

To Zevulun, he said: Zevulun, rejoice in your going out; and Yissachar, in your tents. (33:18)

Apparently, Moshe Rabbeinu's preferred style for conferring blessing differed from that of Yaakov Avinu. Our Patriarch showered his sons with long, flowery blessings. Moshe, on the other hand, sufficed with brevity. Yaakov's blessing to Dan consisted of two pesukim, while Moshe's a mere five words. Zevulun and Yissachar's blessing from the Patriarch was a litany of three pesukim. Moshe's blessing to Zevulun was not short, but the blessing he conferred upon Yissachar was a single word: B'ahalecha, "(You shall rejoice) in your tents." On the surface we may suggest that Yaakov was addressing his sons. Thus, he did not rush his blessing. This was his parting moment from his sons. Moshe was addressing entire shevatim, tribes. This called for brevity. Horav Yisrael Belsky, zl, explains that brevity is not an indication of a dearth of superior qualities. On the contrary, with regard to distinction in Torah, it is not necessary to articulate (and write) numerous appellations.

One who fails to achieve in Torah (due to his own deficiency) is falling short of his obligation as a Jew. Torah is our lifeblood, without which we are no better than the common man. Chazal (Pirkei Avos 6:4) teach: "This is the way of Torah (live a simple life devoid of excessive materialism) ... If you conduct yourself thus, you are praiseworthy, and it will be good for you." This Mishnah says very little about the reward or the praise received for he who follows the Torah way; nor does it indicate what lies in store for he who chooses not to study Torah and adhere to its dictates.

The Rosh Yeshivah explains that one who is immersed in Torah does not require lengthy explanations of its benefits or the reward he will accrue. He learns because it is his life. You do not pat someone on the back doing the right thing. Any ben Torah understands the value of Torah study just by learning and living it. The one who does not learn remains clueless to its life-altering benefits and reward. Unless he opens up a sefer and learns, he will just not understand, and no amount of explaining will enlighten him.

Moshe Rabbeinu understood that the people were coming down from kabbolas haTorah, followed by forty years of living miraculously in the Wilderness. They valued Torah because they had lived it. Therefore, he chose a simpler, more effective, approach toward blessing: brevity.