*, which means "straight." A song reflects the coalescing of various notes in such a manner that they become a perfect score. *Shirah* is the expression of seeing the "straight" in what appears misshapen. This can only be done through the lens of Torah. A Jew who enjoys such a relationship with the Torah "sings" through life. Regardless of how it might appear to the uninitiated, he is acutely aware and believes with all his heart that his life is a perfect score.