

"The six cities of refuge." (35:6)

After Moshe endured the forty years of travel and travail with *Bnei Yisrael* in the wilderness, he was distressed at not being able to share in their forthcoming joy, entry into *Eretz Yisrael*. The *Abarbanel* explains that Hashem, in an attempt to console Moshe, gave him the task of teaching *Bnei Yisrael* the *mitzvos* relating to *Eretz Yisrael*. He also charged him with five specific missions which Moshe was to initiate, but which would not be completed until after his death. They were: to conquer and seize the land from its present inhabitants; to divide it fairly among the twelve tribes; to set its boundaries; to designate the forty-two cities for the *Leviim*; to set aside the six cities of refuge.

We may question this form of consolation. Would it not be even more difficult for Moshe to teach about *Eretz Yisrael*, knowing fully well that he was prohibited entry? Would it not take an amazing personal forbearance to be able to transcend his own feelings regarding his imminent death in order to teach *Klal Yisrael* about the promised land? The *Abarbanel* explains that, even though he knew he would not enter *Eretz Yisrael*, the realization that he was part of the process of entry consoled him.

We should take note of the above statement. Often we tend to avoid involvement in various activities because we will not receive due recognition for our efforts. This is misguided. The mere realization that we are part of a process which will enhance *Torah* activity should motivate our inclusion in any activity. One who seeks complete recognition for his efforts is guilty of a covert form of arrogance.