

## 2. The Promised Land

[T]he LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites.” Gen 15:18-21)

“I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.” (Exod 3:8)

The Promised Land (a phrase never used in the Bible; it is called simply The Land **הָאָרֶץ** *ha-aretz*) is defined 3 ways:

1. geographically: from the river of Egypt (**נְהַר מִצְרַיִם** e. branch of the Nile) to the Euphrates (**נְהַר פָּרָת**). The Land between the two mighty river civilizations.
2. ethnographically: the land of the Amorites, Canaanites, etc.
3. characteristically: a good and broad land (**אֶרֶץ טוֹבָה וְרַחְבָּה**), a land flowing with milk and honey (**אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֵלֶב וְדָבָשׁ**)

### I. The Geography of the Land

The Levant is bounded:

- on west: the Sea (**הַיָּם**), or The Great Sea (**הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל**). Lat. *mediterrāneus*.
- on north: Taurus Mountains (Turkey)
- on east: Syrian Desert
- on south: Egypt, Arabia

Four longitudinal zones:

1. Coastal Plain
2. Central Mountain Range
3. Rift Valley: the Great Rift Valley (n. Syria to Mozambique)
4. Mountains

#### A. Northern Levant (Lebanon/Syria)

1. Coast: narrow
2. Mountains: Lebanon Range
3. Valley: Beqa' Valley (**בְּקַעַת הַדְּבִנּוֹן**), from which Orontes River flow north, Litani River south.
4. Mountains: Anti-Lebanon. Mt Hermon is southmost end.

## B. Southern Levant (Israel)

### 1. The Coastal Zone

The Plain of Acco  
 The Jezreel Valley  
 The Sharon (הַשָּׂרֹן)  
 The Philistine Coast  
 The Shephelah: foothills  
 The Western Negev

### 2. The Central Mountain Range

Galilee  
 Mount Ephraim  
 The Judean Hill Country  
 The Eastern Negev

### 3. The Jordan Rift

a. Huleh Valley: Huleh lake now drained.

b. Kinneret כִּנְרֵת: elev -630 ft. 13 mls long, 7 mls wide. City of Kinneret on nw.

c. The Jordan Valley: narrow strip of dense vegetation either side (gaon Yarden יַרְדֵּן הַגֹּאֵן)

d. Dead Sea יַם הַדְּעַרְבָּה the Sea of the Arabah, יַם הַמֶּלַח the Salt Sea (θάλασσα Αραβα, θάλασσα άλυκης) divided in two by the Lisan (ford across at Lisan):

- north: c. 30 mls long, 1200 ft deep.
- south: c. 15 mls long, shallow.

high cliffs on both sides

Oases: En-gedi, Jericho.

Jericho: 7 mls nw of sea.

e. The Arabah יַם הַדְּעַרְבָּה: rift valley from Dead Sea to Gulf of Elat/Aqaba. c. 110 mls. rises to 750 ft. In OT Arabah used also for Dead Sea, Jordan Valley.

### 4. The Transjordanian Highlands

- Bashan
- Gilead
- Moab
- Edom

## II. The People of the Land

[T]he land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites. (Gen 15:19-21)

The existing peoples of the land are described in lists of different lengths:

1. 6 peoples (10×): the most common list: Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites (these first 3 in various orders); Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites (last 3 always in this order).
2. 7-peoples (3×): adds the Girgashites.
3. 10-peoples (1×): adds the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites (Gen 18:19-21). The fullest list is the original promise.

The spies' report of the peoples of the land:

The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan. (Num 13:29)

- The Amorites
- The Canaanites/Phoenicians
- The Philistines

## III. The Characteristics of the Land

a land flowing with milk and honey (אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֵלֶב וְדָבָשׁ).

A land sensitive to spiritual condition of the people (Deut 11:10-17): unlike Egypt where the Nile always provided irrigation, the Land drinks rain from heaven. Rain is dependent on faith: if the people follow the Lord, he will give rain at the right time; if not, he will withhold rain.

A land the Lord cares for (Deut 11:12); it's his land, given to Israel as tenants.

The land is a partial restoration of the Garden of Eden.

## IV. The Entrance into the Land

The Exodus: The Lord brought the Israelites out of Egypt, through the Red Sea. This marked a new beginning for Israel's calendar (Exod 12:1). On the 15th day of the 1st month (Nisan), after 430 years in Egypt. Celebrated ever since in the Passover (M1 D14).

Mt Sinai: 6 weeks later, at the beginning of the third month, the Israelites arrived at Mt Sinai. (Traditional site: Jebel Musa; St Catherine's Monastery, built 548-565 by Justinian).

God made a covenant with Israel. The Ten Commandments are the treaty document: two copies (a full copy on each stone tablet), deposited together in the ark of the covenant.

Stayed at Mt Sinai for nearly 1 year, making the tabernacle:

Y1 M1 D14 departed Egypt

Y1 M3 D1 arrived at Sinai

Y2 M1 D1 Moses erected tabernacle  
 Y2 M1 D14 Passover at Sinai  
 Y2 M2 D14 second Passover for those who had been unclean at first  
 Y2 M2 D20 departure from Sinai

Kadesh-barnea: an 11-day journey brought the Israelites to the edge of the Land, at Kadesh-barnea. Moses sent 12 spies to spy the land; they journeyed 40 days, and brought back a report:

- +ve: “It is a good land that the Lord our God is giving us” (Deut 1:25). Evidence: bunch of grapes from Valley of Eshcol (אֶשְׁכּוֹל “cluster” Num 13:23-24).
- -ve: giants in the land.
- 10 spies afraid; Joshua & Caleb confident in God.

Rebellion against God > God’s punishment: aimless wandering in wilderness for 38 years until all males over 20 die.

### 1. Trans-Jordan

### 2. Conquest

### 3. Allocation