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Saeko Yazaki

See also → Menorah

Lampstand

→ Menorah

Lance of Christ

→ Spear

Land

- I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
- II. New Testament
- III. Judaism
- IV. Christianity
- V. Islam
- VI. Literature

I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

In the HB/OT, Israel’s land is regarded as the gift of the God YHWH to his people. According to this idea, the biblical record suggests that the Israelites regarded themselves as a non-autochthonous people in their land who once immigrated into their area of settlement during their early period. The religious reason given for the settlement and the associated idea that as a people the Israelites originated outside of their own land requires explanation.

The outline of history given in the OT can only be taken at face value with reservations. The account of the *conquest* of the promised land in the books of Numbers and Joshua has essentially been proven to lack a reliable foundation in history. For example, archaeology has shown that the conquests of Jericho (Josh 2; 6) and Ai (Josh 8) could never have taken place as they are recorded in the Bible. As an alternative explanation, a gradual immigration was suggested as a result of the seasonal changes of pasture grounds. Albrecht Alt and others saw this behavior mirrored in the living conditions that are recorded in the patriarchal narratives in the book of Genesis. However, this hypothesis does not stand up to scrutiny either, since the seasonal changes of pasture grounds are also common for sedentary farmers with their livestock. Moreover, in all likelihood the patriarchal narratives did not originate prior to the 7th century BCE. The presupposed ethnic antagonism between Canaanites and Israelites lying at the heart of the idea of the conquest has not been confirmed by archaeological evi-

dence and is unknown in most OT/HB writings. This view is likely a transposition of the living conditions of the Jewish diaspora onto the life in the land. It seems that the idea of the promised land has its origin in the experience of the Judeans who were spread around the ancient world.

In the Yahwist history, which provides the basis of the Pentateuchal narrative, the pre-editorial source texts are selected in a way that always situates the protagonists of the narratives outside the land – beginning with the expulsion from paradise (Gen 3:23) until Moses’ death (Deut 34:5–6). The people of YHWH used to be foreigners. This is not only true for the Israelites in Egypt and their wanderings through the desert, but also for Lot (Gen 19:9), Isaac (Gen 26), Jacob (Gen 28–33), and Joseph (Gen 39–50). In order to make the stories about Abraham (Gen 12–13; 18) fit in this narrative setting, the editor stated that the land during those times was inhabited by the Canaanites (Gen 12:6), from whom the patriarchs would have differed ethnically (Gen 24:3). “(Only) to your descendants I will give this land” (Gen 12:7). In the same way, according to the Priestly code, the patriarchs lived in the land as foreigners (Gen 35:27; 36:7; 37:1; Exod 6:4) and even the cult is established outside of the land (Exod 25–29; 40).

Neither the Yahwist history, nor the basic document of the Priestly code contain an account of the settlement in the promised land. It was, however, a matter of consequence that the settlement followed the Israelite’s sojourn in foreign lands (Exod 3:8). Therefore, the gift of the land was later added to the promises to the patriarchs, in the Priestly Code (Gen 17:8; 28:4; 35:12; Exod 6:4) as well as in the non-priestly texts (Gen 13:15; 26:3; 28:13; 48:4). The stories of the books of Numbers and Joshua provide the account of its fulfillment (summarized in Josh 21:43–45). But there was also the idea that the land was not completely conquered – an idea, which again reflects the experience of living in the Diaspora (Josh 13:1; Judg 1:19, 21, 27–35; 3:1–5). The claim that the promised land would cover the entire region from the Nile to the Euphrates (Gen 15:18) is, however, no more than an exegetical application of Abraham’s wanderings from Mesopotamia (Gen 11:31) to Egypt (Gen 12:10) to the promise in Deut 11:24: “Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours.”

When Deuteronomy, whose origin can be placed in the 7th century, was inserted into the account of Israel’s history in the form of a speech given by Moses, it was related to the conquest of the land. This probably have occurred at the end of the 6th or during the 5th centuries. Since then, the law presents itself as the religious and ethical rule of life in the land that YHWH will give to the Israelites (Deut 5:31; 12:1; 17:14; 19:1; 26:1; Josh 1:2).

When doubt increased as to whether YHWH would fulfill his promise, the promise took on the form of a solemn self-commitment of YHWH (*bērit*, Gen 15:18), which was also interpreted as YHWH's *oath* to the patriarchs (Gen 24:7; 26:3; 50:24; Exod 6:8; 13:5; Num 11:12; Deut 1:8; 6:10, 23; 19:8; 26:3, 15; 28:11; 31:7; Josh 1:6; Judg 2:1; Jer 11:5; 32:22). The promise was associated with the admonition to obey YHWH's commandment (Deut 5:33; 11:9; 25:15) as a precondition for the Israelites to occupy the land (Deut 6:18, 8:1), or even with the threat of losing the land again, should they be unfaithful (Deut 4:26; 28:63; 30:18; Josh 23:16).

For this reason, the loss of the land which Israel experienced after 722 BCE by way of the Assyrian deportations, could later be interpreted as a punishment for the disobedience of YHWH's commandment (2 Kgs 17:6–23). Looking back in hindsight, no earlier than the 5th century, at the Babylonian conquest in 597 and 586 BCE, the interpretation became prevalent that the land had been *completely abandoned* (2 Kgs 24:14; 25:11, 21; Jer 24:10). This meant that the people of God had exclusively survived in the Babylonian exile until they were allowed to return (Jer 29:10–14; 30:3; 32:37) after seventy years (Jer 25:11). The book of Ezekiel, which represents the interests of the Babylonian Jews and asserts that YHWH had left his temple before its destruction in 586 BCE (Ezek 11:23), proclaims the *reunion of the Jewish Diaspora* in the land (Ezek 36:24, 28; 37:21, 25). This proclamation concurs with the promise that YHWH will again take residence in his land (Ezek 37:26–27).

In the Priestly code and in its later revisions, this promise – according to which YHWH will take up residence in the land – becomes the basis for the early history of the people of God. Consequently, it is because of the divine presence in the land that Israel has to settle there. This resulted in the urgent appeal to the Jews to leave their safe existence among the “fleshpots” in Egypt (Exod 16:3) and to take up residence in the vicinity of YHWH's sanctuary. The appeal had only limited success (Exod 14:12; 17:3; Num 20:5). An “unfavorable report” was spread stating that it was impossible to live in the land because it devoured its inhabitants (Num 13:32; Ezek 36:13). Those who had spread this report were punished by being refused entry to the land (Num 14:23, 30). The complaint about the land was balanced out by the praise of the good land (Deut 6:10–11; 8:7–9; 11:9–12), “flowing with milk and honey” (Exod 3:8; Num 14:8; Deut 26:9, 15). It was especially reprehensible to leave the land of YHWH again of one's free will (Gen 24:5–6; 26:2; Num 14:3–4; Deut 17:16). This was only allowed in case of great need or an emergency (Gen 12:10; 47:4), or if God himself allows it in order to carry out his plans with his people (Gen 46:2–4). On the other hand, the Jewish Diaspora

shared the strong desire to be able to live in close proximity to YHWH (Ps 23:6; 27:4; 63:2–3; 84:3–5). The collection of the Psalms of Ascents (Pss 120–134) promotes the Jews to move from their dwellings in the Diaspora into the land where their God is nearby (Ps 133).

YHWH's presence lends the land its religious quality. The land is the “land of YHWH” (Hos 9:3; Jer 2:7). He is its owner; the Israelites are his “so-journers” (Lev 25:23). They have the obligation to preserve the cultic purity of the land (Num 35:34). Otherwise, there is a danger that the land will “vomit out” its inhabitants (Lev 18:28; 20:22; Jer 2:7; 3:1–2; Hos 8:13; 9:3). Then the history of YHWH with his people will begin anew with a new generation (Hos 2:16, 17b, 25).

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II. New Testament

Apart from references to “the land of Israel” (Matt 20:20–21) and to subdivisions of that land (“the land of Judah,” Matt 2:6; “land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,” Matt 4:15), the NT employs the concept of “land” (almost always in the NRSV for γῆ) in several connections. Sometimes it designates specific geographical regions – “the land of Egypt”

(Acts 7:40; 13:17; Heb 8:9; Jude 5), “the land of Midian” (Acts 7:29), “the land of Canaan” (Acts 13:19). Other times it refers to personal property, as in Luke 12:16 (“the land of a rich man”) and Acts 5:8 (“your husband sold the land”; cf. Luke 14:18; Acts 5:3). Most frequently it designates the dry land or shore as opposed to the sea of Galilee or the Mediterranean: Matt 14:24, 34; 23:15; Mark 4:1; 6:47, 53; Luke 8:27; John 6:21; 21:8; Acts 20:13; 27:27, 39, 43, 44; Heb 11:29; Rev 10:2, 5, 8. In Heb 11:15, “the land” designates “a better country, that is, a heavenly one” (cf. *T. Job* 33:4–5: “The whole world shall pass away.... But my throne is in the holy land, and its splendor is in the world of the changeless one”). This land or better country is the place of the heavenly or new Jerusalem (Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22; Rev 3:12; 21:2, 10).

The synoptics record that, when Jesus was crucified, a darkness covered “all the land” for three hours (Matt 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 24:44). Although a few pre-moderns thought of a local darkness confined to the land of Judea (e.g., *Gos. Pet.* 5:15; Origen, *Comm. Matt.* frag. 134), most rather thought of a world-wide phenomenon (e.g., Ps.-Dionysius, *Ep.* 7).

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III. Judaism

- Second Temple, Hellenistic and Rabbinic Judaism
- Modern Judaism: General ■ Modern Judaism: Politics and Borders

A. Second Temple, Hellenistic and Rabbinic Judaism

As in many cultures, postbiblical Hebrew literature too sometimes personifies land as “Mother Earth.” In a passage with several echoes of Gen 2, Sir 40:1 refers to the day of people’s death as “the day that they return to the mother of all things.” *Fourth Ezra* 5:48 describes God as having given a womb to the earth. Rabbinic literature too portrays the earth’s fertility in human female embodiment. Interpreting the curse on the soil in Gen 2:17, *TanB* (Toledot 18) asks, “just as the primordial Adam was cursed for his sin, was his mother not cursed as well?” And *yKil* 1:7 explains the curse in Gen by analogy to common parlance: “Cursed are the breasts that thus offered suckling.”

The realia of life on the land underlie much of rabbinic law and legend. Attunement to the land’s shifting character across the seasons is evident in this statement in *BerR* 13:12:

Rabbi Simeon ben Gamliel said: “[The earth] has four names: *erets*, *tevel*, *adamah*, *arqa*. The name *erets* corresponds to the vernal equinox which makes the crops run (*meritsah*); *tevel* corresponds to the summer solstice which lends flavor (*metabbelet*) to the crops; *adamah* corresponds to the autumn, when the ground [once the

rainy season begins] consists of clods of earth (*adamah*); *arqa* corresponds to the winter, which causes the crops to wither (*moreqet*).”

Echoing biblical promises of fertile soil providing sustenance, *mBer* 6:1 prescribes a benediction to precede the consumption of vegetables: “On [eating] the fruit of the land [*peri ha-arets*] one says, ‘Praised be You, ... Creator of the fruit of the soil [*peri ha-adamah*].’”

Rabbinic attitudes toward land and agriculture varied. Rabbi Eleazar (*bYev* 63a) cites Ps 115:6: “The heavens are the Lord’s heavens, but the earth he has given to the sons of men,” as proof that “any man who owns no land is not a proper man.” That very sage, though, is quoted in the same passage as having said that “no occupation is inferior to that of agricultural labor.” Furthermore, attachment to the land was seen as no proof of good character. As *BerR* (22:3 and cf. 36:3) notes, commenting on Gen 4:2 (“And Noah, the man of the soil...”): “Three had a passion for agriculture, and no good was found in them: Cain, Noah, and Uzziah. [Further prooftexts:] “Noah the man of the soil” (Gen 9:20), “For he was one who loved the soil” (2 Chr 26:10).

This recognition of the possible association of the soil and its cultivation with untoward behavior appears despite the continued application of biblical laws regarding the Sabbatical year (see “Sabbath Year”) and Jubilee (see “Jubilee, Year of”), which attribute a special sanctity to the soil of the land of Israel. Every seven years that soil is granted rest analogous to human rest on the seventh day of the week, and a fiftieth year of rest and recuperation as well.

Land ownership in Palestine became a critical issue for the beleaguered Jewish community in the wake of the failure of the two Jewish revolts against Roman rule in the first two centuries CE. Some sabbatical year laws were relaxed, so, e.g., fields could now be plowed until the onset of the new year rather than only until the Shavuot holiday months earlier (*tShev* 1:1). Those laws were also applied to a limited geographical area, to minimize their impact on Jewish agriculture (*tShev* 4:11). Mishnaic law (*mGit* 5:6) abrogated the application of rules regarding stolen property to the purchase of lands confiscated from Jews by the Roman occupiers and made further modifications to the law, all designed to encourage Jews to purchase such land without fear of forfeiting all their investment to the original owner. An outright ban on any sale of land in Palestine by Jews to non-Jews was justified on the basis of Deut 7:2, “show no mercy to them” (*lo teḥon-nem*), read midrashically as though the verb were derived from the root *h-n-h*, meaning “encamp,” “settle”: do not enable them to settle in the Land of Israel (*bAZ* 20a, *yAZ* 1:9 [7b]).

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B. Modern Judaism: General

Early modern Jewish societies were, like medieval ones, noticeably urban, with relatively few Jews engaged in occupations tied to the soil, such as farming or animal husbandry. The Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment) movement of the 18th–19th centuries sought to "productivize" the Jews by, among other means, promoting their engagement in such occupations. Zionists and diaspora nationalists alike adopted these views. Aaron David (A. D.) Gordon, a prominent public intellectual in Palestine in the first decades of the 20th century, expressed this view:

The Jewish people has been completely cut off from nature and imprisoned within city walls these two thousand years.... We lack the principal ingredient of national life, ... the habit of labor.... This kind of labor binds a people to its soil and to its national culture, which in turn is an outgrowth of the people's soil and the people's labor. (quoted in Hertzberg: 372)

The purchase of agricultural land in Palestine, then, largely through the Zionist movement's Jewish National Fund, had significant symbolic value that transcended its practical importance.

Kissing the ground of the Holy Land upon arriving (or returning) there is a custom sometimes explained on the basis of Ps 102:14, "For your servants hold its stones dear and have pity on its dust." There is only scant talmudic precedent: Rabbi Abba would demonstrate his great love for the land of Israel by kissing the rocks of Acre as he returned to the land (*bKet* 112a). The practice of kissing the soil upon arrival is ascribed by Maimonides (*MishT*, Laws of Kings 5:10) to "great rabbis," but it became a widespread custom, especially as Jews immigrated into Palestine in large numbers beginning in the last decades of the 19th century.

Another custom involving the soil of Palestine is that of bringing back a bit of soil from a visit there, often to be placed under one's head when one is interred after death. This seems to be a development on the basis of a practice recorded in *yKet* 12:4 (35b), in which local soil is placed on a coffin as it arrives in Palestine for burial, which is described there as a fulfillment of the last clause of Deut 32:43, "and [He] atones for the land of his people."

The ecological awareness of recent decades has engendered both a critique of a supposed Judeo-Christian license, based on the Bible, for the depredation of the earth and a learned response claiming that the true biblical mandate is for humankind to exercise careful stewardship of the divinely created earth.

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Peretz Rodman

C. Modern Judaism: Politics and Borders

During the early 19th century, as in earlier periods, the land of Israel was an important feature of Jewish liturgy, legends, and faith. This is not to say, though, that the actual land had a major role in Jewish life. There were few Jews who braved the dangerous journey and the insecurity and harsh conditions in Palestine. The Jewish communities of the four holy cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, and Safed were small and backward, and the communities depended on charity that Jews around the world contributed to keep them alive. All this began to change in the later 19th century, when the land of Israel emerged as an alternative to immigration to the New World. At first, it was an alternative that only a small minority of immigrants preferred. But this changed after World War I and the Balfour Declaration (1917), and after the gates to the United States were closed to the Jewish masses in 1924.

During the first half of the 20th century the land of Israel had a growing role in Jewish life, culminating with the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. It was seen first as a refuge for persecuted Jews, and then as a symbol of Jewish independence and self-sustainability. But the land in the territorial sense, and particularly the issue of borders, still had limited importance for Jews. During the partition controversy in the 1930s, and again in the wake of the War of Independence in 1948–49, the issue of future borders was one of the main dividing lines between the left and the right of the Zionist movement, but it had very little effect on the everyday life of Jews in Israel or outside it. The state of Israel and its symbols made Jews everywhere proud, especially in the wake of the terrible disaster of the Holocaust. But very few were interested in the borders of that state: both the new immigrants and the established community were busy adjusting to the new realities of life in Israel. Security was the predominant issue, and the existence of a Jewish state as a potential refuge for distressed Jews. But the fact that Old Jerusalem, Hebron, and Bethlehem were outside the Jewish realm did not bother many people, even religious Jews. On the eve of Israel Independence Day in May, 1967, Geula Cohen, then a journalist on the extreme right wing of Israeli politics, interviewed retired Prime Minister David Ben Gurion (1886–1973). Ben Gurion dismissed Cohen's suggestion that it was a shame that Israel did not rule over Old Jerusalem, then in Jordanian hands. She asked him what he would say to his grandson if he were asked about the borders of Israel. Ben Gurion's answer was: "There are no absolute borders. ... [Borders] are drawn according to the needs of the situation" (Cohen: 6). He showed

little interest in the historic land of Israel. This attitude was shared by about 90% of Jews in Israel, and it was even more common in the Diaspora.

All this changed a few days later, with the Six-Day War of June 5–10, 1967, and the Israeli conquest of Jerusalem and the West Bank. Suddenly, the territory that had been out of bounds for nineteen years came under Israeli rule. This territory was the historic land of Israel, where the kingdoms of Judah and Samaria had been located, where biblical prophets and kings had walked about, where the Temple had stood on Mount Moriah. This was the original land of Israel. The territory of the State of Israel, along the Mediterranean Sea, had been settled in ancient times mostly by non-Jews. All the long suppressed yearnings and dreams, fueled by legends and prophecies, came to the fore.

The outcome was an eruption of messianic hopes. Israeli conquests were interpreted by religious Zionists as heralding the advent of the Messiah, the end of times, the final redemption. The territory became a major factor in religious Jewish Zionist theology, trumping other values. Suddenly the Land assumed an importance above any other element of Judaism and Jewish life. The enthusiasm swept many people and brought about a radical change in Jewish life. American Orthodox Jews were taken with the idea of settling the land of Israel. Many came to Israel and settled in Jerusalem and the West Bank, joining a number of religious Zionists in Israel, and creating the settlement movement in the occupied territories. Dedicated, zealous, persevering, and very well organized, this movement changed the character of Israeli and Jewish politics and the role of religion in Israeli Jewish life.

Since the early 1970s, the continued possession of the biblical land of Israel (esp. the West Bank) has become the central issue in Israeli politics, dominating public discourse, and is a source of constant friction among Jews. The clash between the settlers and the Palestinians over control of the land has become a major factor in Israeli politics. While moderate Zionists are seeking some kind of compromise with the Palestinians, a new partition of the land into two states, one Jewish and one Palestinian, the settlers and their supporters on the Israeli Right are making this solution less and less feasible by occupying and settling growing areas of the West Bank.

Zionists in the early days of the 20th century saw Jews as the rightful owners of the land of Israel. It was only in the wake of the ensuing struggle with the Palestinians, from the 1920s until the 1940s, that they came to the realization that they would have to share their homeland with the people already settled there. Nevertheless, the memory of the Jewish people's historic attachment to the land, not only in the political sense, but also in the geo-

graphical and historical sense, continued to lie dormant beneath the surface. The war in 1967 turned a dormant spark into an all-consuming flame.

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Anita Shapira

IV. Christianity

■ Greek and Latin Patristics ■ Modern America ■ New Christian Movements ■ World Christianity

A. Greek and Latin Patristics

The notion of "land" (γῆ, *terra*) is employed in patristic literature in many instances, but (leaving aside the many occurrences of "holy land," for which see the respective lemma) most of them do not qualify as biblical reception. The latter is true, e.g., for the darkness covered "all the land" (ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν: Matt 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 24:44), which was mainly understood as referring to the whole world, but sometimes taken as denoting the land of Judea specifically (see above "II. New Testament").

Origen states that the Christians "live in a foreign land (ἀλλοτριᾷ γῇ) and venerate this land's god" instead of living "in the land of God, that is, the church" (*Hom. Jer.* 7.3). Similarly, John Chrysostom accuses his audience in Antiochia "to strive for the land instead of the heaven" (*Hom. Matt.* 6.5). "Land" in the sense of "native country" (πατρις) is in similar manner sometimes opposed to the "foreign world" (ξένη) in which the Christians temporarily have to live but which they will leave for the heavenly realm (cf. Heb 11:14–15; see, e.g., *Diogn.* 5.5). Of interest is also the exegesis of Ps 26:13 LXX ("I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" [ἐν γῇ ζώντων]), for which see Didymus' explanation as "the land of the promise" (ἡ ἐν ἐπαγγελίας γῆ; *Fr. Ps.* 242), and Matt 5:5 ("Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth" [τὴν γῆν]) which, e.g., according to Gregory of Nyssa meant "the land which is above the celestial" (ὑπερουράνιον, *De Beatitudinibus* 2).

Augustine (*Serm. Dom.* 1.4) also explained *terram* in Matt 5:5 with Ps 142:6 (the Lord as hope "in the land of the living") and as "the church and the heritage of the faithful and saints" (*Ep.* 149.3: *terram intellegamus ecclesiam hereditatemque fidelium atque sanctorum*). It is noteworthy that the idea of a land "which is apprehended by the intellect" (γῆ νοητή) is rejected by John Chrysostom because "nowhere in the Scriptures do we find such an intelligible

land,” and thus Christians should “strive for a trophy which can be apprehended by the senses” (αἰσθητὸν ἔπαθλον; *Hom. Matt.* 15.3).

Finally, we find a highly contested notion of land in monastic literature: the desert has formerly been “a diabolic land” (γῆ σατανική), but by being civilized by the hermits it has been turned into “a land illuminated by the divine” (γῆ φωτεινὴ τῆς θεότητος; [Ps.-] Macarius the Egyptian, *Hom.* 14.6). However, it is essential for the monks not to dwell too long among other people, because then they risk dying “like fish which remain too long on the dry land” (τῇ ξηρᾷ γῇ; Athanasius, *Vit. Ant.* 85.3).

Peter Gemeinhardt

B. Modern America

The Bible came to North America with the first European arrivals in the late 15th century. Christopher Columbus sought a route to India, but the land he opened to European exploration and exploitation became widely known as the American Israel. Alternately construed as treasure field, wilderness, promised land, and Egypt of the Pharaohs, the continent became the canvas on which biblical imaginations painted the drama of an emerging nation. More recently, new voices have emerged to begin a reappraisal of the dominant imagery.

New Spain was established in the southwestern regions of the continent in the early 16th century as a colonial enterprise seeking wealth from the abundant natural resources of the region. For the Roman Catholic newcomers, the land was gifted by God for development, and proper stewardship was expected to yield a corresponding wealth, understood as divine blessing.

The settlement of the northeastern seaboard in the early 17th century, by contrast, was in substantial measure a refugee enterprise, undertaken by Puritans and Pietists fleeing religious persecution. They arrived to a “howling wilderness,” which they understood as the setting for their own exodus, the place of a new beginning under God’s providence. With their faithful Calvinist diligence and God’s blessing, the land would undergo “a figural transformation ... into a type of biblical Israel” (Smith: 72), fulfilling prophetic promises as the original could not.

So Jonathan Edwards in 1743 expounded on the prospect of a restored Eden,

When God is about to turn the earth into a Paradise, he does not begin his work where there is some good growth already, but in a wilderness where ... nothing is to be seen but dry sand and barren rocks; that the light may shine out of darkness, and the world replenished from emptiness, and the earth watered by springs form a droughty desert. (McManners: 337)

Throughout the American colonies, the biblical place-names sprang to life, with variations of Jerusalem eventually becoming the most common single eponym on the continent.

Following Revolutionary success under the “American Moses” or “Joshua” (both terms were used for George Washington) America expanded by settling more and more the promised land. Native inhabitants were cast as Canaanites or the children of Cain, equally abominable in their respective offenses and therefore obstacles to the country’s “manifest destiny.” The expansionist era of the first half of the 19th century saw the rhetoric of the American Israel reach its apex, constituting a political theology that Shalev calls “Old Testamentism.”

This imagery has also influenced American art and music. Thomas Cole (1801–1848) led the way in the Hudson River Valley school of landscape painting, presenting “the new continent as parables of God’s power and benevolence” (cf. Collins; see also “Landscape II. Visual Arts”). William Sidney Mount, in 1848, opined in his journal that “the longer an artist leaves nature, the more feeble he gets, he therefore should constantly imitate God.... The canopy of heaven is the most perfect paint room for an artist.” (Long Island Museum) Cole’s four-canvas series, *The Voyage of Life* (1839–40, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), is a visual allegory of life as a river journey through an imaginary but familiar set of landscapes, guided by an angel and ultimately emerging onto a vast, calm ocean. It traveled in 2014 under the exhibition title, “America’s Eden.” The heavenly vision in the second canvas, *Youth*, could illustrate the gleaming “alabaster cities” “beyond the years” in Katherine Bates’ hymn, “America” (1893; *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* 888), with its further biblical motifs of loving “mercy more than life” and offering the wish that “God thy gold refine.”

No less biblically resonant is the iconic African American anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing” (1921; *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* 841), by James Weldon Johnson, which ends with the hope that, “shadowed beneath thy hand, may we forever stand true to our God, true to our native land.” That goal stands at the end of a long hymnic exodus over a “stony road” to a “place for which our parents sighed,” ending in liberty only after enduring a dark past and the chastening rod. Like Israel listening to Moses on the verge of the promised land in Deuteronomy, the chief dangers ahead are that “our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met thee,” or that, “our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget thee.”

As recently as 1960 the Deuteronomic echo could also be heard in Frank von Christieson’s “As Saints of Old” (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* 695). Recalling how those saints “their first-fruits brought of orchard, flock, and field,” the hymn joins the Israelite worshipper of Deut 26:10 in singing, “so we today first-fruits would bring, the wealth of this good land.” Equally present in this hymn is an echo of the Transcendentalism of Emerson and Thoreau,

for whom nature, the land itself, is a primary vehicle of the divine and natural harmonies are the model of human community toward which people should bend their efforts.

Not all segments of America Christianity could look on the land with such equanimity. In James Cone's judgment, "almost all blacks in America – past and present – have identified Egypt with America, Pharaoh and the Egyptians with white slaveholders and subsequent racists, and blacks with the Israelite slaves" (Smith: 71). So Johnson's hymn resonates with the same exodus story as the dominant discourse, but with roles assigned differently and dynamics correspondingly altered.

In the late 1960s, Martin Luther King, Jr., speaking of America's long-deferred racial equality, also invoked Moses looking into the promised land (Deut 34:1–4) as had the Pilgrim settlers nearly four centuries before. "I've been to the mountaintop ... And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land" (Smith: 63). As the Puritans had used the image of an American Israel to counter European condescension toward the continent, so King used it to counter the dominant white culture's condescension toward the black; the multiracial future in America for him would now be the place of God's new work.

The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints is a distinctly American development within the Christian world. Growing out of the fertile period of the 1820s–1830s, it formed around the new revelation of the *Book of Mormon*, presented by Joseph Smith as the translation of gold tablets dug up near Palmyra NY. Revered as scripture by the Mormon community, it speaks of North America as the "land of promise," to which Israelites fled at the destruction of Jerusalem in the 6th century BCE. With that direct narrative connection to biblical Israel, America becomes an extension of the holy land in very specific and concrete terms and Mormon temples represent a restoration of biblical temple worship, albeit with Jesus Christ as its focus.

The legacy of European Renaissance Christian Hebraism also flourished in the 19th century with the rise of Christian Zionism under influences from England. The millenarian spirit of the era turned Christian thought toward biblical prophecy, where it saw that the land of biblical Israel and the scattered Jewish people would figure prominently in the culmination of history. Paired with a romantic and evangelistic interest in "the land where Jesus walked," it became a political force for the repatriation of Jews to their homeland, aligning America's role in the world's destiny with that of the Holy Land and the Jews. The cultural impact of these forces is evident in the record that the most popular exhibit at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair was Palestine Park.

In the mid-20th century, the revolutions in largely Roman Catholic Central America elicited from local churches the liberation theology that became an incubator for theology of and by many marginalized groups. Both the exodus paradigm and a creation theology that focused on God's providence through the land given to all people served to ground liberation theology's power to bring dignity to the oppressed. The locus and focus of its work among *campesinos*, the peasant land workers descended from those who were first forced to work for the *conquistadores* of New Spain, introduced a critical post-colonial approach to land.

Early in the 21st century, a further critical voice emerged, reading the Bible in line with agrarianism, which Davis defines as "a way of thinking and ordering life in community that is based on the health of the land and of living creatures" (1). The implications of this approach, clearly challenging the narrative, history-of-salvation model that has dominated Christian thought about land in North America, will continue to emerge as a new chapter in a long and variegated story.

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Peter Pettit

C. New Christian Movements

The concept of land can refer either to geographical areas associated with religious history, specific places where the sacred has been manifested, or sites that have been made sacred by an act of consecration.

In the case of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the country of North America, and specifically the state of Utah, is regarded as particularly sacred, being the country to which the Ten Lost Tribes are believed to have sailed, and to whom Jesus Christ appeared after his resurrection. When Brigham Young led the Mormons out of New York County, and arrived at the Great Salt Lake, he declared that "This is the place." The Grove in Palmyra, New York, in which Joseph Smith is believed to have received his inaugural vision, continues to be regarded as sacred space, and the Mormon tem-

ples serve as examples of deliberately consecrated sacred sites. The first Temple, at Kirtland, Ohio, completed in 1836, is now owned by the Community of Christ (formerly the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints). It is a location at which Joseph Smith claimed to receive numerous visions, including Adam, Abraham, three family members, and the celestial kingdom and throne of God, on which the Father and the Son were seated.

For the Rastafari, their sacred land is Ethiopia. The Rastafari regard the Bible as a history of oppressed people, for whom God incarnated in a series of avatars: Moses, Elijah, and Jesus Christ. The fourth and final incarnation is reckoned to be Haile Selassie (1892–1975, also known as Ras Tafari), Emperor of Ethiopia, who is held to be the “King of kings and Lord of lords” (Rev 19:16). Ethiopia acquired significance, being mentioned in Ps 68:31: “Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.” Daniel also describes the Ancient of days as having hair “like pure wool” (Dan 7:9), thus suggesting their savior’s African identity.

For the Unification Church, the sacred land from which the new Messiah is believed to have come is Korea. This is held to be so, since the book of Revelation mentions “another angel coming up from the East” (Rev 7:2). Israel is believed already to have failed, having refused to recognize Jesus as the Messiah and to allow him to complete his mission. By a complex process of reasoning relating to biblical and post-biblical history, it is concluded that the new messiah – held to be Sun Myung Moon – would be born around 1920, and that this event would take place in a “front line” on which God and Satan were combating. Being a country divided between North and South, and communism and democracy, Korea is believed to satisfy the relevant requirements.

For Zionists, as well as for many new forms of Christian and Christian-related groups, Israel continues to be regarded as sacred territory, being the Promised Land of the Jews, and the land of the Bible. The Raelians – a UFO-religion founded in 1974 – identified Jerusalem as an appropriate site for the extra-terrestrial landing they believed was imminent, and requested President Netanyahu to allocate them some land. Unsurprisingly, the request was declined. Founder-leader Rael has subsequently accused Israel of betraying Jewish values by unjustly appropriating land, and disobeying the commandment about killing. He has advised all true Jews to leave Palestine without delay.

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George D. Chryssides

D. World Christianity

Land equals livelihood. From early on in the biblical text, land was a central object of concern. In the call of Abraham, God’s invitation was to “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land that I will show you.” (Gen 12:1 [NIV]). The land in reference would henceforth be referred to as the Promised Land – a literal and a metaphorical concept with ramifications that continue to be especially significant in ethnic and religious disputes. Abraham’s obedience, on the other hand, set a precedent of migration in search of a promised land, notional territory that is symbolic of productive human habitation. This nascent biblical trajectory on land has been appropriated in various ways to enhance and challenge traditional cultural notions of land.

Land as “home”: As the stage of human activity, land is regarded as “home.” Although global habitats may vary, the fact that they are all “earthed” on land mass creates value for the land as “home,” a place where human activities become meaningful and worthwhile. Delineating and defining such territorial space for individuals and communities thus becomes the pursuit that provides meaning and value to human activities. “A place to call home” becomes the organizing criteria for families, clans, tribes, and whole nations. When a particular human group has such ties to a given global location and territory, such an attachment generates an arbitrary premium for the land mass concerned. Care and protection for such a *homeland* may lead to productive internal activity or destructive external relations and engagement.

1. Land and Social Organization. The African clan system represents a social organization with a corresponding settlement scheme which largely mirrors territorial claims. Relatives are settled on the basis of ridges, rivers, and mountains. A similar system was implemented by the Israelites upon entry into Canaan, where land allocations for the twelve tribes were conducted along definitive topographical features (Josh 13–19). Global evolution and adaptation of human cultures is also in keeping with geography: pastoral communities such as the Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania inhabit the fodder-rich plains and grasslands of East Africa, while on the other hand, agrarian communities such as the Meru, the Embu, and the Gikuyu of Kenya occupy the lush slopes of Mt Kenya where they may profitably practice their respective livelihoods. In this sense, therefore, land is key to human social organization and economy.

2. Land and Ethnic Identity. In the Bible, the identities of the land territories and those of the people that inhabit such territory are symbiotic. People often derive their identity from the place. Similarly, places regularly derive their names from the people. In the Bible, Israelites inhabit Israel,

Moabites inhabit Moab, Babylonians inhabit Babylon, and Egyptians inhabit Egypt. A similar trend is evident in many parts of Africa. In the local tongues, place names directly echo those of the ethnic communities and cultures that inhabit the territory. Beyond this, many towns and cities that were established in the wake of Christianity owe their lexical identity to such a biblical philosophy of nomenclature. For example, the Meru People of Kenya live in Meru County (formerly Meru District), which is headquartered in Meru City. Hence the land, the people, and the town identify by singular terminology. Whereas the semantics may at times prove challenging, the intended unifying convergence of identity is achieved.

Furthermore, the concept of *ancestral lands*, the land of our fore-fathers, gains credence from the biblical narrative and works in similar fashion. Since the name of the people is literally the name of the land, the practice has implications for inheritance and ownership of land: To possess a portion of *ancestral land* becomes a critical authenticating mark of ethnic tribal identity and belonging. This gains particular traction for “men of the tribe,” from whom whole families derive their corresponding ethnic identity. “To be gathered with one’s ancestors” literally and symbolically means to be united with them by being buried on the same *terra firma*, the same *ancestral* physical ground territory (Gen 25:8–9; 49:29–32; 50:25; Josh 24:32; Acts 13:36). The land thus becomes the ultimately unifying object of affection and respect – a heritage that is stewarded in trust and conveyed as a gift worthy of posterity.

3. Landed eschaton. In the biblical narrative, the last things, *eschaton*, are portrayed in telluric terms (Rev 21:1–4). Christian hymnal tradition fanned this view with renditions of “Beulah land” as our final eschatological destiny. John’s revelation (Rev 21) provided the scriptural basis for land-ed eschatological discourses. Whatever meanings can be attributed to the imagery of John’s revelations of the afterlife, the imagery of a new *creation* captioned as “a new heaven” and “a new earth” is explicitly conveyed. At face value, the picture is one of co-existence on a new “land” territory. Since world Christianity is motivated by a fervent desire for the now-and-not-yet Kingdom of God, such a view of *landed eschaton* would demand greater recognition of our present habitation – this present land and this present earth – as an important mission component in the grand narrative of redemption. Missional Christian faithfulness therefore requires faithful stewardship of the land, and is reflected in intentional care and nurture of the natural environment. In this, Christians are enabled to fulfil their calling and their identity in the land of the living, as they seek the on-earth-as-it-is-in-heaven kingdom.

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Joshua K. Rutere

V. Islam

In Islam, God has not granted his people a particular land as he does for the patriarchs and the Israelites in the HB. Instead, Muslims are communally identified, primarily at least, as a people (*umma*) with a shared religion (Denny: 862).

Perhaps most significantly, land in Islam is associated with the Arabian Peninsula in general and the land around the cities of Mecca and Medina in particular. According to the Qur’ān (S 27:91), God made the city of Mecca holy (*haramahā*) and the rituals associated with the city – events related to the *Hajj* – are considered the “sacred things of God” (*ḥurumāti Allāhi*; S 22:30). Since Muḥammad emigrated to the city of Medina and died there, this city is also incorporated into Islamic ritual and is considered a sacred site (Neuwirth: 297–99). As such, only Muslims may enter these regions and, in the context of *Hajj*, must be in a purified state. Of course, Islamic holy sites exist in other regions, but the *Ka’ba* took precedence early on in Islam’s development, along with the rites associated with the *Hajj*. As a result, other sacred sites gradually became subordinate to Mecca and Medina (ibid.: 297).

Echoes of biblical geography can be heard in various sections of the Qur’ān. In many cases, these passages are used to undergird the significance of the Muslim community as a divinely appointed historic faith. For example, Mount Sinai, the site of a previous revelation from God to the prophet Moses, is juxtaposed with the *Ka’ba* in Mecca as a means for affirming the latter’s sanctity and giving it a history attached to ancient monotheism (e.g., S 19:51–52; Neuwirth: 308–9). In other cases, Jerusalem and the holy land related to Judaism and Christianity are mentioned. For example, the prophecy of a son given to Zechariah (i.e., John the Baptist; S 3:39, 19:7), God’s provision for Mary in the temple with Zechariah (S 3:37), and the destruction of the temple (S 17:2–8), all events occurring in Jerusalem and the holy land, help to connect Muslims to sacred geography. In effect, the Muslim community is grafted into the salvation history begun in Judaism and Christianity. As a result, connecting the spiritual geography of the past with Islam helps Muslims “adopt the remote world of the memory of [Jews and Christians] as their own spiritual past” (ibid.: 309). Finally, the early Muslim community’s initial identification of Jerusalem as its *qibla*, before changing it to Mecca (S 2:143–44), and Muḥammad’s miraculous night journey (*al-Isrā’*; S 17:1)

from the Sacred Mosque in Mecca (*al-Masjid al-Ḥarām*) to the “farthest mosque” (*al-Masjid al-Aqṣā*) in Jerusalem help to substantiate the land of Israel in Islam’s history and the city of Mecca as a corresponding holy land (Neuwirth: 308–9).

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Charles Tieszen

VI. Literature

“The land” in the Bible denotes primarily the territory into which the Israelites moved after the exodus, together with its subsequent history. Other lands, such as Assyria or Egypt, form the defining boundaries to this land, as do more metaphoric and symbolic notions such as “The North” and “The South.” The common literary trope of exile is dependent on the concept of the land. In the Bible’s literary afterlife, as biblical stories and events are transposed to quite different geographical settings, or “proximized” (in the terminology of Gérard Genette), “The land” often signifies the country of the writer’s residency or origin, though for Jewish writers it continues to support strongly ideas of exile and uprootedness. Dante’s *Comedy* and *Purgatorio* (early 14th cent.) lean heavily on Holy Land itineraries (especially ascents of Mount Sinai) and accounts of pilgrimages to the Holy Land, while simultaneously localizing the diegetic content to political events in the Italy of the author’s time.

The mystery plays populate biblical episodes with bucolic shepherds from Yorkshire and accommodate the scene of the drunkenness of Noah or the wedding at Cana to the conditions of medieval French viticulture. The sense, ironic and otherwise, of America as the Promised Land for European settlers dominates the work of such writers as James Fenimore Cooper (1789–1851) and William Faulkner (1897–1962), sometimes resulting in a reversal of the exodus narrative, as when John Steinbeck in *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) has the Joads move from a ruined promised land to relative slavery in New York. Maera Schreiber has demonstrated the blended senses of homecoming and displacement found in Jewish American poetry. A similarly conflicted sense of The Land informs Caribbean literature, where the multiple exilic displacements experienced through marronage greatly complicates the sense of “The Land,” as in Sylvia Wynter’s novel *The Hills of Hebron* (1962).

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Anthony Swindell

See also → Environment, Ecology, and the Bible;
→ Foreigner; → Geography; → Holy Land;
→ Israel, Land of; → Jubilee, Year of; → Promised Land; → Sabbath Year

Land of Milk and Honey

→ Promised Land

Landauer, Gustav

The German-Jewish political philosopher, novelist, and cultural critic, Gustav Landauer (1870–1919) conscripted ancient and medieval mystical thinkers to formulate his vision of an ethical anarchism. His point of departure was Fritz Mauthner’s critique of language as inherently incapable of gaining access to “knowledge of the world as it truly is,” for it is bound to the world as mediated by the senses and thus cannot transcend the *principium individuationis* that governs the phenomenal world. Language, in effect, thus sanctifies the divisiveness of the world as we ordinarily experience it, and, Landauer would add, also the conflictual divisions of the social world.

Inspired by Mauthner, he published in 1903, *Skepsis und Mystik* (Skepticism and Mysticism), in which he developed a mystical anthropology in support of his vision of anarchism. Drawing primarily on Meister Eckhart’s notion of the primordial unity of the world which all individuals, regardless of their station in life, can experience, Landauer advocated a retreat from language and the phenomenal world into one’s self. Ensconced in silent solitude one is insulated from the influences of the bourgeois society and its egotistic individualism. Within the bounds of one’s inner sanctum, one is primed to a mystical perception of the unity beyond the pernicious divisions of prevailing social realities. Further, consequent to the mystical apprehension of the primordial unity of the world, one experiences Eternity as a continuous presence, and hence a proleptic glimpse of Utopia as here and now. Accordingly, social justice is not to be sought in a future paved by class struggle, as propagated by revolutionary socialists. Socialism is rather to be realized by enjoining the ethical will, nurtured by mystical insight. Towards this end, Landauer advocated the establishment of small, voluntary socialist communities, free from the coercive power of the state and religious institutions. For Landauer, anarchism was a spiritual, high-religious ideal.

Through his friendship with Martin Buber, this ideal exercised a seminal influence on the Zionist kibbutz movement. By virtue of their friendship, Landauer drew closer to the Judaism of his birth,