



Moshe's chastisement of the people for their sins, so the second part of the Parsha is replete with poetic descriptions of movement and victories, of battles and the acquisition of pledged territories in that ancient world.

As we read the Parsha, let us anticipate the continuous undoing of our past foibles, dwell on the miracles of the past, and yearn for the fulfilment of our national and religious mission - speedily and in our days, Amen. **MP**

Sometimes the simplest notions expressed are the most profound. So when Yoel Elizur reminds us that Parshat D'varim is always read on the Shabbat preceding Tish'a b'Av, we prick up our ears and we read further.

For we are reminded that Tish'a b'Av is more than (just) a day of mourning. True, Tish'a b'Av recalls the severity of the Sin of the Spies, the aftermath of which caused a whole generation (adult males) never to merit entering Eretz Yisrael. But, on the other hand, following the prophecies of Zechariya, Tish'a b'Av will one day be a day of joy and celebration when Hashem, "will yet have mercy on Tzion and choose Yerushalayim" (1:17).

Had the spies come back with praise of the Land, the people would have immediately gone up to conquer it - but alas! Nevertheless, we are reminded that the essence of Tish'a b'Av actually lies in its potential as a source of rejoicing and happiness and of an awareness of our national destiny and fulfilment, as G-d's Chosen People in the Chosen Land.

This theme is echoed in our Parsha. For while the first part reflects