

Parshas Ha'azinu

This week, known as Shabbos Shuva, as well as the last formal Torah reading in Shul before Parshas Bereishis. This Parsha is a “song” written in the Torah in a different column format than other Parshas.

The poem expresses the relationship between the Jews and Hashem, where Moshe calls the Earth (and other parts) to bear witness to the relationship. At the beginning of the Parsha, Moshe uses the allegory that may my teaching flow like rain, and my utterances flow like dew. Rashi explains that just as rain is this earth's life force, the Torah is the world's life force. The spoken word should be like dew, which is pleasant to everyone (unlike rain, which can inconvenience some).

Both rain and dew are essential as a life force for this earth, as the Torah and the words of Hashem are. Both dew and rain reflect different Kabbalistic principles. Rain is the reward for “good behaviour,” whereas dew falls regardless. This is also regarding divine revelation, the one borne from hard work, like rain, versus the revelation that arrives just because we exist. The dew-style revelation will also happen when Mashiach arrives, whereas the revelation of rain is a result of our hard work.

In a sense, what Moshe is telling us of what Hashem wants is for us to work hard, and then ultimately, Mashiach will come. But regardless, Hashem is still deeply connected with us, and us, of course, with Him, and no matter what, we are connected just as the earth is forever, and the Torah is forever.

This is a beautiful message to impart to the Jewish community on the Shabbos in between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. On Rosh Hashana, we pronounce the kingship of Hashem and reclaim Hashem as our King, which begins the process of us asking for forgiveness for past actions. Our focus is on the good we will accomplish instead of the wrongdoings we may have acted on.

Moshe reminds us as he departs from the world that we remain connected to Hashem and will always be connected so that when we show up on the day, not even necessarily coming to Shul, we reignite our connection for a beautiful, sweet, healthy, blessed year.

Good Shabbos.