

## "And the Bnei Yisroel wept for Moshe." (34:8)

*Rashi* explains, regarding Moshe's death that only the males wept, in contrast to Aharon's death when all the people mourned. This is because Aharon pursued peace, making peace between man and his fellow man, and between husband and wife. It seems puzzling that the *Torah* should belittle Moshe in its culmination. The *Or Hachaim* explains that the contrast in mournings was due to *Klal Yisroel's* having an immediate successor to Moshe upon his passing. Since they were not left leaderless, the impact of Moshe's passing was not as noticeable. However, with Aharon's demise, as his son Elazar replaced him as the *Kohein Gadol*, therefore his presence as the arbitrator and promoter of harmony among people was greatly missed. *Rabbi Meir Bergman Shlita* explains the nature of the loss of a *Torah* scholar to his students. When a great *Torah* mentor passes on, it is not merely the demise of a great individual that is mourned, it is the immeasurable loss of a source of *Torah*. The fountain of *Torah* knowledge has ceased to flow. In the eyes of the "ordinary Jew", the loss of Moshe as the source of *Torah* knowledge was replaced by Yehoshua, his student. It was only the elders and great scholars of that generation who were able to perceive the spiritual loss that would affect them. However, upon Aharon's demise every Jew understood how he was affected.

*Rabbi Moshe Shternbuch Shlita* explains the apparent diminution of mourning for Moshe. A true leader must remain aloof of the populace and should not allow public opinion to deter him from steering the proper course. The pettiness of simple folk who lack the desire to understand the inner workings of leadership should not be his concern. Indeed, he must do what is mandated by the *Torah* even when there are those who protest his decision. A leader's popularity is not measured by the number of times he concedes to the pressures of his congregation. Moshe, during his tenure as the shepherd of Hashem's flock, often took a position which was not accepted by the people. Individuals were castigated and rebuked, sinners were punished, whiners and complainers were quieted in strong terms. These situations were not conducive to Moshe's popularity, but were necessary for the continued strong leadership of *Am Yisroel*. These instances of non-acceptance did not deter Moshe from navigating *Am Yisroel* on the proper course. Therefore his passing was noted more so by the people who were cognizant of Moshe's greatness.