

But Hashem became angry with me, because of you. (3:26)

Moshe *Rabbeinu's* address to *Klal Yisrael* is enigmatic. Our quintessential leader was not one to share with the people what appear to be his personal issues concerning not being allowed to enter *Eretz Yisrael*. He erred, and Hashem did not forgive him. Indeed, why did Hashem not forgive Moshe? Incredibly, according to the *Midrash*, he offered five hundred and fifteen supplications to Hashem! Moshe knew how to pray. Yet, his prayers were not accepted. Moshe said to Hashem: "I spent so much time and trouble to inspire *Klal Yisrael* to be faithful, to believe and to observe. It was not easy. Why should I not share in their success?" It is almost like a long-suffering teacher who has spent so much time believing in his student and suffering with him through the challenges, the failures, the bumps in the road – until finally – graduation, and the teacher is not permitted to attend, to join in the *nachas*, satisfaction. What an enormous letdown that would be.

The *Yalkut Shemoni* quotes Moshe petitioning Hashem, "*Ribbono Shel Olam*, Yosef *HaTzaddik's* bones will enter into the Land, but I will not?" We hear the pain in Moshe's voice, pleading with Hashem to allow the *middah*, Attribute, of *Rachamim*, Mercy, to precede the *middah* of *Din*, Strict Judgment. Hashem stills him, saying, "Enough! The people should not intend to suggest that the Master is acting onerously by imposing a heavy punishment on Moshe."

The *Sifri*, as explained by *Haamek Davar*, sheds light on Hashem's action and Moshe's remonstrating to the people. The key is in the words, "But Hashem became angry with me – *l'maanchem* – because of you." The word *l'maanchem* actually means "for you," for your benefit. To say simply, "because" of you, the Torah should have written *biglalchem*, "you caused this." Moshe was intimating to the nation, "Perhaps I could have 'pulled it off.' I might have successfully petitioned Hashem to forgive me and to allow me to enter the Holy Land. The reason for my lack of success is you." Hashem wanted to teach you an important lesson: all is not forgiven. Once you enter into *Eretz Yisrael*, your actions will not be overlooked. What was forgiven in the wilderness will not necessarily effect the same good fortune in the Holy Land. More is expected of you and the barometer of judgment is different.

Indeed, Hashem's compassion for the Jewish People, His love and caring for them, was the reason that he evinced no flexibility in judging Moshe. The lesson had to be effectively imparted: A new era was dawning. No more free passes. Every negative action will incur punishment. Moshe had to ruminate over his fate publicly – for their sake. They should realize that their quintessential leader was serving as the prototype, the example of what occurs when one breaches Hashem's imperative.