

"And die on the mountain . . . as your brother Aharon died." (32:50)

It seems that Hashem is promising Moshe that he will die in the same manner that his brother Aharon died. What did Moshe envy that was so unique about Aharon's death? *Rashi* explains that just before Aharon died, Moshe dressed Elazar, Aharon's son, in the priestly vestments, so that Aharon would have the *nachas* of seeing his son fill his position as *Kohen Gadol*.

Indeed, we find in *Parashas Pinchas* (*Bamidbar* 27:16) that Moshe entreated Hashem to bequeath his position of leadership to his sons. This seems puzzling. This *parsha* indicates that Hashem promises to honor Moshe's request. It would be inconceivable to think that Hashem would promise Moshe to give his sons leadership and instead appoint Yehoshua to this position. How, then, did Hashem grant Moshe's request? How did Moshe see his sons attain his greatness?

Horav D. Feinstein, Shlita, offers the following answer to this question. Moshe's distinction did not lie in his role as king or leader, but rather as the *Rebbe* of *Klal Yisrael*. He was the pre-eminent teacher who first introduced the *Torah* to us. Just as the biological father brings his child into this world, so does the *rebbe* bring the Jewish child into the eternal world of *Olam Ha'bah*. Indeed, in the eternal world, the *rebbe* is viewed as a father to his students.

Moshe Rabbeinu, the quintessential teacher of *Klal Yisrael*, was promised that he would see his most devoted student, Yehoshua, accede to his position as *manhig*, leader, of *Klal Yisrael*. All of his spiritual children, the entire *Klal Yisrael*, have inherited his legacy of *Torah*. What greater joy and *nachas* can a *rebbe* have than to see his *talmidim* follow in the path which he has charted for them?

Moshe truly merited a death similar to Aharon's, for until this very day we, his spiritual heirs, study the *Torah* which he taught to that initial generation.

We may advance this thought further. There are some parents who structure their child's whole future in their mind. They have decided which career their child should embark upon. There are also those individuals who, themselves erudite *Torah* scholars, expect the same orientation for their sons. Alas, there is always the one child who doesn't fit the mold, whose aspirations and strivings are not in harmony with those of his parents. To some people, not having their son follow in their footsteps or predetermined future plans can be a crushing blow. This reality can destroy a relationship between parent and child and place a heavy strain on the whole family.

This foolish response is not *Torah* oriented. Parents must inspire and encourage their children, while guiding them towards their own individualized future. Negative responses to a child's choice can only destroy the child's self-image and will be self-defeat. *Moshe Rabbeinu's* sons did not assume his mantle of leadership. Moshe accepted Hashem's decision and instead joyfully

transferred it to his student, Yehoshua. Moshe was not only *Klal Yisrael's* illustrious leader, he was also a parent whose love and respect for his offspring transcended his personal aspirations for them.