

## Connections Israel - Bringing the Jewish People Together

---

Educational Department

### Yom Yerushalayim – Jerusalem Through Famous Quotations

**Goals:**

To examine a variety of quotations about Jerusalem first from religious texts and then from modern sources to find their current applications and personal meaning

**Target audience:**

High school students - adults

**Visual Aid:**

A picture of Jerusalem

**Length of activity:**

90 minutes

#### **Part I: Religious Sources**

Place the following quotations on the board:

(Note: This activity can be done individually or with students working together in small groups.)

- I) Ten measures of beauty descended to the world, nine were taken by Jerusalem." (Talmud: Kiddushin 49b)
  
- II) "Eternity - this refers to Jerusalem" (Talmud: Berachot 58a)
  
- III) In ne'ilah [the closing prayer] of Yom Kippur, what did he [the cohen] say? "And Hashem will bless you from Zion and you will see the good of Jerusalem all of the days of your life" (Talmud : Sotah 40a)
  
- IV) Jerusalem will only be redeemed through [the merit of giving] charity. (Talmud: Shabbat 139a)

Jerusalem is like a city that people are friendly together - A city in which

all [the people of] Israel are friends when the tribes ascend there for the pilgrimage  
(Talmud Yerushalmi: Hagiga 3)

After reading the quotes, ask the participants to answer the following questions:

- I) Think of nine things that make Jerusalem special.
- II) Beauty can be found in nature, art, people, architecture – almost anything! What are 9 ways in which Jerusalem is beautiful?
- III) When something is eternal it means that it will last forever. What makes Jerusalem eternal? Do we as human beings have a role in making Jerusalem eternal? How?
- IV) What goodness does Jerusalem give to you, the Jewish People, the world at large?
- V) Can you find any connection between the last two quotes?

## **Part II: Secular Sources:**

Place the following quotations on the board:

(Note: This activity can be done individually or with students working together in small groups.)

A great city, whose image dwells in the memory of man, is the type of some great idea. Rome represents conquest; Faith hovers over the towers of Jerusalem; and Athens embodies the pre-eminent quality of the antique world, Art.

**Benjamin Disraeli**

As a result of the historic catastrophe in which Titus of Rome destroyed Jerusalem and Israel was exiled from its land, I was born in one of the cities of the Exile. But always I regarded myself as one who was born in Jerusalem.

**Shmuel Y. Agnon**

“You ought to let the Jews have Jerusalem; it was they who made it famous.” — **Winston Churchill to diplomat Evelyn Shuckburgh**, 1955, *Descent to Suez; Diaries 1951-1956* (London: 1986).

“Without Jerusalem, the land of Israel is as a body without a soul.” — **Elhanan Leib Lewinsky** (1857-1910), Hebrew writer and Zionist leader

“No city in the world, not even Athens or Rome, ever played as great a role in the life of a nation for so long a time, as Jerusalem has done in the life of the Jewish people.” — **David Ben-Gurion**, 1947

After reading the quotes, ask the participants to answer the following questions:

- I) The above sayings were uttered by authors, respected world leaders and great thinkers. In the first one, Disraeli says that Athens is the city of art while Jerusalem is the city of faith. In contrast, the Talmud suggests that Jerusalem is the most beautiful city on earth. How can this contradiction be explained? Do you agree with one quotation more than the other?
- II) How can a person born overseas see himself as a native of Jerusalem? Consider the following: Did Holocaust survivors consider themselves German, Polish, Hungarian etc. or something else? Do you consider yourself a Jewish American or an American Jew? Does it make any difference?
- III) Is Churchill's reason the best one for why Jerusalem belongs to the Jews? Name some others.
- IV) What does Lewinsky's metaphor mean? Can you create a metaphor that describes Jerusalem's relationship to Israel? How about a metaphor to describe your relationship to Jerusalem?
- V) Give some examples of ways in which Jerusalem has played an important role in the life of the Jewish people through history. Has that changed in modern times? What role does Jerusalem play in your life?

### **Closing thought:**

- I) What does the name Yerushalayim mean? Where did this name originate? (Hint: Look at the word carefully and find two other Hebrew words in it).

Answer: Avraham called it Yireh (See) as it says [in the scriptures], "And Avraham called the name of that place Yireh Hashem" (See G-d). Shem called it Shalem (Complete) as it says "And Malki Tzedek, King of Shalem." The Holy One, Blessed be He said "I will call it Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) like both of them called it - Yireh, Shalem - Yerushalayim (Midrash: Bereshit Raba 56)

Jerusalem is all about bringing thoughts, people, physical and spiritual together.

### **Jerusalem related utubes**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKrPqlmuIt4&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1zyt-n8LE4> – religious

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZysDfygzsE&feature=related> – visual all encompassing