

Travelling | Religious tourism and pilgrimage | Jewish pilgrimage

“I was glad when they said to me ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord!’” (Psalm 122)

According to Judaism, the required thrice-yearly pilgrimage focuses on the Western Wall of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, as this is believed to be closest to the spot where the Holy of Holies of the First Temple was situated before its destruction. From the mid-19th century onwards, piety and messianic fervour spurred unprecedented numbers of Jews, from as far afield as Morocco and Russia, to visit and indeed settle in the Holy Land. A visit to Jerusalem was often combined with a tour of the wider region, taking in the Tombs of the Patriarchs – most importantly those of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – and those of the Matriarchs Sara, Leah and Rebecca, situated in Hebron. Visits to commemorative sites had great spiritual significance for believers, for as the Talmud explains, prayers at the graveside of someone who was holy during their lifetime have a greater chance of being accepted and bring blessings on both the suppliant and the deceased.



Working Number: UA 026

Name: Jews' Place of Wailing, Jerusalem

Holding Museum: Sharjah Art Museum / Sharjah Museums Department

Date: 1840s / early 1850s

Materials: Engraving

Curator Justification: The picture depicts the faithful at the Wailing Wall, the most sacred of sites according to Judaism. Situated at the foot of the western side of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem, Jewish pilgrims, who have converged on this site for centuries, offer prayers and commemorate the destruction of the First Temple in 70 BCE.



Working Number: FR 062

Name: Jerusalem, al-Haram al-Sharif, Dome of the Rock

Holding Museum: National Library of France

Date: 1842–1844

Materials: -

Curator Justification: An early 19th-century photograph of the Dome of the Rock showing the mighty foundations and surrounding wall of the original Jewish Temple Precinct, the most holy location for adherents of the Jewish faith the world over.



Working Number: UA 023

Name: Hebron

Holding Museum: Sharjah Art Museum / Sharjah Museums Authority

Date: 1835

Materials: Steel engraving

Curator Justification: According to the Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions, the Sanctuary at Hebron houses the graves of Abraham, his wife Sarah, and their family. Among the Jewish community, it is the second holiest site after the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem.



Working Number: UA 028

Name: The Approach to Nablus (Shechem)

Holding Museum: Sharjah Art Museum / Sharjah Museums Department

Date: Published 1881–1884

Materials: Wood engraving

Curator
Justification: This 19th-century image shows the approach to Nablus, believed to be the city of Shechem at that time, the first capital of the Kingdom of Israel according to the Bible, situated in the vicinity of several important Abrahamic sites.
