

Episode 5: Search for Deliverance

V-1: Atlas: Mediterranean: 1492

We'll look at other eventual destinations of the Sephardim a little later – northern lands like England and the Netherlands -- and we'll return to Renaissance Italy as well. But the primary initial recipients of the Sephardic diaspora were the major cities and towns of the Ottoman Empire.

- Point out Spain, Portugal, northern Europe, and Italy, noting the Ottoman border at the lower-right of the map.
- Drag the map to the right using the thumbnail slider navigation tool, pointing out the extent of the Ottoman Empire.
- Point out and click on key places of Sephardic settlement, like:
 - **Thessalonica** (modern Salonica in Greece)
 - **Istanbul** (in Turkey)
 - **Izmir** (later known as Smyrna in Turkey)
 - **Jerusalem**
 - **Safed**
 - **Cairo**

V-2: Atlas: Israel-Palestine: 1581

Safed is located in the Upper Galilee region of Israel.

- Point out the locations of the traditional centers of Jewish populations throughout history in Palestine: **Jerusalem** and **Hebron** (bottom-center of the map).
- Open the **Map Legend** by clicking the tab at the bottom of the screen, and note the mileage-scale of the map, to indicate the roughly 80-mile distance between Jerusalem and Safed.
- Click the tab again to close the Map Legend.
- Point out **Haifa** (on the coast) and the Jezreel Valley, extending south-easterly from that city above the visible mountain ridge (shown topographically).
- Mention that the Galilee extends northward from that valley, with **Nazareth** being an important city of the Lower Galilee, and **Safed** being the key city of the more rugged Upper Galilee.
- Point out **Safed**, also noting that the era displayed (late sixteenth century) is when the Kabbalistic movements associated with Safed reached full flower. (This was in the decade following the death of Safed's most important figure, Isaac Luria.)

V-3: Atlas: Europe, South: 1556

As noted before, Sephardim fleeing Spain in 1492 were often welcomed into the Ottoman Empire and Renaissance-infused Italian cities. Others, expelled from Portugal five years later, made their way to northern European ports via the Atlantic Ocean.

- Point out **Venice** (near the top, left of center); **Ancona** (on the Adriatic, below Venice); **Florence** below and to the left of Venice, in Tuscany); and **Naples** (below Rome, on the coast)
- Then, Zoom Out, and, using the thumbnail slider navigation tool, move the map up and to the left to show **Antwerp** and **London**.
- Please note that there is additional information for all the above places. Click on the city name, and pop-up information will appear.

V-4: Atlas: Europe, North: 1520

Most Ashkenazic Jews lived in the vast expanses of Poland and neighboring Silesia, but the eastward migration saw many of them settle in more central areas of Europe, like Bohemia and Bavaria.

- Point out Poland, Silesia, Bohemia, and the southern German/Bavarian cities of Munich and Nuremberg.
- Mention that expulsions from many of these areas and cities in the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries – much like earlier expulsions from western European countries – drove more and more Jews eastward.

V-5: Atlas: Europe, North: 1655

Most of eastern European Jewry lived in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth formed in 1569. But when Poland colonized Ukraine and Belarus with Jewish economic Arendal agents, the stage was set for a debacle for Poland and the Jews at the hands of fierce Ukrainian revolutionaries.

- Point out Poland, Silesia, Bohemia, and the principal Ukrainian cities of Lwow, Kiev, and Nemirov.
- Click the tab **Modern View** to show the current contours of Poland, Ukraine, and Belarus.

V-6: Atlas: Europe, Eastern, 1789

In the two generations after the Besht, great centers of Chasidism arose all over eastern Europe.

Unlike non-Chasidic Judaism, a Chasidic community called its charismatic chief rabbi by the term *Rebbe*, and this leadership position was, for most Chasidic communities, hereditary.

The Rebbe was invested with extraordinary power by his disciples, and most Chasidic groups are identified by the hometown of their founding Rebbes to this day.

- Point out the following cities:

- **Mezerich** – home of Dov Baer, the Besht's main disciple who, in turn, trained the leaders of the Chasidic sects in the next generation.
- **Uman** – pilgrimage-site and burial place of Nachman of Bratslav, founder of the Bratslaver Chasidim.
- **Chernobyl** – famous now as a site of nuclear disaster, this city was home to a great Chasidic community.
- **Lubavitch** – (all the way at the top-right) home of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and his Chasidim, perhaps better-known today as *Chabad*.