

## **Encountering the Holy Land Geography of Israel**

Israel is located on the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. It is often called “The Land Between” because of its location between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Over 1800 miles connected Ur of the Chaldees in the north to Thebes in Egypt in the south. Roman conquerors built roads through Israel to connect these two power centers. Israel is divided into five geographical areas:

### **1. Coastal Plain**

- \*Flat coastline

- \*Agriculture-wheat and barley

- \*Powerful springs provided water so the people were able to build large cisterns coated with plaster to store water.

- \*Because of the terrain, they built using mud bricks.

- \*Caravans traveled through this area from Mesopotamia to Egypt or Egypt to Mesopotamia. They created lots of trade opportunities for the people living there. This was also how Joseph’s brothers were able to sell him into slavery.

- \*Armies traveling through this area caused many hardships for the people.

### **2. Hill Country**

- \*This area was rich in limestone which the people were able to cut, shape, and design with a chisel. Houses built using limestone could last for hundreds of years.

- \*Mountains in this region were generally between 2,000 and 3,000 feet above sea level.

- \*Jerusalem is 2,500 feet above sea level.

- \*This terrain forms deep V shaped valleys.

- \*Farmers raised their crops on terraces. (wheat, barley, fruit trees)

- \*Powerful springs and good rainfall enabled the people to hue out large caverns that they plastered with lime to store water.

- \*The mountains made travel difficult so the people would travel along the ridges (Central mountain spine on the top of the mountains).

- \*This is the route the patriarchs took.

### **3. Rift Valley**

- \*This valley is a huge ditch that runs for 3,700 miles from Turkey through Israel and down to Africa.

- \*Rainfall decreases as you move from north to south.

- \*In Israel it starts with the Jordan River that flows into the Sea of Galilee (690 feet below sea level) and down into the Salt Sea also known as the Dead Sea (1,200 feet below sea level).

**4. Trans Jordan Mountains**

\*This area is located on the eastern side of the Jordan River also known as Gilead.

\*These mountains are also made of limestone and range in height from 3,000 feet above sea level to Mt. Herman which is 9,232 feet above sea level.

\*Location of the Golan Heights

\*Important rivers include the Yarmuk and Jabbock Rivers.

**5. Eastern Desert**

\*It is 400 miles from the TransJordan Mountains to the Euphrates River.