Everywhere I Go:
Affirming Our Rootedness to Zion and the Earth
Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson

Fills All the World
Your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you and your descendants. Genesis 28:14

Thus says the Holy One Tzeva’ot, the God of Israel, to the whole community which I exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon: “Build houses and live in them, plant gardens and eat their fruit. Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters. Multiply there, do not decrease. And seek welfare of the city to which I have exiled you and pray to the Holy One on its behalf; for in its prosperity you shall prosper.” Jeremiah 29:4-7

If you remain in this land [Bavel], I will build you and not overthrow, I will plant you and not uproot; for I regret the punishment I have brought upon you. Jeremiah 42:10

The remnant of Jacob shall be, in the midst of the many peoples, like dew from the Holy One, like droplets on grass—which do not look to any person nor place their hope in mortals. Micah 5:6

Great is the Holy One beyond the borders of Israel. Malachi 1:5

God began to gather the body of Adam from the four corners of the world, so that the earth should not say, “The dust of your body does not come from me,” so that if he was taken from the east and expires in the west, the western part of the earth should not say, “the dust of your body is not from me, so I am not accepting it.” Therefore God took it from the four corners of the world, so wherever he dies, the earth should accept him, as it is stated, For you are dust (Gn 3:19). Tanhuma, Pekudei 3

Dwells in Zion
It is a land which the Holy One your God looks after, on which the Holy One your God always keeps an eye, from beginning to year’s end. Deuteronomy 11:12

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Ten measures of wisdom descended to the world. The Land of Israel took nine, and all the world took one.  
Kiddushin 49a

Ten measures of beauty descended to the world. Jerusalem took nine, and all the world took one.  
Kiddushin 49b

You shall arise and ascend to the place that the Holy One your God will choose (Dt 17:8). This teaches that the Holy Temple is higher than all the rest of the Land of Israel, and that the Land of Israel is higher than all the other lands.  
Kiddushin 69a

Dwelling in the Land of Israel is equivalent to all the other commandments of the Torah put together.  
Sifre Devarim, Piska 80

Rabbi Yohanan said, Anyone who walks but four cubits in the land of Israel is assured of inhabiting the Coming World.  
Midrash Mishlei, Chapter 17

The Land of Israel and the Torah have a closeness and a relationship similar to that of the life-force to the heart…. It is more meritorious to perform the commandments in the Land than outside.  
Rabbi Moses Cordovero, Or Ne’erav, III:5

The Challenge and the Paradox

And is Babylonia most of the world?  
Eruvin 28a

And is Judea most of the world?  
Kiddushin 6a

Judea in addition to Scripture?  
Kiddushin 6a

Palestine is not a refuge from the vicissitudes of the Golah; it is the avant-garde of the Golah.  
Hans Jonas Memoirs 118

The establishment of the state of Israel is the most profound modification of the Galut which has occurred, but it is not the end of the Galut; in the religious sense, and perhaps not only in the religious sense, the state of Israel is a part of the Galut.  
Leo Strauss Preface to Spinoza’s Critique of Religion, 230

Beyond “Either/Or” to “Both/And”
Those who desire to should go up.  

Exile was not exclusively or even primarily a punishment for the past, but rather, and essentially, a constructive measure for the future: the return of the Presence to “her place” — the hearts of all who are in a state of loneliness and solitariness.  

Rabbi Aaron Samuel Tamares

Zionism declares boldly to the world that Judaism means to preserve its life by not losing its life. It shall be a true and healthy life, with a policy of its own, a religion wholly its own, invigorated by sacred memories and sacred environment, and proving a tower of strength and of unity not only for the remnant gathered within the borders of the Holy Land, but also for those who shall, by choice or necessity, prefer what now constitutes the Galut”.


**Israel**

When I think of the liberation of Palestine,  
When my eye conceives the great black English line  
Spanning the world news of two thousand years,  
My heart leaps forward like a hungry dog,  
My heart is thrown back on its tangled chain,  
My soul is hangdog in a Western chair.  

When I think of the battle for Zion I hear  
The drop of chains, the starting forth of feet  
And I remain chained in a Western chair.  
My blood beats like a bird against a wall,  
I feel the weight of prisons in my skull  
Falling away; my forebears stare through stone.

When I see the name of Israel high in print  
The fences crumble in my flesh; I sink  
Deep in a Western chair and rest my soul.  
I look the stranger clear to the blue depths  
Of his unclouded eye. I say my name  
Aloud for the first time unconsciously.

Speak of the tillage of a million heads  
No more. Speak of the evil myth no more  
Of one who harried Jesus on his way  
Saying, Go faster. Speak no more  
Of the yellow badge, secta nefaria.  
Speak the name only of the living land.  

Karl Shapiro, “Israel”