**\*Miller’s Musings**פרשת האזינו**\***

**\*The Rain on Your Parade\***

How do you like your Torah?  As rain or as dew?  Moshe in his final address to the Jewish people suggests that there are two forms that the transmission of the Torah can take. One is to “drip like the rain”, whilst the other is to “flow like the dew”.  Rashi seems to indicate that the latter is the more preferable one, as dew is something that is appreciated and gladly received by all, whereas rain may vex some and infuriate others.  One may wonder why, if this is so, that Moshe desires that his Torah should ever be conveyed in the manner of rain rather than in the apparently more greatly valued dew format?

Perhaps most fundamental to understanding our role in this world, is our capacity to fully appreciate the nature of existencevis-à-vis the ongoing spiritual battle we are embroiled in every moment of our lives.  It is for this that we were created and it is with this that we will fulfil our purpose.  An integral part of this conflict involves our natural reaction to the words of the Torah.  If each instruction would fully comply with our own innate desires and predilections, no struggle would ever manifest itself, and there would cease to be a point to our being here.  Because some of the messages may be divergent from the way we view the world or seek to live our lives, a reconciliation is required to bring us back in line with the Torah’s dictums and directives.  Perhaps the analogy of rain is not there to imply an inferior mode of teaching, but the superior one, hence it being listed first, because it involves the need to subjugate ourselves to our Creator due to the instinctive rejection of some of His commands.

There are people who only seek Torah and teachers of Torah that will consistently fail to challenge them.  As long as they can stay perpetually within their comfort zone, they will have found the type of Torah they desire.  But Torah is about seeking the ultimate truth, not trying to merely confirm our version of it.  Religious integrity demands that we accept that not all we will hear will align with our way of thinking and maybe that means our way of thinking may have to change.  This does not mean that we can not look for those who guide us to be people who in a general sense share our beliefs and values. But if the wisdom they impart never threatens our safe, settled way of life, we may be lacking the true Torah we need to awaken us from our spiritual slumber.  If the Torah we are being offered doesn’t sometimes inspire a passionate reaction within us, we may be living a convenient life in the warm glow of sunshine, but we will never be receiving the nurturing rain that is so indispensable to our growth.

\*May the infusion of Shabbos’s power rouse us from our sleeping.\*

לעילוי נשמת לאה בת אברהם