

## From the Abravanel Jacob Solomon

G-d spoke to Moshe, telling him to instruct the Israelites with: "This is the land that shall fall to you as an inheritance when you arrive in the land of Canaan" (34:1-2).

G-d proceeded to detail the geographical borders for the nine-and-a-half tribes that Moshe in turn would present to the Israelites. It was territory that Moshe would never see at close range; he would never set foot on it. It would be Yehoshua's work to conquer and settle the Land. Yet Moshe, not Yehoshua, received the brief: prepare the Israelites to conquer the Land and end the idolatrous practices there, set the Land's precise borders, appoint leaders from each tribe to divide the Land, allocate cities to the Levites, designate cities of refuge within the main part of the Land as well as on the east side of the Jordan, and ensure that family real-estate stays within the tribe.

Abravanel suggests that G-d's asking Moshe to prepare the conquest and settlement of the Land was to comfort him before his death as he faced the reality that he would not personally take part. Moshe would therefore be able to leave this world with the sense of being connected to the Israelites' entry and settlement of the Promised Land. He would die with the satisfaction that his work was

marching on, even though he would not personally see the results.

In addition, it could be suggested that G-d's involving Moshe in entering the Land would maximize the impact of his life's work and influence on the Israelites. Directing the planning and mapping-out the campaign would make his presence and his teachings felt later on at the time of conquest, even though he would no longer be alive. The Israelites would perceive him as having been committed and involved with them until the very last moment of his life.

Were, on the other hand, the directives to come from Yehoshua at this stage, the people's memory of Moshe would be of a less influential retiring person rather than an leader driving the ultimate ideals and teachings. It would be akin to a restaurant that in the eyes of the customer is only as good as the last meal he ate there.

So to ensure that the Israelites would be inspired by the very best of Moshe, G-d gave him the directorship of conquering, sharing out, and settling the land, which he himself followed up with his final rousing address to the Israelites ending with:

**"Happy are you, Israel! Who is like you? You are a nation delivered by G-d, the Shield who helps you, and your triumphant Sword. G-d will**



**subjugate your enemies and you shall crush their high places underfoot" (D'varim 33:29).**

This can exemplify the importance of grandparents, great-grandparents, and great-great-grandparents being positively and proactively involved in the lives of the younger members of the family as far as health allows; ideally to the very last moment. After the time has come, the memories of those remaining will not be of someone withdrawn from life, but a personality who was with them through-and-through and in their minds is still marching on. 🚶