

Vezos Haberachah 2015

1.

### Connection between end of the Torah and beginning

Nachlas Tzvi page 530

“and by all the strong hand and awesome power that Moshe performed before the eyes of all Israel” (34, 12)

"ולכל היד החזקה ולכל המורא הגדול אשר עשה משה לעיני כל ישראל."

Why does the Torah conclude with the word ‘Israel’ and what is the connection of ‘Israel’ to ‘Berashis’ the first word of the Torah?

The Jews and Torah are called ‘ראשית’ (first). ‘ראשית’ is an acronym for ‘יש ששים ריבוא אותיות’ (the Torah has 600,000 words). The world was created for the Torah and for the Jews. Therefore, the Torah concludes with Yisroel and starts with Berashis in order to allude to the fact that the world was created because of the Jews and the Torah.

2.

### How does one become a Posek?

Kemotzei Shlal Rav pages 408-409

“They shall teach Your ordinances to Yaakov and Your Torah to Israel.” (33, 10)

Since Levi is a good tribe, therefore they will pasken (decide) what the Halacha is. Even though that they are fitting to pasken, nevertheless, they still need Moshe’s beracha.

The Brisa in Avos (perek vav) relates a fascinating story. Rabbi Yose ben Kisma said: Once I was walking on the road, when a certain man met me. He greeted me and I returned his greeting. He said to me, ‘Rabbi, from what place are you?’ I said to him, ‘I am from a great city of scholars and sages.’ He said to me. Rabbi, would you be willing to live with us in our place? I would give you thousands of golden dinars, precious stones and pearls.’ I replied, ‘even if you were to give me all the silver and gold, precious stones and pearls in the world, I would dwell nowhere but in a place of Torah etc. Furthermore, when a man departs from this world, neither silver, nor gold, nor precious stones nor pearls escort him, but only Torah study and good deeds.’ אמר רבי יוסי בן קיסמא פעם אחת הייתי מהלך בדרך ופגע בי אדם אחד ונתן לי שלום והחזרתי לו שלום אמר לי רבי מאיזה מקום אתה אמרתי לו מעיר גדולה של חכמים ושל סופרים אני אמר לי רבי רצונך שתדור עמנו במקומנו ואני אתן לך אלף אלפים דינרי זהב ואבנים טובות ומרגליות אמרתי לו בני אם אתה נותן לי כל כסף וזהב ואבנים טובות ומרגליות שבעולם איני דר אלא במקום תורה לפי שבשעת פטירתו של אדם אין מלוין לו לאדם לא כסף ולא זהב ולא (אבנים טובות ומרגליות אלא תורה ומעשים טובים בלבד).

**Rabbi Yose ben Kisma’s response and decline is very difficult to understand. With so much money he would easily be able to fully focus on his Torah learning. He could also make that**

place a place of Torah by paying talmedai chachamim to learn there. Yeshiva's could be set up. Why did he refuse to live there? Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer explains that in order for one to have success in learning or in order to turn a place into a place of Torah, one must have more than money. Other merits are needed. Rabbi Yose ben Kisma knew that with so much money he would easily be able to establish Yeshivas. However, he also knew that he needed special assistance from Hashem, which not everyone merits.

There are many big Yeshivas that currently exist that were started with very little money. They started in debt and were small. They spiritually grew, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Their monetary status also improved. Their self-sacrifice and fear of heaven were the strong foundation upon which the Yeshiva was built. **In order to be a Posek, more is needed than a lot of Torah knowledge. A powerful beracha is also needed. Levi therefore received a beracha from Moshe. Heavenly assistance is also needed.**