

Annexure C

Hebrew Biblical Outline of the Promised Land

1. During my postings in West Asia, I travelled widely, often buying books and knick-knacks. In Damascus, Beirut and Jerusalem. I came across tattered pages and fragments from old books or documents. Here is one from an unknown book by an unknown author, presumably describing the geography of the Holy Land. From the point of view of a layman who is no Biblical scholar, I find it intriguing that the antecedents of the expression adopted by the Israelites, "From the River to the Sea", might lie in the Hebrew Biblical description of the Promised Land as being "from Dan to Bersheba". *Notably, there is no mention of the "sea".* It reads:

"The "*Promised Land*" of the chosen people of God, the Homeland of Jesus and the Gospel has been designated during various epochs by different names (*the Land of Canaan, of the Ammonites, of Israel, Juda*) according to the people who occupied it. To-day the country is called Palestine, a name given to us by the Greeks, and at first applied to the coastal region only, which was occupied by the Philistines (*Palestine*).

As a natural region, Palestine, detaching itself from Syria, of which it forms the southern extremity, extends from west to east between the Mediterranean and the Syro-Arabian desert, and from north to south from the Lebanon to the Sinai desert. The Bible indicates the limits by the expression "*from Dan (one of the sources of the Jordan) to Bersheba.*" The distance between these two places, as the crow flies, is 240 km; while the Mediterranean coast line is never more than 150 km. from the farthest inhabited point on the edge of the Sinai desert. The area is about 34.000 km. sq."

Postscript: Since writing the above, I have received an amplification:

2. The phrase is used in 2 Samuel 24:2.

3. Its intent is that the census ordered by David encompassed the entire territory of Israel, from its northernmost boundary (Dan) to its southern (Beersheba). David instructed Joab to count the fighting men, to "go through all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba", underlining that the count must include every part of the kingdom. The expression thus emphasises the comprehensiveness of the census. It was not a local headcount but a survey of the entire population across the nation. There was no reference to a 'sea'