

## **"And Moshe took the bones of Yosef with him, for he had caused the Bnei Yisrael to swear... and you shall bring up my bones with you." (13:19)**

At first glance, the *pasuk* seems to downplay the performance of this *mitzvah*, by implying that the incentive was purely a result of a previous promise made to Yosef. The *Talmud (Sota 9b)* states, however, that because of Moshe's preoccupation with this *mitzvah* he merited that Hashem Himself would engage in his burial. Therefore, we must deduce that the *Torah* is, in fact, teaching us the reason that Moshe merited Hashem's personal engagement in this endeavor. Obviously, it wasn't necessary for Yosef to exact a promise from *Bnei Yisrael* to take his bones out of Egypt. There were many reasons for their indebtedness to Yosef, which should have motivated their reciprocity to him.

This *pasuk* reveals Yosef's great humility. Because of this trait, Yosef did not perceive *Bnei Yisrael* to be in debt to him. Hashem's plan mandated that he be in Egypt, in order to have the opportunity to save his brothers. His humility earned for Yosef the involvement in the burial of another great *tzaddik* who exemplified this same attribute. Moshe understood the true essence of righteousness. He emulated Yosef's behavior thereby meriting himself that Hashem personally engage in his burial. Greatness is not always indicated by how much a person personally benefits from an individual's actions, but rather by a person's innate character traits. Moshe was involved in Yosef's burial as a symbolic eulogy, indicating respect for a great *tzaddik*. An individual who guides and influences others can ultimately be replaced, but his unique personal attributes can never be duplicated.