

# 1967-2017: Jerusalem at 50

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*Once I sat on the steps by a gate at David's Tower. I placed my two heavy baskets at my side. A group of tourists was standing around their guide and I became their target marker. "You see that man with the baskets? Just right of his head there's an arch from the Roman period. Just right of his head." "But he's moving, he's moving!" I said to myself: redemption will come only if their guide tells them, "You see that arch from the Roman period? It's not important: but next to it, left and down a bit, there sits a man who's bought fruit and vegetables for his family."*

- Yehuda Amichai

## **Background:**

In the upcoming year, we will mark 50 years since the Six Day War and the capture of Jerusalem. For part of the Israeli population and the Jewish world, this date signifies the emotional reunification of Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel. Yet for another segment of the population, this date commemorates the start of the occupation.

The jubilee year for this event presents an opportunity to deepen questions on borders, holiness, power (and its limitations), democracy, and the standing of Jerusalem in general. The complex daily reality is likely to intensify this coming year, as it represents a productive opportunity for social and political activity.

## **Using photos as educational tools**

Photos are a visual and expressive tool that works wonderfully in educational activities and can serve well as a trigger or presentation of an issue. It can be used as the basis of a thought exercise, a discussion, or for processing / concluding a topic.

Photos can serve as a historical testimony, and give expression to aspects of life most would not otherwise be exposed to. On the other hand, a photo can portray an event through an array of lenses, making statements about the photographer's views and/or the subject's actions.

## **Goals:**

- Participants will be exposed to a multitude of Jerusalem's complex faces
- To direct discussion to the realities of Jerusalem and to allow for participants to share their thoughts and feelings about Jerusalem

## Materials Needed:

- A complete deck of Makom's Jerusalem at 50 cards (photos and words)
- Post-its
- Writing utensils

## Session Description:

- The facilitator should spread the deck of cards on a flat surface (table or floor) and explain/describe the cards to participants to ensure that they understand the basic context of each photo.
- The facilitator passes around the post-its and pens, asking each participant to take one of each. Instruct participants to write a question that comes to mind when considering Jerusalem (or a question s/he has been asked about Israel/Jerusalem by a student, colleague, etc.).
- Next, ask each participant to select (either to physically pick up, or else just using their eyes) one photo and one word that relates to the question s/he wrote down (it may compliment, contradict, criticize, address or in any way relate to the question).
- Once each participant has selected a photo and a word, divide the group into pairs and allow them to share with one another what question they wrote down, which cards they selected, and how they each view the connections between them.
- After several minutes of sharing have gone by, return to the wider group and conduct a discussion around the questions, the sharing in pairs, what Jerusalem seen through these cards means and what the exercise brought to the fore, and even perhaps even around which cards were *not* chosen by anyone.
- **Suggested discussion questions:**
  - Was it difficult for you to think of / word your question?
  - Do you have an answer to your question?
  - Did you find any words to be lacking from the deck? If so, which? Why would you have selected that word?
  - Do you feel that this collection of photos represents a reality unique to Jerusalem?
  - Is there anything that struck your curiosity / that you'd like to learn more about Jerusalem as a result of some of the photos you've seen here today?