

Let me now cross and see the good land that is on the other side of the Yarden...And Hashem said to me, "It is too much for you! Do not continue to speak to me further about this matter." (3:26,27)

Moshe was not permitted to enter into *Eretz Yisrael* regardless of the sincerity of his abundant prayers. It just was not to be. The *Midrash* adds a profound insight into Hashem's refusal to sanction Moshe's request to enter *Eretz Yisrael*. Rabbi Levi comments, "Moshe *Rabbeinu* said to Hashem; *Ribbono Shel Olam* the bones of Yosef *Ha'tzaddik* shall enter *Eretz Yisrael* (for burial) and I shall not?" Hashem responded, "He who acknowledged his land merits to be buried there; he who did not acknowledge his land is not buried there." When Yosef was falsely accused of making advances to the wife of Potifera, she said, "*See he brought to us a Hebrew man.*" When Yosef was questioned regarding his origins, he said that he had been kidnapped from the land of Hebrews. He did not deny his Jewishness. On the other hand, Yisro's daughters referred to Moshe as "*an Egyptian man (who) rescued us,*" a description which he did not disclaim. Consequently, Yosef, who was not afraid to acknowledge a connection to his land was buried there. Moshe, who seemingly evaded this connection, was denied burial in *Eretz Yisrael*.

The *Midrash* apparently condemns Moshe for not demonstrating greater allegiance to his land. **Horav Avraham Kilav, Shlita**, suggests a unique interpretation of this *Midrash*, which presents Moshe in a totally different light. Yosef and Moshe were charged with two disparate missions as *Klal Yisrael's* leaders. Yosef, as the viceroy of Egypt, was to prepare *Bnei Yisrael* for the Exodus, so that they would leave with remarkable wealth and material possessions. He was to mold the physical dimension of *Klal Yisrael*. Moshe was charged with developing *Klal Yisrael* into a *mamleches kohanim v'goi kadosh*, a nation of priests and a holy people. He was enjoined to prepare them for their eternal destiny.

Moshe's mission as developer of *Klal Yisrael's* spiritual stature prompted him to request access to *Eretz Yisrael*. After all, should he not have taken precedence over Yosef, who focused only on *Bnei Yisrael's* material issues? Hashem explained to Moshe that it was precisely because he was charged with caring for *Klal Yisrael's* spiritual destiny that he had no reason to enter *Eretz Yisrael*. Yosef acknowledged *Eretz Yisrael*: This means that Yosef viewed the land in a fundamental way. *Klal Yisrael* were to leave Egypt and go to their Promised Land - *Eretz Yisrael*. This was his goal, his focus; this is what he achieved. Consequently, he was awarded a place in the land that was an integral part of his mission. Moshe transmitted the *Torah* specifically in the wilderness, as an indication of the *Torah's* character; it held no connection to a specific place. The place is not primal in *Torah*; rather, the law is dominant in *Torah*. Moshe, therefore, had no concern with the reference to him to as an Egyptian. Moshe would be able to enter *Eretz Yisrael* only when his mission was accomplished, when the land had reached the pinnacle of holiness, when Yerushalayim was rebuilt and the *Bais Hamikdash* was functioning in its consummate spiritual

majesty. The *Bais Hamikdash* can attain its spiritual zenith only when *Klal Yisrael* are similarly at their spiritual summit. After the sin of the Golden Calf, which was followed by the sin of the spies and other incidents demonstrating their spiritual shortcomings, Hashem told Moshe that, regrettably, his mission had not been successfully completed. He would not be permitted to enter *Eretz Yisrael*.