

Maps of Jerusalem

Learners will explore what can be learned about Jerusalem through historical maps of the city. Early maps of Jerusalem were produced by cartographers who had never visited the city, revealing that religious beliefs, narratives, and political priorities outweighed geographical reality. Learners will then create a map of their own city.

Group Activity

Step 1:

Present the following two maps of Jerusalem to your class. Discuss the similarities and differences of each map as well as its objective.

[Christian Van Adrichem](#) drew a map of Jerusalem in 1584 without ever visiting the city. The map is structured like a European town and features events and people in Jerusalem from the Old and the New Testament.

[Modern Map of the Old City of Jerusalem](#) from the Old City's tourist website lists the names of the seven gates, the main streets, and some of the tourist sites available in all four quarters of the Old City.

Step 2:

In groups, analyze old [maps of Jerusalem](#) and use the [worksheet](#) to learn about the cartographers' objectives, perspectives, and biases, and what the map tells us about Jerusalem. Each group is assigned one map, and the groups share what they learned with the class and compare the maps.

Discussion Questions

- Is the map drawn to scale?
- Can you identify two or three locations on the map?
- Is the map oriented to the north, south, east, or west?
- What does this map teach you about Jerusalem?
- What was the cartographer's objective, and what might their bias be?

Creative Activity

Using this [template](#), learners create a map of three to five of their most-visited or favorite places. The completed maps are redistributed around the class, enabling them to learn more about their classmates from their maps.

Primary Sources

- [Modern Map of Jerusalem, 1874](#)
- [Shana Tova Card, 1929](#)
- [Guide Map of Jerusalem, Drawn by Survey Directorate H.Q., Pal & T.J., 1949](#)
- [Jerusalem and her Surroundings, 1915](#)
- [Jerusalem From a Bird's-Eye View, 1873](#)

Maps of Jerusalem: Background Information

Modern Map of Jerusalem, 1874.

Amir Cahanovitch Collection



This is from the *Handbook of Biblical Geography* by Reverend George H. Whitney. Some of the maps are hand-drawn up-to-date maps, and others are old photographs of engraved or hand-drawn maps. This particular map is an official map of the British Ordnance Survey during the Ottoman rule of the region of the Old City of Jerusalem and indicates its four quarters: Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and Armenian. The Temple Mount is indicated as its own area and is labeled "Moriah" with both the Dome of the Rock and the Temple Area indicated. The Mount of Olives is indicated on the far right side of the map. The Ordnance Survey was Great Britain's national mapping agency, which provided the most accurate and current geographic data and was used by government, business, and individuals.

The Ordnance Survey was Great Britain's national mapping agency, which provided the most accurate and current geographic data and was used by government, business, and individuals.

Shana Tova Card, 1929

Ephemera Collection, The National Library of Israel



This is a Rosh Hashanah card depicting Jerusalem. The Western Wall can be seen in the center, surrounded by the old city walls with six gates. Many important locations are indicated on the card: King David's and King Solomon's castles (right), Beit Lechem (right), Mount of Olives (center), and the Holy of Holies (left). Also indicated on the card: Rachel Imainu (bottom right), King David's son Avshalom's castle (center right), and houses of the prophets Chagai, Malachi, and Hulda (center). It is clear that the artist was religious, as the card refers to the area as Zion (ציון), the biblical reference for

Mount of Olives (center), and the Holy of Holies (left). Also indicated on the card: Rachel Imainu (bottom right), King David's son Avshalom's castle (center right), and houses of the prophets Chagai, Malachi, and Hulda (center). It is clear that the artist was religious, as the card refers to the area as Zion (ציון), the biblical reference for

Jerusalem, and the burial place of religious leaders (Sanhedrin, the prophet Samuel, and Shimon Hatzadik, a high priest during the Second Temple period) are depicted at the bottom of the card.

Guide Map of Jerusalem, Drawn by Survey Directorate H.Q., Pal & T.J., 1946

The Eran Laor Map Collection, The National Library of Israel

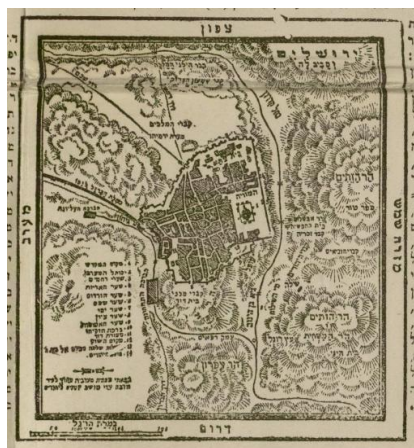


This map was provided to British soldiers stationed in Jerusalem during the British Mandate between 1920 and 1948. The map includes street names to assist with directions as well as important cultural and governmental locations. On the back of the map, there are reminders, guidelines, and a code of conduct for the British soldiers. If you look carefully, you can see the streets Ben Yehudah, King George, and Jaffa. You can also see the YMCA, Qatamon (Katamon), the railway station (known today as the First Station), the Jaffa Gate, and David's Tomb. This

map was created by the 13 Field Survey Company Royal Engineering Unit of the British Army, whose job was to continuously update maps for the daily use of British personnel to ensure their comfort and ease in foreign regions.

Jerusalem and Her Surroundings, 1915

The Eran Laor Map Collection, The National Library of Israel



The title of this map, "Jerusalem and Her Surroundings," can be seen in the top right. The map is an aerial view of the Old City of Jerusalem, but does not distinguish between its four quarters. The map also includes many newer communities outside of the Old City walls, such as Mishkenot Sha'ananim, Kfar Hataymanim, and Bayte Yemen. A key is provided listing fourteen locations indicated on the map. Additional locations are mentioned for their biblical importance: Mount Olives (center-right), Derech Hevron (bottom-center), Derech Shchem (top-left), and Emek Refaim (bottom-center). The map is drawn from the south looking north, and the directions of north, south, east, and west are also listed.

The map is drawn from the south looking north, and the directions of north, south, east, and west are also listed.

Jerusalem From a Bird's-Eye View, 1873

The Eran Laor Map Collection, The National Library of Israel



This map's title and key are in German. The perspective of this map is not from the top of Mount Olives, where maps of Jerusalem were typically drawn at the time. The angle from which the map was drawn is unknown. The focus of the map is the Old City of Jerusalem, but many neighborhoods outside of the Old City walls are also depicted. The Dome of the Rock is at the center of the map, and you can also see crosses on the top of multiple buildings. Six of the seven gates of the Old City of Jerusalem are listed (key numbers: 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30). The map is drawn from the west looking east, and the directions of north, south, east, and west are also listed. There is a big difference inside and outside the Old City walls: inside are many buildings close together with just a few trees, but outside, there is a lot of space between the houses and many more trees.