Love the Life You Live

Background

HASHEM commanded Moshe Rabbeinu in his final *mitzvah*: "Tell the Jewish People to avenge the iniquity done by Midyan to Israel. After this act, you will leave the world."

There was no specific time given for the war. It could have been done right away, or it could happen later. One fact, however, was clear. After this campaign, Moshe would die.

Rather than delaying, Moshe acted on this immediately and told the Jewish People to prepare for war. Rashi comments that despite his knowing that right after the war he would die, Moshe nevertheless proceeded with *joy* and didn't delay.

The *Tzeidah LaDerech* explains that Moshe thought that if he told the Jewish people that HASHEM commanded them to avenge the Jewish Nation, they would delay the event. They understood that once this event occurred, their beloved leader would be taken from them. Since it was their honor that was being defended, they would feel they had a right to wait and thereby prolong the time they had with Moshe. Realizing this possibility, Moshe changed the message. He said, "Take the revenge of HASHEM." Now the Jews would have no excuse to delay. They would be forced to act right away.

Questions

We know that Moshe was a servant of HASHEM, so we can understand how he hastened his death to properly serve his Creator. But could he do this with joy? Moshe loved life. To him, every moment was a precious opportunity to become closer to HASHEM. How was it possible for him to give that up – with joy?

ספר במדבר פרק לא

ג) וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל הָעָם לֵאמֹר הֵחָלְצוּ מֵאִתְּכֶם אֲנָשִׁים לַצָּבָא וְיִהְיוּ עַל מִדְיָן לָתֵת נִקְמַת יְדֹוָד בְּמִדְיָן:

And Moshe spoke to the Nation, saying, "Gather from amongst you men for an army, and you shall prevail upon Midyan to take Hashem's revenge against them."

רש"י על במדבר פרק לא פסוק ג

ג) וידבר משה וגו' - (ספרי) אף ע"פ ששמע שמיתתו תלויה בדבר עשה בשמחה ולא איחר

Despite hearing that his death depended on this act, he [Moshe] did it with joy and didn't delay.