

So Moshe, servant of Hashem, died there. (34:5)

According to one opinion in Chazal, the last eight pesukim of the Torah were written by Moshe, but, rather than using ink, he wrote the last words with tears. The Torah comes to an end with the passing of Moshe, the quintessential rebbe of the Jewish nation, the man who dedicated every fibre of his being to Klal Yisrael. This conclusion to the greatest volume that has ever been recorded is written with tears — Moshe's tears. It is very difficult to accept that Moshe wept over the words, "So Moshe, servant of Hashem, died there." Our leader led a perfect life. No man ever achieved the pinnacle of spirituality and the unprecedented relationship with the Almighty that personified his life. Moshe's place in Gan Eden was assured. Moreover, he was acutely aware that his stay in this world was coming to an end before the nation which he had so faithfully led would enter Eretz Yisrael. Why did he weep?

If I may use my homiletic license, I would like to suggest that Moshe cried over the words, And no one knows his burial place to this day (Ibid. 34:6). What is the significance of these words? I think that the Torah is conveying a powerful message. Throughout the millennia, millions of our people have been persecuted and put to death through the most cruel and inhuman means. For the Jew, however, there is something even worse than death: not having the opportunity to be laid to rest in a kever Yisrael. Throughout our history, millions of Jews have been deprived of a Jewish burial. This is a tragedy of epic proportion. Hashem Yisborach addressed this dilemma when He personally buried Moshe and concealed his burial site. Hashem was teaching us that every Jew who does not have a kever Yisrael is buried personally by the Almighty — and He knows the spot. Just like Moshe, whom He buried, so, too, have millions of our brothers and sisters been buried by Hashem.

Moshe Rabbeinu realized the implications of the words, and no one knows his burial place. He understood profoundly what these words would mean to the millions of Jews, who, like himself, would be buried by Hashem. So he cried. These were not tears of sadness. They were tears of pride in knowing that, regardless of what our enemies do to us, they will never triumph. Hashem will never forsake us. And this is how the Torah concludes.

