

## **And no one knows his burial place to this day. (34:6)**

In his commentary to *Sotah* 14a, the *Bach* amends the *Talmud's* narrative to include an additional passage which is found in the *Ein Yaakov*. *Rav* Chama bar Chanina said: Why is it that the gravesite of Moshe *Rabbeinu* is hidden from the eyes of flesh and blood? For it was revealed and known to the Almighty that the Holy Temple was destined to be destroyed and that the Jewish People were destined to be exiled from their Land. Thus, the grave had to be hidden, lest the Jews come crying to Moshe's gravesite at that time and beseech Moshe, saying, "Moshe, our Teacher, rise and pray on our behalf." Moshe would then arise and through his prayers catalyze the nullification of the decree.

When a monument was erected over the grave of *Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl*, in Kaliningrad, Russia, in 2011, *Horav Chaim Stein, zl*, remarked that we see from the above *Chazal* how much can be achieved by praying at *kivrei tzaddikim*. *Hashem Yisborach* concealed Moshe's gravesite, so that *Klal Yisrael* would be unable to locate it and *daven* to rescind a Heavenly decree. This is a powerful lesson. Indeed, the *Zohar HaKadosh* writes: *Tzaddikim* protect during their lifetime, and even more when they are gone. The *Zohar* quotes the *neshamah*, soul, of a deceased person who told Rabbi Yehudah bar Shalom, after it was asked if, in fact, the dead are aware of the travail experienced by the living: "In the name of the archangel who is appointed over graves, if not for the constant supplication of the deceased on behalf of the living, the living would not live even half a day." Furthermore, it goes without saying that the *neshamos* of the deceased derive immense spiritual pleasure from the prayers of the living.

The *Chafetz Chaim* once remarked concerning *Chazal's* words (*Eirubin* 13b), "One who pursues *kavod*, honor – the honor runs away from him, while one who runs away from honor – it also runs after him." It appears that both (the one who pursues honor and the one who runs away from honor) are left bereft of honor. The difference between them is apparent on the day of death. The person who has run after honor has distanced himself from it. The one who has run from honor, however, will find that it finally catches up with him on the day of his death. No more running. We see now who is worthy of distinction and who is not. *Klal Yisrael* has great and wonderful humble individuals who have kept to themselves and have never sought glory. We see their glory at the cemetery from all the little stones piled up on top of their monuments.