



Lesson Plan (45 minutes)

Jerusalem: Why is it so important?

Step 1: Start with the goals/questions

Goals: What are the goals of this lesson?

Affective – Students will feel a strong emotional and historical connection to Jerusalem, which has been a central aspect of the Jewish people for millennia.

Behavioral – Students will be able to discuss the different sides to various religious and political controversies surrounding Jerusalem (from the Temple Mount, to egalitarian prayer at the Kotel, to the status of East Jerusalem Arab residents).

Cognitive – Students will understand the religious significance Jerusalem holds for all three major religions.

Essential Questions/Big Ideas:

What deep questions and enduring understandings do we want students to be grappling with?

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Why is Jerusalem so important to the Jewish people and Jewish State?2. Why is Jerusalem a source of controversy within the Jewish people and different religious communities?3. How might Israel balance the different political and religious claims of different groups concerning the nature of Jerusalem? | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Jerusalem has, is and will continue to be, an integral aspect of the Zionist movement and the history of the Jewish people.2. Jerusalem has religious significance for Jews, Muslims and Christians.3. There are various political and religious controversies both within the Jewish community and between different religious communities when it comes to Jerusalem. |
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Step 2: Learning Plan

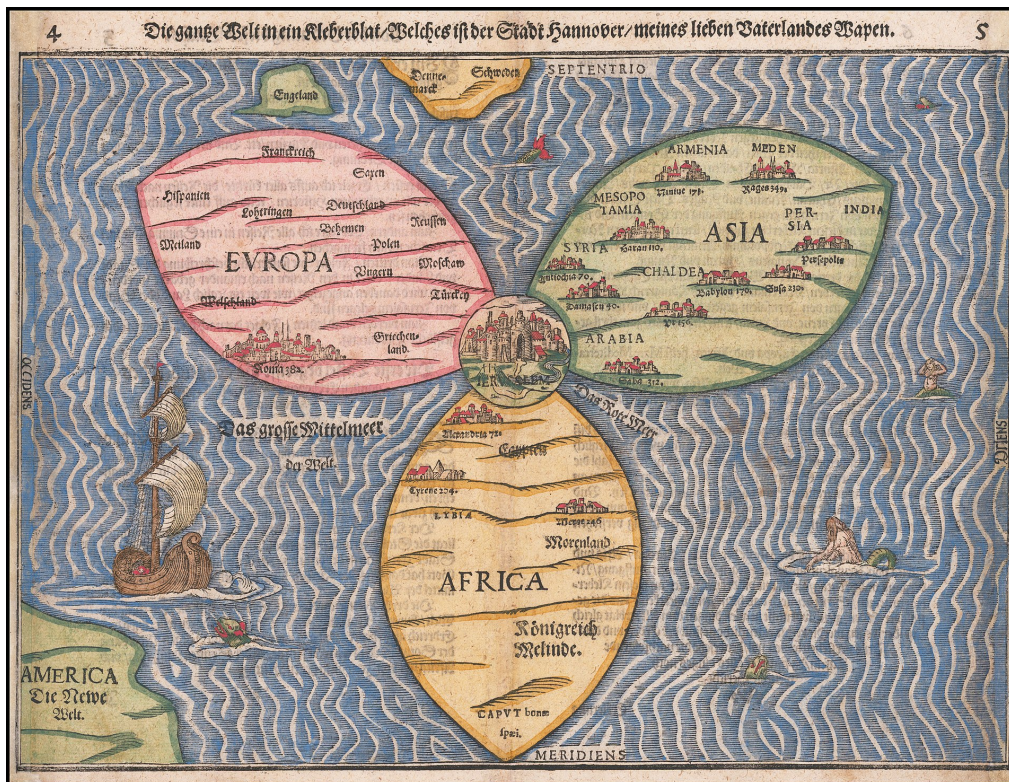
Hook/Trigger: (5 minutes)

Will I use a UED video, question, scenario...

Ask your students to take a look at [this 16th century map](#) created by 16th-century German cartographer and theologian Heinrich Bünting and answer the following prompts:

- What do you notice about this map? What message do you think the cartographer wanted to get across from its design?
- How does the map make you feel about Jerusalem and how it is viewed around the world?
- What are things that Jews did throughout history to mark Jerusalem as their “center” even when they were living far away in exile? (Ex: Said “next year in Jerusalem” at the Pesach seder, prayed in the direction of Jerusalem, sang “im eshcachech...”, “If I forget you, Jerusalem”, at weddings...).

Additional learning activity (if time): Ask students to draw their own map or image that represents how they view Jerusalem (the teacher should provide paper and markers).



Learning Activity: (30 minutes)

What am I using from UED resources (video, discussion question, game, debate)? Do these materials fit the unit goals/essential questions?

1. **Video and Kahoot: (11 minutes)** Watch the [Jerusalem video](#) and play the [Kahoot](#)/review questions.

2. **Learning activity: Jerusalem controversies (19 minutes)**

In Jerusalem, there are various religious and political controversies within both the Jewish community as well as between different religious communities in the city. Divide the students up into 3 groups and give each group a controversy to research. Then, using the [Jigsaw method](#), each group can share what they learned with the rest of the group. They should be able to briefly summarize the controversy, explain the arguments on both sides, and ask students what they think about the issue.

- a. **The Kotel prayer controversy**

Today, Jerusalem is also a place of [controversy over whether or not the Kotel should include an egalitarian prayer space](#). While a compromise was decreed in 2016 where one area would be assigned to egalitarian prayer, it has yet to be implemented, and monthly non-orthodox prayer services are sometimes met by protests orchestrated by some ultra-Orthodox Jews.

- i. Is it fair for the Kotel to be set up only according to Orthodox standards of prayer? Should the Kotel belong to one denomination of Judaism? What are the arguments on each side of the issue?
- ii. Is it possible to come up with a compromise that all groups would agree to follow?

- b. **The Temple Mount controversy**

In 1967, Moshe Dayan made the controversial decision to [relinquish Israeli control of the Temple Mount, and permit Jewish visitation but restrict Jewish prayer there](#). Currently, the Temple Mount is controlled by the Jerusalem Islamic Wakf, a Jordanian appointed organization.

- i. Should Jews be allowed to pray on the Temple Mount?
- ii. Should Jews visit the Temple Mount, or is that provoking the Muslims praying there?
- iii. Would you suggest a different compromise for control of the Temple Mount?

- c. **The Maqdasyin - East Jerusalem Arabs seeking integration**

After Israel's victory in the Six Day War, [East Jerusalem Arabs \(known as Maqdasyin\) found themselves in limbo](#). They did not want to accept Israeli citizenship at first and instead took permanent resident cards, hoping one day to be part of a capital of a Palestinian state. Today, Maqdasyin struggle with their identity. Should they seek out citizenship as a way to integrate more fully into Jerusalem, or does that make them disloyal to the

Palestinian cause? Also, how is Israeli policy affecting this choice? What do you think?

Reflection: (5 minutes)

How can I help students connect with the material on a deeper and personal level?

Choose 1 question:

1. **Visiting Jerusalem**

Have you ever visited Jerusalem? If so, what was the most memorable aspect of your visit? If not, what would you most like to experience in Jerusalem if you could visit?

2. **Tisha B'Av and its place in modern Jewish history (5 minutes)**

Tisha B'Av is the saddest day in the Jewish calendar when Jews around the world mourn Jerusalem and its destruction (amongst other tragedies that have befallen the Jewish people throughout Jewish history). Today however, Jerusalem is no longer desolate and abandoned; rather, it is the thriving capital of the modern state of Israel. Do you think that these historical circumstances change the meaning of Tisha B'Av and how it should be commemorated? Why or why not?

Step 3: Assessment

Checking for Understanding: (5-10 minutes)

Were my learning goals met?

Jerusalem images

Ask each student to find a picture that represents what Jerusalem means to them after everything they have learned in the lesson (give them a few minutes to find a picture online) and to paste it in a shared document. Display the pictures on the board and have each student explain their choice.

You can also place all of the images in the center of the room and ask each student to choose a different image (not the one that they brought) and explain what it means to them.

Ask the students, what pictures somebody who is not Jewish might bring to show what Jerusalem means to them.

How can we create space for the visions of multiple religions?

What to think about when lesson planning:

- Is my lesson being driven by the goals/essential questions?
- Is the UED video the hook or the learning activity?
- Do I have to adjust for the age levels of my students (excerpts, simplify the questions...)?