

Geopolitics and Place

Commentary for July 1, 2008 — The Importance of “Place” in the Bible

All of history deals with time and place. This of course includes biblical events in history. Those events (past and future) are shaped by where they occur.¹ This month’s July 2008 ASK article, “The Geopolitics of Israel, Ancient and Modern” has to do with the relationship of “place” through history. It deals with “geopolitics,” which is the study of the influence of geography on the national and international politics of Israel throughout history.

While several ancient and modern books have dealt with the geography of Israel in relation to the Bible, none that I have encountered discuss the implications of God’s chosen people residing on that particular piece of real estate in the Middle East and the world.

Specifically, the purpose of this month’s article is to show how geography has shaped events in the land for the people of Israel. Read first the [“July 2008 ASK Newsletter.”](#) It gives additional information about the development of the academic subject of geopolitics. The “place” where events occur in history can have an important influence over what, when, and how those events happened.

At the present time God’s chosen people Israel inhabit some of the land that God set aside for them to inhabit. At a future time most all Israelites around the world will return to reside in the territory of the land of Israel at a time when Israelites will be honored and welcomed in territories beyond present borders (Zechariah 10:6–12). This will occur not just in the millennium, but also before Christ’s Second Advent.²

As the Newsletter and Article make clear, God chooses not only His people Israel, and each member of His *ekklesia*, but He also chooses the time and place that events occur. This includes His changing the boundaries of nations, the leadership of nations, and even eliminating entire countries and peoples (Deuteronomy 32:8, Acts 17:26). Note what Job has to say about God’s total control over events, nations, and peoples:

“He increases the nations, and destroys them: he enlarges the nations, and straitens them again. He takes away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causes them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way. They grope in the dark without light, and he makes them to stagger like a drunken man.”

• *Job 12:23–25*

Some biblical events occur on a worldwide scale and involve every person living at the time. The flood of Noah’s day is one example. Everyone was affected and the event resulted in the death of every human being except 8 people. The events leading up to and involving Christ’s return also will be witnessed and experienced everywhere in the world, and involve every person alive at those times. When those end-time events are completed only a few people of each nation will survive God’s punishments.

1. The subject of time has been dealt with extensively on the ASK website in several articles. Time had a beginning and it shall have an end. See the three (3) articles that deal with the concept of the ages or eons in the plan of God. [“The Time Periods for Salvation, Part 1,”](#) [“The Time Periods for Salvation, Part 2,”](#) and [“The Doctrine of the Ages in the Bible.”](#)
2. See the map of the extended borders of Israel in Dr. Martin’s article [“Prophetic Geography and the Time of the End.”](#) As amazing as it seems, neighboring nations will support and be happy with Israel assuming a larger role and territory — as impossible as that seems given the present international situation. See Dr. Martin’s article [“How Israel Will Conquer the Middle East.”](#)

We need to realize that the concept of “place” is very important to God. All biblical events have a location where they occur, and the “place” where they happen has meaning that we should note. The earth has been assigned a “place” in the heavens. God in His wrath shall change that “place” of earth (Isaiah 13:13). In fact, the Lord Himself has a “place” from which He shall go forth to punish the entire earth at a time future to us today (Isaiah 26:21; Micah 1:3).

God chose a particular place for Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac (a test of character that God prevented Abraham from completing):

“And he said, Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and get you into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.”

• *Genesis 22:2–4*

In Genesis 22:8 Abraham expressed his faith that God would provide a lamb for a sacrifice. The place of that sacrifice (through the timely substitution of a ram in place of Isaac) Abraham called Jehovahjireh which means “YHWH will see or provide” (Genesis 22:14). This name expressed Abraham’s recognition and understanding that God would and did provide a proper sacrifice (Hebrews 11:17–19).

That mountain where the sacrifice took place, Moriah (22:2), was also the place chosen by God for Solomon to build the Temple, as indicated through an angel’s appearance to David.

“Then Solomon began to build the house of YHWH at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where YHWH appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.”

• *2 Chronicles 3:1³*

So too, the people of Israel have a place appointed for them on this earth.

“Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime.”

• *2 Samuel 7:10*

Yet God pronounces severe judgment against those who commit unjust and evil acts at the “place” where He chose for Judah (and Israel) to be, the place where He put His name (Jeremiah 7:1–20, 19:1–12).

While this month’s article was not written from a biblical perspective, it imparts valuable information regarding Israel’s physical location in the world today and throughout history. You will understand much better the important role of Israel’s “place” in biblical events. God’s choice and use of the land where He “placed” His chosen people was intentional and deliberate. The placement of Jerusalem and the Temple in that land allows us to focus with precision on a tiny piece of real estate. All of the events that took place involving Christ’s ministry, crucifixion, death, resurrection, ascension, and His ministry through His disciples all took place with purpose and precision. They spread out from there to encompass the entire world. Consider God’s works through history and geography as you read this article, keeping in mind that many prophecies involving the land of Israel are yet to be fulfilled.

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3. Shown in 2 Samuel 24:18–25.