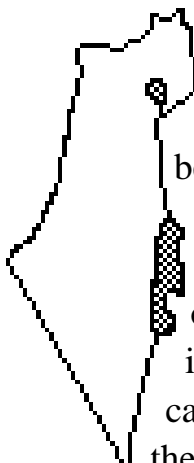


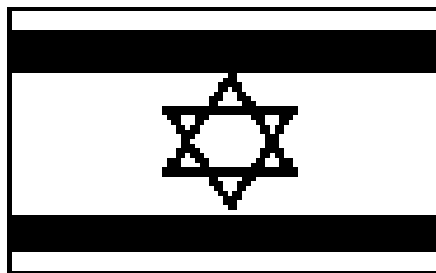
הָאֶרֶץ

The Land of Israel



The land of Israel is geographically oriented from the east. The eastern boundary is the Euphrates river. Since the east is the direction of orientation the word for east can also mean “in front of or before.” The western boundary of Israel is easy since it is a natural one—the great sea, the Mediterranean. Thus the word for sea (or just about any body of water) “yam” can also refer to something or someone behind you. The northern most boundary extends up to the inheritance of the tribe of Dan and thus the length of the land is idiomatically known as “from Dan to Beersheba.” While Beersheba is one of the southern boundaries, most now believe that the river of Egypt otherwise known as wadi el Arish is the southern boundary.

The land of Israel has at times been occupied by numerous nations but the ownership of the land belongs ultimately to G-d (Psalm 24:1). According to Genesis 14:19,22 G-d is the owner of the land and Israel is His firstborn and thus



the land is their inheritance. This land was promised to Avraham in covenant terms in Genesis 12. We know from Genesis one and Deut 8 that the land of Israel was plentiful with all that the people would need to flourish. The Torah and the Prophets focus much attention on the land of Israel because this is the land in which the Messiah would be born, raised, teach, and eventually die. Since the land belongs to Israel not because of any goodness in her but because it is a gift of G-d, no part of the land should be given to any other nation.

Not only was the Land the place of Messiah’s life, death, and resurrection while He lived here upon the earth, but it will also be the place to which He returns when He comes to reign as King over all the earth. He will reside as the Holy One in the rebuilt Temple, and will teach the Torah to all who come. In fact, it will be during His reign that all of the nations will acknowledge that Adonai is the only G-d, and that He alone is to be worshipped. It will be as the nations come to Israel to celebrate the Festivals that He will be known as unique (One) and His name will be unique (One).