

Hashem told Moshe..."to return to Egypt, as all the men who are seeking to kill you have died. (4:19)

Perhaps the people who disparaged Moshe, who went out of their way to inform on him to Pharaoh, were no longer a problem, but Pharaoh himself was still alive. He surely was not likely to embrace Moshe with love and friendship. **Horav Yonasan Eibeshitz, zl**, who suffered greatly from slanderers, asked this question. His response was one to which he could relate only too well. It appears, said *Rav* Yonasan, that the disparaging comments and slander of Jews such as Dasan and Aviram, were even more dangerous than Pharaoh's sword.

What a truism! Anyone who has been the hapless victim of character assassination will confirm this statement. Defamation of character destroys lives. It makes victims of entire families. Its effect can last for generations. Indeed, it really is more treacherous than Pharaoh's sword.