

וזאת הברכה, the final parsha of the torah. It's only the introduction to the beginning once again. The last letter is 'ל', and first letter is 'ב' which spells לב, to tell us that a Yiddish heart keeps right on beating.

There's a very interesting story I came across about the words וַיָּמָת שָׁם מֶשֶׁה (34:5).

At the shiva house for R' Nosson Tzvi Finkel, the rosh yeshiva's brother R' Gedalia Finkel quoted R' Yonasan Eibschutz that when a צדיק who is a תלמיד חכם is taken from this world, all of his positive מדות become הפקר, available to be taken by anyone who claims them. This is brought in the sefer of R' Yonasan Eibschutz called יערות דבש. When asked how one could possibly take these character traits, R' Gedalia answered that one should work hard to improve himself in the area that he has chosen, and Hashem will do the rest; he will have סיעתא דשמיא.

We are not only able to become great by picking up a צדיק's מדות, we are obligated to try to fill the void that his passing has left in this world. As Rav Shach said when he was leaving the funeral of the חזון איש, even though the pasuk in קהלת (9:4) says it is better to be a live dog than a dead lion, nevertheless, if the lion is dead, one cannot remain a dog. He needs to pick himself up and become a lion.

The torah testifies that משה was the greatest man to have ever lived. With his פטירה, his positive מדות became available to the world. Perhaps the previous דורות have already taken and used up משה's positive מדות. In the spiritual realm, perhaps they have not. But one thing is for sure. In recent times, נבך, have lost so many of our great צדיקים, we have the ability to fill their footsteps by choosing one of their מדות. Only one question remains: which מדות should we choose? Let us take one that is meaningful and fill those voids.

