

# The Nations Were Given Their Territories All Based Upon Israel

“When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel” (Deut. 32:8).

Without claiming to uncover all the mysteries of this fascinating passage, at the very least this can be said: When God set the boundaries for all the nations He had Israel in mind, and He wonderfully provided for His chosen nation. Let us recognize God’s sovereign geography! After the Babel dispersion (Genesis 11), the sons of Adam spread out over the earth, doing their own thing and acting independently of God. However, the nations that formed from this migration and the boundaries that resulted were all predetermined by God: “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation” (Acts 17:26).



Israel’s Ancient Territories

In God's sovereign planning, Israel was central. God knew exactly what territory to give them based on their population and all other factors. The land of Israel is in the exact center of the world, based upon its proximity to the world's major land masses. It is nestled in the middle of three major continents.

[See Henry Morris' discussion of the geographical center of the earth: <https://www.icr.org/article/50/>]

“Thus saith the Lord GOD; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her” (Ezekiel 5:5). Here Israel is described as being in the very middle of the nations, surrounded by nations on every side. The words “I have set” indicate that God is the One who determined where Jerusalem was to be located.

“To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land” (Ezekiel 38:12). The expression “in the midst of the land” literally could be translated “in the navel of the earth.” As the navel is at the very center of a person's mid-section, so Israel was at the very center of the earth, surrounded by all the nations.

The land of Canaan is not a large strip of land, but consider all of the major historical events which have taken place there, including Christ's death and resurrection. Consider also the major prophetic events which are yet to occur in this geographical location. Indeed, in the kingdom age, Jerusalem will be the very capital of the world, with Christ sitting on David's throne. How foolish for people to teach that Israel has no place in the future plan of God! Israel has been central and preeminent in the Lord's planning from the very beginning!

George Zeller, January 2017

[For a heart-warming commentary on Deuteronomy 32:8 as it relates to God's program for Israel, see C. H. Mackintosh's commentary on this passage in his \*Notes on the Pentateuch\*.](#)

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Note: There is a variant reading in the text of Deuteronomy 32:8. Instead of bene-israel in the MT, Sam-Penta., Vg., Targ.-Onk, Sym., the LXX, supported by a DSS (Dead Sea Scroll), support bene-elohim., "sons of God," which the LXX paraphrases "angels" (as was also done in ms. A in Gen. 6). See Craigie, *Commentary on Deuteronomy* (NICOT series). However we might understand this particular verse, it is beyond dispute that the overall teaching of the Bible finds Israel ever and always front and center in God's historical dealings with the nation and in God's prophetic program for the future. Israel is truly the “belly-button” of the earth!