

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

508(c)(1)(a) Free Church • Sole Tanakh Authority - A Study for Judaism • Christianity • Islam

DOCUMENT 251

THE PLACE HE CHOOSES

A Covenant Deep Dive into *ha-maqom asher yivchar Yahweh* (the place which Yahweh will choose)

Where Did Yahweh Say He Would Put His Name, Did He Ever Name It, and Can Any Group Today Claim to Be It? — A Three-Religion Covenant Response to the House of Yahweh (Abilene), the Latter-day Saints, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Nation of Islam, and Every Movement That Says "Come to Us"

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The Message is Sent to the World

✡ JUDAISM

† CHRISTIANITY

☪ ISLAM

Rabbinic Judaism has never claimed that a synagogue, a yeshiva, or a movement is ***ha-maqom*** (the place). Its tradition is unanimous that the chosen place is Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, and every synagogue in the world is built to face it. The Mishnah records the sequence Gilgal, Shiloh, Nob, Gibeon, Jerusalem, and rules that once Jerusalem was chosen, no other altar was ever again permitted (Mishnah Zevachim 14:4–8). That is the posture this document asks of every tradition.

Christian movements have repeatedly relocated "Zion" and "the mountain of the house of **Yahweh**": to Independence, Missouri and Salt Lake City (Latter-day Saints), to a worldwide "organization" (Jehovah's Witnesses), to a Texas sanctuary (House of **Yahweh**), to a church in Korea (World Mission Society Church of God; Shincheonji), or to Rome as the one Church outside of which there is no salvation (Fourth Lateran Council, 1215). The Tanakh is heard first: it names the place, and it names it more than twenty times.

Islam turned its ***qiblah*** (direction of prayer) from Jerusalem to Mecca after about sixteen or seventeen months (Sahih al-Bukhari 40; Q. 2:142–150), and the Nation of Islam in America has called for a separate land for its people. Yet the earliest Muslim prayer faced Jerusalem, and the Qur'an itself calls Yisra'el's sanctuary ***al-masjid al-aqsa*** (the farthest place of prayer, Q. 17:1). The Tanakh's own witness to the place **Yahweh** chose is examined here without insult and without compromise.

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the *Tanakh* — the written covenant of **Yahweh**. No Talmudic tractate, Church council decree, papal encyclical, hadith collection, or extra-biblical tradition carries doctrinal weight equal to or greater than the written Torah. Where any tradition conflicts with the written covenant, the written covenant governs without exception. The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority. Miqdash Bethel uses the Written Tanakh as its sole source for four reasons: it is the only text Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all recognize as originally given by **Yahweh**; it predates and underlies the Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an, so testing those traditions against it follows the evidentiary direction of **Deuteronomy 19:15** — the earlier witness governs the later commentary; every later tradition that departs from the Tanakh does so by addition or reinterpretation, never by overturning the text itself, so the text remains the fixed standard; and **Yahweh's** own words declare the covenant unchanging (Malachi 3:6; Psalms 119:89), making the written covenant — not evolving institutional interpretation — the only stable ground for doctrine. All three great covenant traditions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — are addressed simultaneously and equally in every Miqdash Bethel document, because **Yahweh's** covenant belongs to every nation that will receive it. The **Deuteronomy 19:15** two-or-three-witness evidentiary standard governs all textual claims in this document.

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This document applies the sole authority of the written *Tanakh* to one covenant phrase and to the modern claims built on it. The phrase is "the place which **Yahweh** your **Elohim** will choose" (**Deuteronomy 12:5**), and the question is whether any living group may claim to be that place. **Yahweh** (יהוה) and **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) appear in bold throughout. Tanakh books are cited by their English names. Hebrew transliterations appear in *bold italic* with English meaning in parentheses at every occurrence. Scripture references are bold. Verse numbers follow the English version; where the Hebrew numbering differs, it is given in brackets on first citation. Scripture is rendered in a literal working translation from the Hebrew. Each finding is graded under the two-or-three-witness standard as **Corroborated** (two or more independent Tanakh witnesses), **Single witness**, or **Not in the text**. Groups are described from their own publications wherever possible, and their claims are quoted fairly before they are tested. Three audiences are addressed simultaneously: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Rabbinic commentary, New Testament texts, church documents, the Qur'an and hadith, and the scriptures of newer movements are cited as historical and comparative reference — not as binding authority. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Torah	Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	Moriah; the altar law before the Land; the twenty-one "place which Yahweh will choose" texts; the prophet tests; the Land belongs to Yahweh
Nevi'im (Prophets)	Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Micah, Zechariah, Malachi	Shiloh, Nob, and Gibeon; the naming of Jerusalem; Yarov'am's substitute places; Shiloh as warning; the promise to choose Jerusalem again; the nations streaming to Zion
Ketuvim (Writings)	Psalms, Daniel, Nehemiah, 1 and 2 Chronicles	" Yahweh has chosen Zion"; prayer toward Jerusalem in exile; the return to "the place I have chosen"; the Temple on Mount Moriah

COMPARATIVE TEXTS CITED — HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE REFERENCE ONLY

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Rabbinic literature	Mishnah Zevachim 14:4–8	The sequence of sanctuaries and the permanence of Jerusalem's choosing
New Testament	John 4:20–24; Hebrews 12:22	The Samaritan–Jerusalem dispute and its later Christian reading
Qur'an and hadith	Q. 2:142–150; 3:96–97; 17:1; Sahih al-Bukhari 40	The change of qiblah from Jerusalem to Mecca; the Meccan House
Samaritan Pentateuch	Deuteronomy 12:5 and twenty parallel texts; Deuteronomy 27:4	"Has chosen" in place of "will choose"; Gerizim in place of Ebal

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Newer movements (own publications)	Doctrine and Covenants 57:1–3; 84:2–5; House of Yahweh publications; Watchtower publications; Elijah Muhammad, <i>Message to the Blackman in America</i> (1965); World Mission Society Church of God and Shincheonji teaching materials	Each group's own statement of its claim, quoted before it is tested
Church documents	Fourth Lateran Council (1215), canon 1; <i>Unam Sanctam</i> (1302); Catechism of the Catholic Church 846–848	"Outside the Church no salvation" and its later qualification

I. FRAMING THE QUESTION — "YOU MUST COME HERE"

I-A. The Claim as It Is Usually Heard

Across the religious world one message is repeated with remarkable sameness: **Yahweh** has chosen one place in these last days, this is that place, and to be saved, protected, or taught the full truth you must come here. The address changes — a sanctuary outside Abilene, a temple lot in Independence, a valley in Utah, a mosque in Chicago, a church headquarters in Korea, the see of Rome — but the proof texts rarely do. They are drawn from the Torah's command to worship

"in the place which Yahweh your Elohim will choose" (Deuteronomy 12:5)

And from the prophets' promise that:

"the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established at the top of the mountains, and all nations shall stream to it" (Isaiah 2:2).

People have sold homes, left families, moved across the world, and handed over their tithes because they were told that a man, a building, or an organization is the place **Yahweh** chose. The question deserves an answer from the text itself.

I-B. The Question in the Tanakh's Own Terms

Three questions govern this study.

First: what does the phrase **"the place which Yahweh will choose"** mean in the Torah, and what was to happen there?

Second: did **Yahweh** ever name the place, and if so, what name did He give it?

Third: does the Tanakh anywhere allow that choice to be moved, transferred, or re-issued to a new location or a new group?

This study builds on earlier work in the Library and does not repeat it. **Doc 215 (*Has It Been Fulfilled?*)** tested **Isaiah 2:2** and concluded that, by its own four-element standard, the prophecy is not yet fulfilled. **Doc 250 (*Holy to Yahweh*)** showed that the tithe was brought to "**the place Yahweh chooses**" and that no building today is the storehouse. **Doc 240 (*This Month Is for You*)** surveyed the modern Sacred Name and sighted-moon groups. **Doc 218** set out the Tanakh's tests of a prophet. The present document answers the question those studies left standing: where is the place, and who may claim it?

Every finding below is graded. A finding is corroborated when two or more independent Tanakh witnesses carry it (Deuteronomy 19:15). It is **Single witness** when only one text carries it. It is **Not in the text** when it is taught but the Tanakh does not say it.

II. THE WORD STUDY — WHAT THE HEBREW SAYS

The vocabulary of the chosen place is precise, and it is repeated almost word for word across Deuteronomy. The table sets out the terms this study relies on.

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>ba-maqom</i> (the place), הַמָּקוֹם	H4725	A standing-place, a site; with the article, a specific site already in view	Deuteronomy 12:5, 14; 1 Kings 8:29
<i>bachar</i> (to choose), בָּחַר	H977	To choose, select, elect; the same verb used of Yahweh choosing Yisra'el, David, and Jerusalem	Deuteronomy 7:6; 1 Kings 11:13; Psalms 132:13
<i>yivchar</i> (he will choose), יִבְחַר	H977	Imperfect (future) form: the choice is announced before it is made	Deuteronomy 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26
<i>leshaken shemo sham</i> (to cause His name to dwell there), לְשַׁכַּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם	H7931 / H8034	From <i>shakan</i> (to dwell, settle, tabernacle), שָׁכַן: the Name is made to reside at one site	Deuteronomy 12:11; 14:23; 16:2, 6, 11; 26:2
<i>lasum et-shemo sham</i> (to put His name there), לָשׁוּם אֶת-שְׁמוֹ שָׁם	H7760	From <i>sum</i> (to set, place), שָׁם: the Name is placed as a mark of ownership	Deuteronomy 12:5, 21; 14:24; 1 Kings 9:3

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>be-achad shevatecha</i> (in one of your tribes), בְּאַחַד שְׁבִטֶיךָ	H259 / H7626	The place lies inside the territory of one tribe of Yisra'el	Deuteronomy 12:14
<i>menuchah</i> (rest) and <i>nachalah</i> (inheritance), מְנוּחָה, נַחֲלָה	H4496 / H5159	The settled condition in the Land that must come before the place is used	Deuteronomy 12:9–10; Psalms 132:14
<i>Tziyon</i> (Zion), צִיּוֹן	H6726	The fortified ridge of Jerusalem taken by David; used in parallel with Jerusalem	2 Samuel 5:7; Isaiah 2:3
<i>Yerushalayim</i> (Jerusalem), יְרוּשָׁלַיִם	H3389	The city named as chosen	1 Kings 11:36; 2 Chronicles 6:6
<i>bamah</i> (high place), בָּמָה	H1116	A local shrine or altar outside the chosen place; condemned after the house was built	1 Kings 3:2; 2 Kings 23:8

Four lexical observations govern what follows.

First, the verb is future. Moses speaks on the plains of Moab, before the Land is entered, and says **Yahweh yivchar (will choose)**. A future choice is a promise that the choice will be made and made known. It is not an open invitation for every later teacher to announce the location for himself. The question the text raises is simply: when did **Yahweh** make that choice, and how did He make it known?

Second, the place is singular and bounded.

"Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see; but in the place which Yahweh will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer" (Deuteronomy 12:13–14).

The phrase *be-achad shevatecha (in one of your tribes)* fixes the place inside the tribal territory of Yisra'el. Wherever the choice falls, it falls inside the Land.

Third, the place is where Yahweh puts His Name. It is not where a man puts his own.

"To put His name there, for His dwelling" (Deuteronomy 12:5).

The Name is the mark of ownership; the place belongs to Him, and no human founder, prophet, or organization is ever said to carry that Name as its own title deed.

Fourth, the place requires a condition before it is used:

"For you have not yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which Yahweh your Elohim is giving you" (Deuteronomy 12:9).

The *menuchah* (*rest*) comes first, then the choice is put into effect (**Deuteronomy 12:10–11**). The Psalms later use the same word of Zion:

"This is My resting place forever" (Psalms 132:14).

III. THE TORAH'S TEXT — TWENTY-ONE WITNESSES TO ONE PLACE

The phrase "*the place which Yahweh will choose*" or its close variants appears twenty-one times in Deuteronomy — the same twenty-one texts in which the Samaritan Pentateuch changes the verb (**Section IX-F**). The texts are not scattered; together they describe everything that was to happen at the chosen place.

TEXT	WHAT HAPPENS AT THE PLACE
Deuteronomy 12:5–7, 11–14, 18, 21, 26	Burnt offerings, sacrifices, tithes, contributions, vows, and freewill offerings are brought and eaten before Yahweh with rejoicing
Deuteronomy 14:23–25	The second tithe is eaten there; if the way is too far, it is turned to silver and carried there (compare Doc 250)
Deuteronomy 15:20	The firstborn of herd and flock are eaten there year by year
Deuteronomy 16:2, 6–7, 11, 15–16	Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Booths are kept there; "three times in a year shall all your males appear before Yahweh your Elohim in the place which He will choose" (16:16)
Deuteronomy 17:8–10	The supreme court of priests and judge sits there for cases too hard for the towns
Deuteronomy 18:6	A Levite from any town may come there and serve
Deuteronomy 26:2	The firstfruits are brought there in a basket with the confession of 26:5–10

TEXT	WHAT HAPPENS AT THE PLACE
Deuteronomy 31:11	The Torah is read aloud to all Yisra'el there every seventh year at the Feast of Booths

Two things follow from the list. The place was the location of the altar, the priesthood, the high court, the pilgrimage feasts, and the public reading of the Torah. And every one of those functions required a sanctuary, a serving priesthood, and an altar that Yahweh Himself authorized. A place without an altar, priests, and the Name placed by Yahweh is not the place of Deuteronomy 12 by the Torah's own definition.

III-A. The Altar Law Before the Land

Before Deuteronomy, the altar law of Sinai speaks differently:

"In every place where I cause My name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you" (Exodus 20:24 [Hebrew 20:21]).

The patriarchs built altars where Yahweh appeared to them — Shechem, Beit-El, Hebron, Beersheba (Genesis 12:7–8; 13:18; 26:25; 35:1–7). Deuteronomy does not cancel that history; it announces what will change once Yisra'el has rested in the Land. The key is:

Deuteronomy 12:8–10: "You shall not do according to all that we do here this day... for you have not yet come to rest."

Before the rest, many altars; after the choice, one place.

Finding: that the Torah commands one place, chosen by **Yahweh**, inside one of the tribes of Yisra'el, where His Name dwells and where altar, priesthood, court, and feasts are centered, is corroborated by twenty-one texts in Deuteronomy alone. That the place could be anywhere outside the tribal territory of Yisra'el is **Not in the text**.

IV. HOW YAHWEH ACTUALLY CHOSE — THE PLACE IS NAMED

The Torah left the place unnamed. The Prophets and the Writings did not. They record a sequence of sanctuaries and then, with unusual repetition, the naming of one city.

IV-A. Shiloh: "Where I Set My Name at the First"

After the conquest,

"the whole congregation of the children of Yisra'el assembled at Shiloh, and set up the Tent of Meeting there" (Joshua 18:1).

Elkanah went up **"year by year to worship and to sacrifice to Yahweh of hosts in Shiloh"** (1 Samuel 1:3). Yahweh later calls it by the Deuteronomy formula:

"Go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I caused My name to dwell at the first" (Jeremiah 7:12).

Shiloh was a real first fulfillment of the promise, and it lay in Ephraim, inside the tribes.

IV-B. Nob and Gibeon: The Interval

After the ark was captured and Shiloh fell, the priests served at Nob (1 Samuel 21:1–6; 22:19), and the Tabernacle and bronze altar stood at Gibeon (1 Chronicles 16:39; 21:29; 2 Chronicles 1:3–6), where Shelomoh offered a thousand burnt offerings (1 Kings 3:4). The text is candid that this was an interval:

"the people sacrificed at the high places, because there was no house built for the name of Yahweh until those days" (1 Kings 3:2).

IV-C. Moriah and the Threshing Floor

The site was fixed by an act of judgment and mercy. When the plague stopped at the threshing floor of Arabnah the Jebusite, David was told to raise an altar there, and he bought the floor at full price (2 Samuel 24:18–25). David then said,

"This is the house of Yahweh Elohim, and this is the altar of burnt offering for Yisra'el" (1 Chronicles 22:1).

The Chronicler identifies the spot:

"Shelomoh began to build the house of Yahweh at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where Yahweh appeared to David his father, in the place that David had prepared, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Yevusite" (2 Chronicles 3:1).

Moriah is the land where Avraham was sent to offer Yitzchak, where he named the place *Yahweh yir'eh* (Yahweh will see / provide),

"as it is said to this day, In the mount of Yahweh it shall be seen" (Genesis 22:2, 14).

IV-D. The Choice Announced in Words

Then comes the plainest thing in the whole subject: Yahweh Himself names the place, in the first person, in the Deuteronomy vocabulary. The table sets out the witnesses.

TEXT	WHAT YAHWEH SAYS OR THE TEXT RECORDS
2 Chronicles 6:5–6	"I chose no city out of all the tribes of Yisra'el to build a house in, that My name might be there... but I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name might be there."
2 Chronicles 7:12, 16	"I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice... For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart shall be there perpetually."
1 Kings 8:29; 9:3	"The place of which You said, My name shall be there"; "I have hallowed this house which you have built, to put My name there forever."
1 Kings 11:13, 32, 36	"For the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen"; "Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself to put My name there."
1 Kings 14:21; 2 Chronicles 12:13	"Jerusalem, the city which Yahweh had chosen out of all the tribes of Yisra'el, to put His name there."
2 Kings 21:4, 7; 2 Chronicles 33:7	"In Jerusalem I will put My name... In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Yisra'el, will I put My name forever."
Psalms 78:67–68	"He rejected the tent of Yosef, and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Yehudah, Mount Zion which He loved."
Psalms 132:13–14	"For Yahweh has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling; This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it."
Nehemiah 1:8–9	"If you return to Me... I will gather them from there and bring them to the place that I have chosen to cause My name to dwell there."
Zechariah 1:17; 2:12 [Hebrew 2:16]; 3:2	" Yahweh will yet comfort Zion and will yet choose Jerusalem"; "and will choose Jerusalem again"; " Yahweh who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you."

Note what these witnesses do. **2 Chronicles 6:5–6** deliberately echoes the Torah's phrase "**out of all the tribes**" (**Deuteronomy 12:5**) and then fills in the blank the Torah left: Jerusalem. **1 Kings 14:21** and **2 Kings 21:7** add "**out of all the tribes of Yisra'el**," and **Psalms 78:68** names the tribe — Yehudah — answering **Deuteronomy 12:14's** "**in one of your tribes.**" **Nehemiah 1:9** takes the

future verb of Deuteronomy and restates it in the past tense: "**the place that I have chosen.**" The promise of Deuteronomy was kept, and the Tanakh says where.

Finding: that **Yahweh** named Jerusalem, Mount Zion, in the tribe of Yehudah, as the place He chose to put His Name is **Corroborated** by more than twenty witnesses across the Former Prophets, the Latter Prophets, and the Writings. The Torah's future *yivchar* (**He will choose**) becomes the history books' past *bachar* (**He has chosen**). That the choice is still open, waiting for a modern founder to announce it, is **Not in the text**.

V. CAN THE CHOSEN PLACE BE FORFEITED OR MOVED?

Every group that claims to be "**the place**" today must first explain why the named place no longer counts. The usual answer is that Jerusalem was rejected for sin and the choice passed to someone else. Tanakh addresses that argument directly.

V-A. Shiloh as Warning, Not Precedent

Yahweh did abandon a place where His Name once dwelt:

"He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among men" (Psalms 78:60),

And He warned Yehudah, **"I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust... as I have done to Shiloh"** (Jeremiah 7:14).

But look where the Psalm goes next. When Shiloh was set aside, the choice did not pass to whoever claimed it; **Yahweh** Himself named the new place — "**Mount Zion which He loved**" (Psalms 78:68).

The only transfer in the Tanakh is a transfer Yahweh announced, to a place inside the tribes, recorded in scripture.

V-B. Jerusalem Cast Off — and Chosen Again

The judgment on Jerusalem is stated in the strongest words the text has:

"I will remove Yehudah also out of My sight, as I removed Yisra'el, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there" (2 Kings 23:27).

If any text in the Tanakh were going to announce a new place, this would be the moment. It does not. Every prophet who speaks after the judgment brings the promise back to the same city!

TEXT	THE RESTORATION PROMISE
Jeremiah 3:17	"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Yahweh , and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of Yahweh , to Jerusalem."
Isaiah 2:2–3; Micah 4:1–2	"Out of Zion shall go forth the Torah, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem."
Joel 3:17 [Hebrew 4:17]	"So you shall know that I am Yahweh your Elohim , dwelling in Zion My holy mountain; then Jerusalem shall be holy."
Zechariah 1:16–17; 2:12	"I have returned to Jerusalem with mercies; My house shall be built in it... and Yahweh will yet choose Jerusalem."
Zechariah 8:3, 22	"I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem... many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Yahweh of hosts in Jerusalem."
Zechariah 14:16	"Everyone who is left of all the nations... shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Yahweh of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths" — in Jerusalem.
Nehemiah 1:9	"I will gather them... and bring them to the place that I have chosen."

The pattern is the same in all seven witnesses. The nations come to Jerusalem; Jerusalem does not go to the nations. The phrase *ve-vachar od bi-Yerushalayim* (*and He will choose Jerusalem again*) in **Zechariah 2:12** is decisive: the re-choosing after exile is a re-choosing of the same place, not a transfer of the title.

Finding: that the chosen place was judged, its house destroyed, and its people exiled is **Corroborated** (**2 Kings 23:27; Jeremiah 7:14**). That **Yahweh** promised to restore and choose Jerusalem again is corroborated by at least seven prophetic witnesses.

That He transferred the choice to any other city, land, building, or organization is Not in the text. No verse in the Tanakh names a second chosen place after Jerusalem.

VI. WHAT THE COVENANT BELIEVER DOES, WHEN NO HOUSE STANDS

The strongest pull of a "come to us" message is practical: if the Temple is gone, where is a believer supposed to worship? The Tanakh answered that question before the first Temple fell, and the answer is not *"move to a new headquarters."*

VI-A. Pray Toward the Place, From Where You Are

At the dedication of the house, Shelomoh anticipated exile:

"If they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies... and pray to You toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built for Your name, then hear their prayer" (1 Kings 8:48–49; compare 2 Chronicles 6:38–39).

The exile is not told to find a new place. The exile is told to pray from where he is, facing the place **Yahweh** chose.

Daniel did exactly that in Babylon:

"his windows being open in his upper chamber toward Jerusalem, he knelt three times a day and prayed" (Daniel 6:10 [Hebrew 6:11]).

VI-B. Yahweh Is Found Where He Is Sought

The Torah itself says the scattered will find **Yahweh** in the lands of their scattering:

"From there you will seek Yahweh your Elohim, and you will find Him, if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul" (Deuteronomy 4:29).

Jeremiah wrote the same to exiles in Babylon:

"You shall seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

Ezekiel adds that **Yahweh** Himself became to the exiles *le-miqdash me'at* (*a little sanctuary*), מִקְדָּשׁ שְׁמֵט, **"in the countries where they have gone" (Ezekiel 11:16).**

Hosea foresaw that Yisra'el would **"remain many days without king and without prince, without sacrifice and without pillar"** before returning to seek **Yahweh** (Hosea 3:4–5).

VI-C. The Nations Are Welcome Without Relocation

The door to the nations never required a change of address.

"From the rising of the sun to its setting My name shall be great among the nations, and in every place incense shall be offered to My name" (Malachi 1:11).

"Yahweh is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth" (Psalms 145:18).

The foreigner who joins himself to **Yahweh**, keeps the Sabbath, and holds fast the covenant is promised a place in the house of prayer **"for all peoples"** (**Isaiah 56:6–7**) — and the house is still called **"My holy mountain,"** the same Zion. The covenant brings the nations to **Yahweh**; it never sends them to a man.

Yahweh also warned against making the house into a talisman.

"Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool; where is the house that you would build for Me?... But to this one will I look: to him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word" (**Isaiah 66:1–2**; compare **Isaiah 57:15**).

Finding: that the covenant believer outside the Land is to seek **Yahweh** where he is, with all his heart, and to pray toward the place **Yahweh** chose, is **Corroborated** (**Deuteronomy 4:29**; **1 Kings 8:48**; **Daniel 6:10**; **Jeremiah 29:13**; **Ezekiel 11:16**). That he must relocate to a substitute place named by a modern teacher in order to be heard or saved is **Not in the text**.

VII. THE TANAKH'S OWN TEST FOR ANYONE WHO SAYS "COME HERE"

The modern claim is not new. The Tanakh records the first organized alternative "place" in detail, and it records **Yahweh's** verdict.

VII-A. Yarov'am (Jeraboam): The First Substitute Place

When the kingdom divided, Yarov'am feared that pilgrimage to Jerusalem would draw his people back to Yehudah. His solution was two new places, a new calendar, and a new priesthood:

"It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Behold your gods, O Yisra'el" (**1 Kings 12:28**). He set up calves at Beit-El and Dan, made priests **"from among all the people, who were not of the sons of Levi"** (**12:31**), and kept a feast **"in the month which he had devised of his own heart"** (**12:33**).

The name he chose was even a holy one: Beit-El, the house of El, where Ya'akov had met **Elohim** (**Genesis 28:19**). The verdict: **"this thing became a sin"** (**1 Kings 12:30**), and it became the standing charge against every northern king — "the sins of Yarov'am the son of Nevat, who made Yisra'el sin" (**2 Kings 10:29**, and repeatedly).

Yarov'am's pattern is the template for every later substitute. A holy-sounding name, a real concern (the journey is too far), a new location, a leader who controls access, a calendar set by the leader, and worship that is sincere and still rejected.

VII-B. Earlier and Later Warnings

Before the kings, Mikhah of Ephraim built a private house of gods with an ephod and hired a Levite, and the tribe of Dan carried it off and kept it

"all the time that the house of Elohim was in Shiloh" (Judges 17:5–13; 18:30–31).

Gideon's ephod at Ofrah became **"a snare to Gideon and to his house" (Judges 8:27)**. And even the true place could be turned into a slogan:

"Do not trust in lying words, saying, The temple of Yahweh, the temple of Yahweh, the temple of Yahweh are these" (Jeremiah 7:4).

If Jerusalem's own Temple could not be used as a guarantee of safety while justice was trampled (Jeremiah 7:5–11), no substitute can.

VII-C. Five Covenant Tests

The Tanakh supplies the tests. Each is carried by more than one witness.

#	TEST	WHAT THE TEXT REQUIRES	WITNESSES
1	Does the Tanakh name it?	The place is the one Yahweh names, not the one a man names	Deuteronomy 12:5; 2 Chronicles 6:6; Nehemiah 1:9
2	Is it inside the tribes of Yisra'el?	"In one of your tribes"; the tribe named is Yehudah	Deuteronomy 12:14; Psalms 78:68; 1 Kings 14:21
3	Does the claimant add to the word?	New scripture, new names, or new calendars laid over the covenant are additions	Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32 [Hebrew 13:1]; 1 Kings 12:33
4	Have its predictions come to pass?	A date or event announced in Yahweh's name that fails marks the speaker as presumptuous	Deuteronomy 18:21–22; Jeremiah 28:9
5	Does the "place" serve the flock or the founder?	Shepherds who feed themselves, prophets who run unsent, and priests who teach for hire are condemned	Ezekiel 34:2–3; Jeremiah 23:21; Micah 3:11

A sixth caution sits beneath all five. Even a sign that comes true does not validate a messenger who leads people after another way:

"you shall not listen to the words of that prophet... for Yahweh your Elohim is testing you" (Deuteronomy 13:1–3).

VIII. THE MODERN CLAIMS EXAMINED

The groups below are described from their own publications or from reputable reference works wherever possible, and each claim is set out fairly before it is tested. The purpose is not to mock anyone who belongs to them. Many members are sincere people who were told that leaving meant losing their salvation. The purpose is to put the claim beside the text.

VIII-A. The House of Yahweh — Abilene (Eula), Texas

The claim. The House of **Yahweh** headquartered near Abilene, Texas, begun by Yisrayl Hawkins (earlier known as Buffalo Bill Hawkins) in 1980, after his brother Jacob Hawkins had founded the original House of **Yahweh** in Odessa, Texas, and led by Yisrayl until his death on October 8, 2021, teaches that its sanctuary is the place **Yahweh** has chosen for these last days. Its own literature states: **"The House of Yahweh is the ONLY place where Yahweh's Complete Truth is taught, including Yahweh's Truth about The Place He has CHOSEN to Establish HIS NAME in These Last Days!"** (*What Yahweh's Feasts Mean to You*). It has taught that **"The House of Yahweh, Established in Abilene, Texas, is SPOKEN OF and WRITTEN ABOUT by the Prophets of Old."** Members are required to keep the three annual feasts at the Eula sanctuary and nowhere else. In a 2016 press release the organization stated that, according to prophecy, it expects two billion people to **"flow to its doors"** — an application of **Isaiah 2:2**. It also taught that its founder and his brother were the two witnesses of Revelation 11.

THE TEST

- (1) The Tanakh names the chosen place, and it is not in Texas; no verse moves it (Sections IV–V).
- (2) West Texas is not inside any tribe of Yisra'el (**Deuteronomy 12:14**).
- (3) The phrase "house of **Yahweh**" in the Tanakh is the house in Jerusalem — **Isaiah 2:2–3** itself ends **"the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem"** — and archaeology confirms it: an ostrakon from the Judean fortress at Arad mentions *beit Yahweh* (the house of Yahweh), a reference most scholars read as the Temple in Jerusalem.

The name belongs to the Jerusalem house; taking the name does not transfer the choice.

- (4) **Doc 215** already showed that **Isaiah 2:2** is not yet fulfilled by its own four elements; nations beating swords into plowshares have not streamed to Abilene.

(5) The requirement that feasts be kept only where the leader presides, under a calendar he sets, is the Jeroboam pattern of **1 Kings 12:26–33**, and **Doc 240** has already set out the Tanakh's teaching on who sets the month.

It must be added in fairness that the organization's use of **Yahweh's** Name, its Sabbath and feast observance, and its insistence on the Torah are points the Tanakh supports. The error is not in those things. The error is in claiming a place **Yahweh** never named and making salvation depend on travelling to it.

Finding: the claim that a sanctuary in Texas is the place **Yahweh** chose to put His Name is **Not in the text**. It fails Tests 1, 2, and 5, and its application of **Isaiah 2:2** fails Test 4 on its own terms.

VIII-A-1. Isaiah 2:2 — Is the House of Yahweh in Abilene "the Mountain of the House of Yahweh"?

The House of Yahweh's strongest proof text is **Isaiah 2:2**. It teaches that the verse speaks of its own sanctuary: "The House of Yahweh, Established in Abilene, Texas, is SPOKEN OF and WRITTEN ABOUT by the Prophets of Old." In a 2016 public statement its founder said that, according to Bible prophecy, the organization expects two billion people to "**flow to its doors**." The words "flow" and "house of Yahweh" both come from **Isaiah 2:2**. The claim therefore has to be tested against the whole passage, not against one phrase lifted out of it.

The Hebrew text:

וְהָיָה בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים נִכּוֹן יְהוָה הַר בֵּית־יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הָהָרִים וְנִשָּׂא מִגְבָּעוֹת וְנִהְרָוּ אֵלָיו כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם

"And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established at the top of the mountains, and shall be lifted above the hills; and all the nations shall stream to it" (Isaiah 2:2).

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	MEANING	WHAT IT REQUIRES
<i>be-acharit ha-yamim</i> (in the latter days), בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים	H319 / H3117	The end of the days; the closing era of history	A time marked by the events of verses 3–4, not a date a group sets for itself
<i>nakhon yibyeh</i> (shall be established), נִכּוֹן יְהוָה	H3559	Firmly set, fixed in place	An act of Yahweh that establishes the mountain; no human founding does this

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	MEANING	WHAT IT REQUIRES
<i>har beit Yahweh</i> (the mountain of the house of Yahweh), הַר בֵּית־יְהוָה	H2022 / H1004	The Temple mount; the same phrase appears in Micah 3:12 , of Zion	A specific mountain: the one verse 3 calls Zion and Jerusalem
<i>be-rosh be-harim</i> (at the head of the mountains), בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים	H7218	Chief, foremost, raised above all others	Pre-eminence over every other place of worship on earth
<i>ve-nabaru elav</i> (and they shall stream to it), וְנָהָרוּ אֵלָיו	H5102	To flow like a river; the image is water running <i>uphill</i>	A movement of nations that only Yahweh could cause
<i>kol ha-goyim</i> (all the nations), כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם	H1471	Every nation, as nations	Whole nations turning, not individual recruits

1. **The heading names the subject.** The oracle begins:

"The word that Yesha'yahu the son of Amotz saw concerning Yehudah and Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:1).

Before verse 2 is read, the prophet has already said which city he is speaking about. A reading that moves verse 2 to Texas contradicts the verse in front of it.

2. **The passage names the place twice more.** The nations say:

"Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the Elohim of Ya'akov... for out of Zion shall go forth the Torah, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3).

The prophecy therefore names the place three times — Yehudah and Jerusalem in verse 1, then Zion and Jerusalem in verse 3. "**Zion**" and "**Jerusalem**" stand in parallel, the Hebrew way of saying one thing twice. No reading of the Hebrew lets "**Zion**" mean a sanctuary outside the Land while "**Jerusalem**" in the same line means the city of David.

3. **A second witness confirms it word for word.** Micah 4:1–2 repeats the prophecy almost exactly, including "out of Zion shall go forth the Torah, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem." Micah had just said that for her sins "**Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest**" (Micah 3:12). The mountain that was plowed is the same mountain that will be raised up. That fulfills the two-witness standard of **Deuteronomy 19:15**, and both witnesses put the mountain in Jerusalem.

4. The fulfillment has visible marks. Doc 215 set out the elements of fulfillment in full. Tested against the House of Yahweh's claim, they stand as follows:

WHAT ISAIAH 2:2–4 SAYS WILL HAPPEN	TEXT	HAS IT HAPPENED IN ABILENE?
The mountain is raised above all mountains and hills	2:2	No. No place of worship on earth recognizes it as pre-eminent.
All the nations stream to it	2:2	No. The organization's membership is small, and no nation has turned to it.
Many peoples say "let us go up... to the house of the Elohim of Ya'akov"	2:3	No. The peoples of the earth are not going there to be taught.
The Torah goes out from Zion, the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem	2:3	No. By the text's own words it goes out from Jerusalem, not from Texas.
Yahweh judges between the nations and settles disputes for many peoples	2:4	No. No nation submits its disputes there.
Swords are beaten into plowshares; nation does not lift up sword against nation; they learn war no more	2:4	No. War continues across the world.

The claim fails on every element. Most important, **Isaiah 2:4** is not decoration: an end to war among the nations is the sign by which the prophecy is known to be fulfilled. As long as nations still train for war, **Isaiah 2:2** has not been fulfilled — not in Abilene, and not anywhere else.

5. "Two billion" is not in the text. **Isaiah 2:2** says *kol ha-goyim* (*all the nations*), and **2:3** says *ammim rabbim* (*many peoples*), עַמִּים רַבִּים. The prophet gives no number. A figure of two billion is an addition to the word (**Deuteronomy 4:2**). When a specific ingathering is announced in **Yahweh's** name as prophecy, the speaker is subject to the test of:

Deuteronomy 18:22: "When a prophet speaks in the name of Yahweh, and the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which Yahweh has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously."

6. The chapter ends with a warning against exalting man. The same oracle continues:

"The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the loftiness of men shall be bowed down, and Yahweh alone shall be exalted in that day" (**Isaiah 2:11**; repeated in **2:17**).

It closes: **"Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for what account is he?" (Isaiah 2:22).**

The chapter used to exalt a man's organization is itself a warning against exalting any man. When the mountain of the house of **Yahweh** is truly raised, no founder, overseer, or "witness" will stand on it in **Yahweh's** place. **Yahweh** alone will be exalted.

7. **Verse 5 is the invitation for today.** Between the promise (2:2–4) and the judgment (2:6–22), the prophet speaks to his own people in their own time:

"O house of Ya'akov, come, and let us walk in the light of Yahweh" (Isaiah 2:5).

Until **Yahweh** fulfills verses 2–4, the call of the passage is not to travel to a building. It is to walk in His light now, wherever one stands.

Finding: that **Isaiah 2:2–4** speaks of the mountain of the house of **Yahweh** in Zion and Jerusalem is corroborated by the passage's own heading (2:1), its own parallel (2:3), and a second prophet (**Micah 4:1–2**; compare 3:12). That the prophecy is not yet fulfilled is corroborated by the absence of every visible mark it names (2:2–4; **Doc 215**). That **Isaiah 2:2** speaks of the House of **Yahweh** in Abilene, Texas, or of any organization outside Jerusalem, is **Not in the text**. That two billion people will flow to any building is **Not in the text**.

VIII-B. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — Independence, Missouri, and Salt Lake City

The claim. In July 1831 Joseph Smith announced a revelation: **"this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion... the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward"** (Doctrine and Covenants 57:2–3). In September 1832 a further revelation said the city New Jerusalem **"shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation. For verily this generation shall not all pass away until a house shall be built unto the Lord"** (Doctrine and Covenants 84:4–5). After the Saints were driven from Missouri, church leaders taught that the Salt Lake Temple, built in the Rocky Mountains, began the fulfillment of **Isaiah 2:2's "mountain of the house of Yahweh... at the top of the mountains"** (for example, Harold B. Lee, *Ensign*, November 1971; Gordon B. Hinckley). Latter-day Saint teaching holds that there will be two capitals, Zion in America and Jerusalem.

The test. (1) The Tanakh never names a second Zion. **Isaiah 2:3** and **Micah 4:2** place "Zion" and "Jerusalem" in direct parallel as one location.

- (2) Missouri and Utah are not inside the tribes (**Deuteronomy 12:14**).
- (3) The revelations that name Independence are additions to the covenant (**Deuteronomy 4:2**).
- (4) The temple that "**shall be reared in this generation**" at the Independence temple lot was not built by the Latter-day Saints in that generation, or in any generation since; the lot is today held by a different body, the Church of Christ (Temple Lot). Under **Deuteronomy 18:22**, a word that does not come to pass is a word **Yahweh** did not speak.
- (5) Relocating the fulfillment of **Isaiah 2:2** from Missouri to Utah after the first site was lost is the pattern of a claim adjusting to events, not of a word fulfilled.

Finding: the claim that Independence or Salt Lake City is Zion, the place of **Isaiah 2:2**, is **Not in the text**. It fails Tests 1, 2, 3, and 4.

VIII-C. Jehovah's Witnesses — "God's Visible Organization"

The claim. The Watch Tower Society does not name a city. It teaches that "the mountain of the house of Jehovah" in **Isaiah 2:2** is "**pure worship**", now elevated above all other religion through the Jehovah's Witnesses and the "other sheep" who stream to it (*Isaiah's Prophecy — Light for All Mankind*, vol. I, ch. 4). Its publications have taught that salvation requires association with "God's organization" (*The Watchtower*, March 15, 1989; May 15, 2006), and researchers who document its literature record repeated comparisons of that organization to Noah's ark, outside of which there is no survival at Armageddon. The organization's world headquarters is in Warwick, New York.

The test. (1) The Witnesses' reading dissolves a named place into an organization. But the Tanakh's chosen place is concrete: a city, a mountain, a threshing floor bought for fifty shekels (**2 Samuel 24:24**), and a house whose windows Daniel faced (**Daniel 6:10**). The same prophecy the Society applies to itself ends "**from Jerusalem**" (**Isaiah 2:3**).

- (2) No verse makes an organization into *ba-maqom* (the place).
- (3) The name "Jehovah" is itself a later hybrid of the Name's consonants with another word's vowels (see **Doc 210**).
- (4) The Society's history includes announced dates — 1914, 1925, and the strong expectation around 1975 — that did not come as announced; **Deuteronomy 18:22** applies.
- (5) An organization that places itself between a person and survival stands where the Tanakh places the shepherds of **Ezekiel 34** and the unsent prophets of **Jeremiah 23:21**.

Finding: the claim that the Watch Tower organization is the "mountain of the house of **Yahweh**" and the one place of survival is **Not in the text**. It fails Tests 1, 3, 4, and 5.

VIII-D. The Nation of Islam — A Separate Land and a Last Messenger

The claim. The Nation of Islam, founded in Detroit in 1930 by W. D. Fard and led from Chicago by Elijah Muhammad from 1934 until 1975 (and re-established under Louis Farrakhan from 1977, headquartered at Mosque Maryam, Chicago), does not claim to be Jerusalem. Its "place" claim is different: that its people must be separated into a land of their own. Elijah Muhammad wrote: "**We want our people in America whose parents or grandparents were descendants from slaves, to be allowed to establish a separate state or territory of their own — either on this continent or elsewhere**" (*Message to the Blackman in America*, 1965). Alongside this, the movement has taught that Elijah Muhammad was the Messenger through whom its members must receive the truth.

The test. The Tanakh's land promise is specific: to Avraham's seed through Yitzchak and Ya'akov, within boundaries **Yahweh** Himself drew (**Genesis 15:18; 17:8; Numbers 34:1–12**), and the land itself belongs to **Yahweh** (**Leviticus 25:23**). "**When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples**" (**Deuteronomy 32:8**) — the drawing of boundaries is His act, not a movement's demand. The Tanakh does not reserve the covenant to one race; it opens it to every foreigner who joins himself to **Yahweh** (**Isaiah 56:3–7; Exodus 12:48–49; Numbers 15:15–16**), and it commands Yisra'el to "love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (**Deuteronomy 10:19**). The suffering that lies behind the Nation of Islam's demand is real, and the Tanakh takes man-stealing and slavery with the utmost seriousness (**Exodus 21:16**; see **Docs 222–226**). But the answer the covenant gives to oppression is justice and return to **Yahweh**, not a new chosen land outside the one He named.

Finding: that any people must be gathered to a new land, other than the Land **Yahweh** swore to the fathers, in order to be His, is **Not in the text**. The claim fails Tests 1, 2, and 3.

VIII-E. Islam — Mecca and the Change of Qiblah

The comparison. Mainstream Islam does not claim that Mecca is the place of **Deuteronomy 12**; it has its own scripture for the Ka'bah. The Qur'an says "**the first House established for mankind was that at Bakkah, blessed and a guidance**" (Q. 3:96) and commands pilgrimage to it (Q. 3:97). It also records that the Muslims' *qiblah* (direction of prayer) was changed: "**Turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram**" (Q. 2:144). The hadith records that the Prophet and his companions prayed toward Jerusalem for sixteen or seventeen months before the change (Sahih al-Bukhari 40).

The test. No Tanakh text names Mecca, Bakkah, or the Ka'bah as the place where **Yahweh** put His Name, and the Tanakh's chosen place is inside the tribes of Yisra'el. The earliest Muslim practice of

facing Jerusalem is itself a witness to where the prayer of the earlier covenant faced. This document does not tell Muslims what their own tradition must hold; it states what the Tanakh, which the Qur'an calls the *Tawrat* (Torah) and describes as guidance and light (Q. 5:44), names as the place.

Finding: that the Tanakh names Mecca as the place of **Deuteronomy 12** is **Not in the text**. That the first Muslim *qiblah* was Jerusalem is historically well attested.

VIII-F. The Samaritans — Mount Gerizim

The claim. The Samaritans, a small community of several hundred people living today on Mount Gerizim and in Holon, hold that Gerizim is the chosen place. Their Pentateuch reads *bachar* (*He has chosen*) in all twenty-one texts where the Masoretic text reads *yivchar* (*He will choose*), so that the choice appears already made in Moses' day. At **Deuteronomy 27:4** it commands the covenant altar to be built on Gerizim rather than Ebal, and it adds a commandment to build an altar on Gerizim to the Ten Words.

The test. This is the oldest and most serious rival claim, and it deserves an honest answer. The **Deuteronomy 27:4** reading "Gerizim" has real textual support outside the Samaritan tradition (an Old Latin manuscript and, by some scholars' reading, a Qumran fragment), and it may be original there. But **Deuteronomy 27** describes a one-time covenant ceremony on entering the Land, not *ba-maqom* (*the place*) where the Name dwells; the Masoretic text, the Septuagint, and the Qumran evidence agree against the Samaritan past tense in the twenty-one centralization texts, which most textual scholars classify as a deliberate sectarian change. Most important, the Samaritans accept only the five books of Moses. The Prophets and Writings — which the Samaritan community does not receive — are exactly where the choice is recorded by name (Section IV). A tradition that sets aside the witnesses who name the place cannot then claim the place is unnamed.

The dispute was already old when a Samaritan woman put it to Yeshua: "**Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship**" (John 4:20, comparative witness only).

Finding: that the Masoretic *yivchar* (*He will choose*) reflects the Torah's own vantage point before the Land is entered is corroborated by the plains-of-Moab setting (**Deuteronomy 1:1–5; 12:9–10**). That Gerizim is the chosen place is **Not in the text** of the Tanakh as a whole.

VIII-G. The Roman Catholic Church — "Outside the Church No Salvation"

The claim. The Catholic Church does not require pilgrimage to Rome for salvation, but its classic teaching locates salvation in one visible institution: "**There is one universal Church of the faithful, outside of which no one at all is saved**" (Fourth Lateran Council, 1215, canon 1); and "**it is**

absolutely necessary for salvation that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff" (*Unam Sanctam*, 1302). Modern teaching restates the principle — "**all salvation comes from Christ the Head through the Church which is his Body**" — while qualifying it for those who do not know the Church through no fault of their own (Catechism of the Catholic Church 846–848). Catholic interpretation has also read **Isaiah 2:2** as fulfilled in the Church.

The test. The Tanakh's place is a location **Yahweh** named, not an institution with a succession of officers. No verse attaches the Name to a bishopric, and no verse transfers the choice to Rome. The qualification of Catechism 847 is a welcome softening, but the principle that one institution holds the key to salvation stands where the Tanakh places the claim of any human gatekeeper (Tests 1 and 5).

Finding: that a church institution, or the see of Rome, is the place **Yahweh** chose is **Not in the text**.

VIII-H. Other Movements With the Same Claim

MOVEMENT	WHAT IT CLAIMS	TANAKH TEST
World Mission Society Church of God (founded by Ahn Sahng-hong, 1964, South Korea)	"Zion is the place where God's feasts are celebrated" (citing Isaiah 33:20), and only this church keeps them, so this church is Zion; its members are to come to it	Isaiah 33:20 says: "Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts; your eyes shall see Jerusalem." The verse names Jerusalem in the same breath. Keeping feasts does not turn a church into Zion (Tests 1, 2, 3)
Shincheonji Church of Jesus (Lee Man-hee, 1984; headquarters Gwacheon, South Korea)	Its community is "Mount Zion" and the new spiritual Yisra'el; Gwacheon is the place where prophecy is fulfilled; salvation is through its founder's testimony	No Tanakh text names Gwacheon or makes a living man the gate of the place (Tests 1, 2, 5)
Worldwide Church of God (Herbert W. Armstrong) and several successor groups	A "place of safety" in the end-time tribulation, often identified as Petra, to which the faithful would be taken	Petra lies in Edom, outside the tribes; announced end-time dates did not come as announced (Tests 2, 4)
Community of Christ and other Latter Day Saint branches	Independence, Missouri as the center place (the Community of Christ dedicated its temple there in 1994)	As in VIII-B (Tests 1, 2, 3, 4)

The same shape recurs in dozens of smaller movements: a founder, a place, a calendar, a claim that the feasts count only there, and a warning that leaving means losing salvation.

IX. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — HOW EACH TRADITION HANDLES THE CHOSEN PLACE

The table sets the three traditions against the Tanakh's own findings. Comparative texts are cited as historical reference only, in keeping with the standing rule of this document.

ELEMENT	✡ JUDAISM	✝ CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
Where is the place?	Jerusalem, the Temple Mount. The Mishnah traces Gilgal, Shiloh, Nob, Gibeon, and Jerusalem, and rules that after Jerusalem private altars were never again permitted (Zevachim 14:4–8). Synagogues face Jerusalem.	Divided. Most churches treat Jerusalem as historically central but not binding; some relocate Zion to a church, an organization, or a city in America or Korea; Catholic teaching locates salvation in the one Church.	Mecca and the Ka'bah for prayer and Hajj (Q. 2:144; 3:96–97); Jerusalem honored as the first qiblah and as al-Masjid al-Aqsa (Q. 17:1).
Covenant strength	Holds the Tanakh's own answer: the place is named, and it has not moved. Prays toward it, as 1 Kings 8:48 and Daniel 6:10 direct, without claiming a synagogue is the place.	The New Testament's own statement that true worshippers are not bound to Gerizim or Jerusalem for prayer (John 4:21–24) echoes Malachi 1:11 and Psalms 145:18: Yahweh hears from every place.	The earliest Muslim practice faced Jerusalem; the Qur'an honors Yisra'el's sanctuary and calls the Tawrat guidance and light (Q. 5:44).
Covenant departure	Very little on this point. Where later rules are added to Temple Mount practice, they are rules about the place, not claims to replace it.	Relocating Zion to Missouri, Utah, Texas, Korea, or an organization; making membership in one body the condition of survival; reading Isaiah 2:2 as fulfilled in a church.	The Tanakh names no Meccan sanctuary; the change of qiblah rests on the Qur'an, not on the Tanakh. The Nation of Islam's separate-land demand has no Tanakh witness.
Covenant witness	Every synagogue that faces Jerusalem preaches Nehemiah 1:9 without a word.	Hebrews 12:22 speaks of "Mount Zion" in a heavenly sense; however it is read, it does not name a new earthly headquarters.	Q. 17:1's "farthest place of prayer" keeps Jerusalem in the Muslim memory of the covenant.

X. WHY "COME TO US" WORKS — AND HOW TO ANSWER IT

The claim succeeds for reasons the Tanakh understands well. It offers certainty in a scattered world, where **Hosea 3:4** has left Yisra'el many days without sacrifice. It borrows real covenant language — the Name, the feasts, Zion. It usually teaches some true things the surrounding churches neglect, which makes the rest easier to accept. And it attaches fear to departure. Tanakh's answer is not to despise the hunger behind the claim; it is to satisfy that hunger with the text.

WHAT IS SAID	WHAT THE TANAKH SAYS	TEXT
" Yahweh has chosen a place for these last days, and it is here."	He chose Jerusalem, and promised to choose it again — not another place.	2 Chronicles 6:6; Zechariah 2:12
"The feasts only count if kept here."	The pilgrimage feasts were tied to the place with the altar and the priesthood; in exile the covenant believer rejoices, prays, and keeps what can be kept where he is.	Deuteronomy 16:16; Deuteronomy 4:29; Ezekiel 11:16
"Isaiah 2:2 is fulfilled in us."	The prophecy ends "from Jerusalem," and swords have not become plowshares.	Isaiah 2:3–4; Doc 215
"Leave and you lose your salvation."	Yahweh is near to all who call on Him in truth; He is found by those who seek Him with all their heart.	Psalms 145:18; Jeremiah 29:13
"Your tithe belongs to the place Yahweh chose — here."	The tithe was produce brought to Jerusalem's altar for the Levite and the poor; no building today is the storehouse.	Deuteronomy 14:22–29; Doc 250
"Our founder is the prophet who reveals the place."	A prophet whose word fails, or who adds to the covenant, is not sent.	Deuteronomy 18:22; Jeremiah 23:21

XI. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON THE PLACE YAHWEH CHOSE

Per the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard, no doctrine may stand on a single text. Each declaration below draws on more than one witness.

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	The Torah commands worship at one place chosen by Yahweh , inside one of the tribes of Yisra'el, where He puts His Name.	Deuteronomy 12:5, 11, 13–14; 16:16
II	Yahweh named the place: Jerusalem, Mount Zion, Moriah, in the tribe of Yehudah.	2 Chronicles 3:1; 6:6; 1 Kings 14:21; Psalms 78:68; 132:13
III	The choice was judged but never transferred; Yahweh promised to choose Jerusalem again.	2 Kings 23:27; Jeremiah 3:17; Zechariah 1:17; 2:12; Nehemiah 1:9
IV	The nations are promised to come to Zion and Jerusalem; no prophet sends them to a second Zion.	Isaiah 2:2–3; Micah 4:1–2; Zechariah 8:22; 14:16
V	Where no house stands, the covenant believer seeks Yahweh where he is, with all his heart, and prays toward the place He chose.	Deuteronomy 4:29; 1 Kings 8:48; Daniel 6:10; Ezekiel 11:16
VI	A substitute place, with a leader-set calendar and a priesthood of the leader's choosing, is the sin of Yarov'am, however sincere its worship.	1 Kings 12:26–33; 2 Kings 10:29; Jeremiah 7:4
VII	No group, founder, organization, or institution — Miqdash Bethel included — is the place Yahweh chose, and none may bind a conscience to its address.	Deuteronomy 4:2; 18:22; Ezekiel 34:2–3; Isaiah 66:1–2

The seventh declaration binds this Institution by the same standard it applies to others. Miqdash Bethel is a teaching work that sends the covenant message to the world. It is not *ba-maqom* (*the place*), its founder is not the gate of salvation, and no one needs to move anywhere to receive what it teaches.

XII. THE COVENANT RESPONSE — WHAT TO SAY TO THE ONE WHO WAS TOLD "YOU MUST COME HERE"

Behind this question there is usually a person: someone who has been told to sell a house, leave a family, or give everything to a group that claims to be the place **Yahweh** chose. Tanakh's answer is fivefold.

First: the place has a name, and Yahweh gave it. "I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name might be there" (2 Chronicles 6:6). You do not need a modern prophet to reveal what Yahweh has already written.

Second: it has not moved. Judgment fell on it, and the promise returned to it: "Yahweh will yet choose Jerusalem" (Zechariah 1:17).

Third: you can be heard from where you stand. "From there you will seek Yahweh your Elohim, and you will find Him, if you seek Him with all your heart" (Deuteronomy 4:29). Face toward the place He chose, as Daniel did, and pray.

Fourth: test every claim. Ask whether the Tanakh names it, whether it lies within the tribes, whether it adds to the word, whether its words have come to pass, and whether it feeds the flock or the founder (Deuteronomy 13; 18; Ezekiel 34).

Fifth: leaving a false place is not leaving Yahweh. Those who walked away from Yarov'am's Beit-El to seek **Yahweh** in Jerusalem were not the apostates; they were the faithful (2 Chronicles 11:13–16). "Those who set their hearts to seek Yahweh Elohim of Yisra'el came to Jerusalem to sacrifice to Yahweh, the Elohim of their fathers."

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"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Yahweh, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of Yahweh, to Jerusalem; and they shall no more walk after the stubbornness of their evil heart."

Jeremiah 3:17 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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