

## May my teachings drop like the rain, may my utterance flow like the dew. (32:2)

Moshe hoped that the words of the *Torah* would penetrate the nation as rain and dew penetrate the earth. Moshe was essentially comparing *Torah* to water. Water imbues the earth, softening it, nourishing the soil to provide the seed with the proper environment for growth. So, too, does *Torah* permeate an individual, refining him, preparing him so that *Torah* will have a greater effect on his life. **Horav Eliyahu Meier Bloch, zl**, notes that the similarity between water and *Torah* is even more profound. Water seeps into every particle of the earth. Likewise, *Torah* enters into every corner of a person's *neshamah*, soul, transforming the individual's entire personality.

*Torah* is different from other forms of study. It is not simply an educational endeavor which challenges and hones the mind. *Torah* is absorbed into one's entire body. One who studies *Torah* as the word of Hashem, experiences an educational process which purifies and elevates his entire psyche. *Torah* is *kedushah*, a holiness that emanates from Hashem. This *kedushah* sanctifies its student, so that he becomes literally a *cheftzah*, object, of *Torah*.

*Horav* Bloch observes that the *Torah's* text and subject matter is not written as an abstract book of philosophy, history, or law. It is written, rather, as a narrative so that the reader can experience the events taking place in the story. We do not simply read about others, we actually live the *Torah*! We are in the homes of the Patriarchs; we cross the sea with *Bnei Yisrael*; we stand together with them at *Har Sinai* accepting the *Torah*. We study the Oral Law, the *Talmud*, and the codes in the same manner. We do not merely read what Rav and Abaya say; it is as if we are in the *Bais Medrash* as their students. *Torah* learning is an interactive experience. It all depends on our attitude. Our approach to *Torah* study determines the extent of its penetration into our *neshamos*. This concept of *Torah* study is entirely different from any other kind of educational experience. Thus, the *Torah* is called *Toras Chaim*, the living *Torah*.