

PASSPORT TO ISRAEL JERUSALEM

Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and sits in the center of the country. Over 3,000 years ago, King David conquered Jerusalem and made it the special place where God's holy name would dwell, just as He promised in Deuteronomy 12:5 and 11. David's son, King Solomon, built the Temple there, and it became the center of worship for the Israelites. Many years later, Jesus came to Jerusalem—He died, rose again, and ascended into heaven there. One day, the Bible says, the Messiah will return to Jerusalem. That's why Jerusalem, the city of gold, bronze, and light, is at the very center of God's plan to save the world.

Jerusalem is very important to Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Each group has holy sites in the city. Over thousands of years, different empires and nations have ruled Jerusalem. After World War I, the British governed Jerusalem until the United Nations took charge. During Israel's War of Independence, East Jerusalem came under Jordan's control. In 1967, Israel re-unified Jerusalem, and it has been completely under Israeli control ever since.

Today, Israel works hard to protect Jerusalem's holy places for people of all faiths. For Christians, there are many special sites to visit—such as the Garden of Gethsemane, the Pool of Bethesda, and even the ancient steps that Jesus climbed to go to the Temple! The Bible tells us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and the word "Jerusalem" is mentioned more than 800 times in Scripture.

PSALM 122:6-7
(NKJV)

**Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
May they prosper who love you.
Peace be within your walls,
Prosperity within your palaces.**

The Old City of Jerusalem is divided into four main quarters, or neighborhoods: the Christian Quarter, Jewish Quarter, Muslim Quarter, and Armenian Quarter. Each one has its own history and community.

THE FOUR QUARTERS

- **The Christian Quarter** is home to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which was built over the place where early Christians believed Jesus was crucified and buried. It also includes the Via Dolorosa, the path Jesus is said to have walked on His way to the cross.
- **The Armenian Quarter** belongs to the Armenian Christians, one of the oldest Christian groups in the world. Armenia was the first country to adopt Christianity in the 300s A.D., and Armenians have been present in Jerusalem ever since.
- **The Muslim Quarter** is full of life, with a busy marketplace called a shuk. It is also home to two of the most important sites in Islam — the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- **The Jewish Quarter** includes the Western Wall, a remaining part of the ancient Temple built by King Herod, and many yeshivas where Jews study the Torah and Talmud.

Christians and Jews believe that one day the Messiah will come through the Eastern Gate, also called the Golden Gate, which faces the Mount of Olives.

Every Friday night in Jerusalem, Jewish families gather to observe Shabbat, the Sabbath. God established the Sabbath in the Ten Commandments while the Hebrews were traveling through the wilderness for forty years. As the sun sets, families walk to the synagogue together to welcome Shabbat, which is often described as greeting a bride. Afterward, they enjoy a special meal filled with songs, prayers, and traditional foods. For about twenty-five hours, from Friday evening to Saturday night, Jews rest from work and avoid using electricity, focusing instead on worship, rest, and time with loved ones. On Saturday morning, many return to the synagogue to pray and continue celebrating this special day with family and friends.

In addition to its religious significance, Jerusalem is the center of Israel's government. It's where the Prime Minister, the President, the Knesset (Israel's Parliament), and the Supreme Court all meet. After Israel's War of Independence in 1949, the new nation declared Jerusalem its capital. In 2017, U.S. President Donald Trump officially recognized Jerusalem as the eternal capital of the Jewish people and moved the American Embassy there.

FOR THE TEACHER

Description:

Students will read the Old City Map Maze prompt and use the clues it contains to solve the maze and get Dov to the Western Wall in time for Shabbat.

Resources Needed:

- One printed map maze per student
- One pencil per student

Instructions:

Use the map to help Dov find the fastest route while avoiding streets marked with construction barriers. Dov begins at the Shuk, must stop at the Blue and White Art Gallery, and then finish at the Western Wall. Use a pencil to trace the route he will need to take.

 = ***blocked by construction***

FOR THE STUDENTS

Prompt:

It's almost sunset! Dov glances at his watch and realizes he's been schmoozing (Yiddish for "chatting") with Yael and Benyamin in the busy shuk (market) for way too long. Shabbat is about to begin, and he promised to pick up a new watercolor painting for his mother from Udi at the Blue and White Art Gallery before meeting his father and brother at the Kotel (Western Wall) for evening prayers.

Dov hurries through the crowded market stalls, dodging shoppers and tourists. The sweet smell of baklava tempts him from a nearby stand, but he resists—there's no time to stop! When he reaches the art gallery, he greets Udi with a cheerful, "Good Shabbos!" and Udi smiles back, "Shabbat Shalom!" Dov pays Udi, carefully tucks his mother's watercolor painting under his arm, and steps back into the lively streets of the Old City.

Around him, voices mix in Hebrew, Arabic, Ladino, German, and English, echoing through the stone alleyways. He tries to remember the fastest way to the Western Wall, nervously adjusting his kippah (Jewish skullcap worn by men as a sign of devotion to God). "I can't be late again," he mutters to himself.

Suddenly, a sharp siren pierces the air. Flashing blue and red lights reflect off the ancient walls as a United Hatzalah ambucycle speeds down Cardo Street. A volunteer medic races to help someone nearby. Dov realizes the street ahead is blocked by construction—he'll have to find another path to reach the Western Wall before sunset.

Can Dov make it in time for Shabbat prayers? Help him find his way through the maze to the Western Wall!

Help Dov reach the Western Wall in time for Shabbat. Observe carefully! You must visit the art gallery first!

