



The Jewish Education Center Of Cleveland
2030 South Taylor Road • Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
Phone (216) 371-0446 • Fax (216) 371-2523 • Web Site: www.jecc.org

The Jewish Education Center of Cleveland's **Immediate Response Curriculum** *On The Brink Of War*

Overview

September 11, 2001 served as a horrifying wake-up call for the American government. On that day, terrorism was no longer one among a number of assorted dangers facing the United States, but a fundamental threat to America, its way of life, and its vital interests. As our nation mourned, a new era in American strategic thinking began – strategic thinking that has led us to the brink of war with Iraq.

The Jewish tradition views war as a necessary political tool. It is not seen, however, as a time for unrestricted aggression. Our classical texts go to great lengths to classify types of wars, outline our moral obligations, and frame our civic responsibilities during war.

The Curriculum Resources Department of the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland (JECC) has developed this particular resource to assist educators in considering age-appropriate ways to place a potential war with Iraq within a Jewish context. The curriculum focuses on three overarching questions:

- When is war justified?
- What does Judaism say about public discourse relating to a decision of your government?
- What is Judaism's response to the humanitarian needs (e.g., soldiers in war, civilians in war)?

In this resource packet you will find:

Background Information

Texts

Activities

Resources

The issues, texts and activities in this curriculum guide are best suited for middle school and above. Educators may duplicate as many copies of the curriculum guide as they wish, as long as the JECC logo and “headers” remain.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In the immediate aftermath of September 11, the Bush administration turned its attention to a war against terrorism. The war was to be fought on two fronts - the domestic and international. On the domestic front, the government moved quickly to reorganize its security agencies charged with keeping us safe. On the international front, President Bush outlined what became known as the "Bush Doctrine."

"...(W)e will shut down terrorist camps, disrupt terrorist plans, and bring terrorists to justice. And...we must prevent the terrorists and regimes who seek chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons from threatening the United States and the world Yet time is not on our side. I will not wait on events while dangers gather. I will not stand by as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons."

(State of the Union Address, January 29, 2002)

This doctrine led to the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan and, subsequently, led to renewed interest in Iraqi disarmament. The danger that Saddam Hussein might provide nuclear or biological weapons to terrorist groups (who had clearly demonstrated their willingness to carry out attacks on the United States) or, that he might use them for his own purposes, was too real to ignore.

In October, 2002, Iraq agreed to let United Nations inspectors back into the country to search for evidence of weapons of mass destruction. During this time period, President Bush continued to insist that Iraq was hiding information, as well as weapons. Even while working to amass support of U.S. allies for disposition of Saddam Hussein and physical disarmament of the country, President Bush has begun to prepare American troops for war.

The end of the story is not yet told. The United Nations' arms inspectors reported on January 27, 2003 that Iraq was granting them full access, but had not yet provided evidence that allayed suspicions that Iraq had destroyed the chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs they were known to possess. In the State of the Union address on January 28th, President Bush declared the policies of Saddam Hussein were evil and said that if Iraq did not disarm, the United States would lead a coalition to do so.

And so, the world waits, on the brink of war.

Time Line

1980: Iraq and Iran go to war.

1988: Kurdish minority in northern Iraq rebel during Iran/Iraq war. The Iraqi government uses chemical weapons to put down the Kurdish rebellion. The Iraq-Iran war ends.

August 2, 1990: Iraq invades Kuwait. U.N. demands that Iraq leave Kuwait are ignored. The U.N. puts sanctions in place against Iraq.

January 1991: Gulf War begins.

February 1991: Kuwait is freed from Iraqi occupation. Iraqi government says it will stop building biological and nuclear weapons and will allow U.N. weapons inspectors into the country to search for weapons of mass destruction.

October 31, 1998: Iraq suspends all cooperation with U.N. arms inspectors and monitors.

September 11, 2001: Terrorists attack The World Trade Center and Pentagon.

January 29, 2002: George Bush declares government's intention to prevent states from delivering nuclear and biological weapons to terrorist groups.

October 2002: Iraq agrees to allow U.N. weapons inspectors into the country after four year hiatus.

December 8, 2002: U.N. deadline for Iraq to submit a full list of all its weapons to the U.N.

January 27, 2003: U.N. inspectors report that while Iraq has granted site-access to inspectors, the country has not yet provided the evidence that shows it destroyed the chemical, biological and nuclear weapons previously known to be in Iraq's possession.

February 5, 2003: Secretary of State, Colin Powell, will address the UN Security Council, providing information on United States intelligence on Iraq's weapons program.

WHEN IS WAR JUSTIFIED?

I. Before entering into war

According to Jewish tradition, the world will see a day when war is no longer part of human interactions. Until that day comes, we are informed that measured steps must be taken.

The steps required before commencing a voluntary (meaning: not defensive) war include:

- First approaching the opposing side in peace. Judaism requires only a good-faith attempt to avoid war, specifying the use of force only as a last resort.
- If that approach is rebuffed, it is necessary to try to negotiate a peace. This does not mean giving in to the other side or even a forced compromise. Rather, this implies each side laying out their hoped outcomes, so opponents can weigh the perceived costs and benefits of war before entering into it.

II. Categories of war

Additionally, the rabbis define various categories of war, specifying different cautions and acceptable behaviors. The categories are as follows:

Categories of War	Definitions	Notes
Obligatory wars	<p>Wars that are fought only because God (through the words of the Torah) commanded Israel to wage them.</p> <p>Wars the Jews fought against the nations on the way to Israel.</p> <p>Wars against the people of Amalek. [Babylonian Talmud <i>Sotah</i> 44b]</p>	<p>According to many, once a war is under way, all fighting is considered obligatory.</p> <p>Wars of self-defense are considered by some to be obligatory.</p> <p>War against a neighbor that is considered hostile is considered an obligatory war by some, even if it is a preemptive strike.</p> <p>Many sources add that any war, other than one of self-defense or Biblically commanded, may be permitted, but are not obligatory.</p>
Authorized (permitted) wars	<p>Wars to stop aggressors from overtaking our land.</p> <p>Wars to defend one's self against outside attackers.</p> <p>Wars by Jewish kings to increase the size of Israel and to make themselves more</p>	<p>The Talmud [Babylonian Talmud <i>Sanhedrin</i> 29b, 20a and 16b] lists three conditions for an authorized war:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consent of an authorized court of law • consent of the king or ruler • consultation (some say) with the <i>urim v'tumim</i> (an ornament worn by the High Priest; not in existence for more than 3000 years)

	powerful. [Maimonides, <i>Laws of Kings</i> , 5:1]	One source notes that the approval of the Jewish court is only necessary when a significant element of the nation does not support the war. [Babylonian Talmud <i>Sotah</i> 44b] Some say each side must present their hoped outcomes before the war begins so the opponents can weigh the costs before waging war. It does not require that each side compromise its goals to avoid war.
Preemptive war	Preemptive attacks to stop aggressors are considered authorized.	[Babylonian Talmud <i>Sanhedrin</i> 29b]
In Defense of Others	Protecting innocent people from the attacks of aggressors is permitted (and according to some, obligatory) but is not governed under the laws of warfare.	There are a variety of citations on this, including: <i>Shulchan Aruch</i> 425; <i>Minchat Hinuch</i> , positive commandment 296; and Babylonian Talmud <i>Sanhedrin</i> 72b. A fuller explanation is found in “Fighting the War and the Peace: Battlefield Ethics, Peace Talks, Treaties, and Pacifism in Jewish Tradition,” located at this site: http://www.jlaw.com/Articles/war_notes.html
Murder	Consciously killing people not included in one of the categories above is likely considered murder.	An individual, without the authority of the court or government, may not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kill an innocent bystander to save a life • Compel people to risk their lives to save another • Kill a person who committed an evil act, after the act is done, as a form of punishment • Use excessive force

III. Before entering into war

Text #1

When you approach a city to battle with it, you should call to it in peace.... And if they do not make peace with you, you shall wage war with them and you may besiege them.

Deuteronomy 20:10

Text #2

Simon ben Gamaliel said: Joshua issued three decrees and sent them to the Land of Israel before they [Joshua and his people] entered the land:

Whoever wants to leave - shall leave.

Whoever wants to make peace - shall make peace

Whoever wants to make war - shall make [war].

The Girgeshites - turned and went to Africa . . . The Gibeonites - made peace . . . Thirty-one kings made war - and fell.

Jerusalem Talmud, *Shevi'it* 6

Text #3

Even in terms of self-defense, the use of a weapon that might endanger the lives of those who use it, the lives of those against whom it is used, as well as possibly the lives of the entire world, is not allowed. In that case, if a nation is facing an attack where the only options are either the use of a weapon that renders complete destruction or a full surrender, the nation must surrender.

Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, Tradition 4:202 (1962); reprinted in *Confronting Omnicide: Jewish Reflections on Weapons of Mass Destruction*, D. Landes, ed., p.199 (1991).

EXTENDING THE TEXTS (including the chart with the categories of war):

- How do the categories of war help us examine the building tensions with Iraq? Which principles apply to the Iraqi situation?
- Why do you think the Jerusalem Talmud included the huge effort that Joshua made to bring about peace before declaring war? What message does it give for today?
- What advice would Lord Jakobovits have for Saddam Hussein?

ACTIVITIES:

- Give each student five file cards before beginning a discussion of the categories of war. After each category is talked about as a class, ask each individual to write a category name at the top of one of the cards and then write a few sentences of explanation, according to his or her understanding. When all of the categories are explained, divide students into small groups to compare notes and see where their understandings match, and where they need to clarify information with each other, or back with the class.
- Ask students with a strong Biblical and historical background to find situations in other historical periods that illustrate each of the categories of war. (For example, into which category does the Roman-Jewish War fall? The Six-Day War?)
- Explain to students that before an attack of war begins, an attempt at peace must be made through words. Ask students to create “cartoon bubbles” of a conversation between two leaders of two countries. What would they try to say to each other in the attempt to create peace? [Students may find this easier if they role play the situation first.]
- Have students examine news sources and commentaries to develop an argument whether they think President Bush and the United States government has followed in Joshua’s footsteps in attempting to achieve peace. (This research may be shared in the context of a class debate.)
- Into which category of war does the pending one with Iraq seem to fall? Create a bulletin board with students that includes a name for the Jewish category and news headlines, articles (perhaps with sections highlighted), and photographs that support the class’s decision. Another option is for the teacher to find the articles and photographs, discuss them with the class and then use that basis to examine the categories.

IV. Justifications for war

Text #4

You shall remove evil from your midst.

Deuteronomy 13:6

Text #5

Upon three things the world rests: on justice, on truth, and on peace.

And the three are one, for when justice is done, truth prevails and peace is established.

Mishnah Ta'anit 4:2, Mishnah M'gillah 3:5

Text #6

... while the limitation of violence is one of the most basic of all Jewish ethical teachings, the recent deployment of weapons of indiscriminate mass destruction makes it increasingly difficult to justify war from a traditional Jewish perspective. Even in a war that would be considered justified by the Jewish tradition, Jewish law considers killing another person an offense before God, and a sin offering was made by all soldiers.

Albert Vorspan and David Saperstein, *Jewish Dimensions of Social Justice: Tough Moral Choices of Our Time*, NY: UAHC Press, 1998.

Text #7

(Judaism's) drive for peace is not the sole consideration in Jewish thought. Although God is referred to as *Shalom*, "Peace," He is also called *Ish Milchamah*, the "Lord of War." Although Isaiah and Micah ask that swords be beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks, Joel, in bitter irony, cautions the nations to transform ploughshares into swords and pruning hooks into spears. For despite all the prayerful yearnings for peace, neither the Prophets nor the Sages of the Talmud were pacifists. If war is reprehensible, an unjust peace is immoral.

Rabbi Maurice Lamm, "Red or Dead: An Attempt at Formulating a Jewish Attitude," quoted in *Preventing the Nuclear Holocaust: A Jewish Response*, Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism, UAHC, 1983, page 6.

Text #8

Whatever action required, I will defend the freedom of the American people.

President Bush, State of the Union Address, January 28, 2003

Text #9

We seek peace. We strive for peace. And sometimes peace must be defended. A future lived at the mercy of terrible threats is no peace at all. If war is forced upon us, we will fight in a just cause and by just means – sparing, in every way we can, the innocent. And if war is forced upon us, we will fight with the full force and might of the United States military – and we will prevail. And as we and our coalition partners are doing in Afghanistan, we will bring to the Iraqi people food, and medicines, and supplies ... and freedom.

President Bush, State of the Union Address, January 28, 2003

Text #10*Secular Principles of a Just War*

1. A just war can only be waged as a last resort. All non-violent options must be exhausted before the use of force can be justified.
2. A war is just only if it is waged by a legitimate authority. Even just causes cannot be served by actions taken by individuals or groups who do not constitute an authority sanctioned by whatever the society and outsiders to the society deem legitimate.
3. A just war can only be fought to redress a wrong suffered. For example, self-defense against an armed attack is always considered to be a just cause (although the justice of the cause is not sufficient). Further, a just war can only be fought with "right" intentions: the only permissible objective of a just war is to redress the injury.
4. A war can only be just if it is fought with a reasonable chance of success. Deaths and injury incurred in a hopeless cause are not morally justifiable.
5. The ultimate goal of a just war is to re-establish peace. More specifically, the peace established after the war must be preferable to the peace that would have prevailed if the war had not been fought.
6. The violence used in the war must be proportional to the injury suffered. States are prohibited from using force not necessary to attain the limited objective of addressing the injury suffered.
7. The weapons used in war must discriminate between combatants and non-combatants. Civilians are never permissible targets of war, and every effort must be taken to avoid killing civilians. The deaths of civilians are justified only if they are unavoidable victims of a deliberate attack on a military target.

Quoted on the home page of Vincent Ferraro, Professor of International Politics, Mount Holyoke College, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pol116/justwar.htm>

EXTENDING THE TEXTS:

- According to Jewish tradition, when is war justified?
- How might the rabbis defining these justifications look at the thoughts of President Bush in relation to Iraq?
- Do you agree with the Jewish definitions of a just-war?
- To which of the Jewish texts does President Bush's statement (Text # 9) seem closest?
- According to Dr. Ferraro's website, when is war justified from a secular standpoint?
- How do the secular justifications differ or agree with the Jewish principles? Can you argue for Jewish influence on the secular reasons?

ACTIVITIES:

- After students have had a chance to examine the Jewish definitions of a just war, give each several 5x7 file cards on which to write (in large letters) different slogans (pro and con) that might be part of a rally regarding the war. Create the backdrop for a rally on a bulletin board and place these placards in the hands of "people." Discuss the placards in relation to the texts studied.
- Place a sign on one side of the room that says "Just War" and another sign on the opposite side that says "Unjust War." Based upon students' understandings of the Jewish definition of a just war, and their understandings of the potential conflict, ask them to line

up according to the strength of their feelings to the just-ness or unjust-ness of situation. (For example, those who feel it fits the definition of a just war would stand closer to that sign, those who might feel it's almost a just war would stand more towards the middle but close to the "Just" sign, and those who feel the current situation is leading to an unjust war would stand on the opposite end, nearer the "Unjust" sign.) Use student standing-decisions to being a discussion.

- In his 2003 State of the Union Address, President Bush talked about the pending conflict with Iraq in the context of a "just war." [See Text # 9; a video of President Bush's State of the Union speech is available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/mmedia/politics/012803-50v.htm> and an indexed written version is found at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/transcripts/bushtext_012803.html.] Ask students to compare the President's words and thoughts, with those of Judaism's tradition.
- Ask students to create an e-mail to President Bush explaining their support or lack thereof for his decisions regarding a potential war with Iraq. Ask them to include some Jewish texts.
- Give small groups of students a copy of the secular principles for a just war and ask them to create a set of Venn diagrams (circles that overlap circles) that shows their relationship to the Jewish ones.

ROLE AS A CITIZEN

The Jews have always lived among other peoples, and as such, have had thousands of years to struggle with the issues of living and dealing with the rules of a secular government. Following Hillel's 2,000-year-old admonition not to separate ourselves from the community, as Jews who live in America, we respect and work in partnership with the government, even if we might not agree with the specific policies and decisions of those ultimately in charge. We are citizens of our country, who enjoy the religious freedom that allows us to practice our Judaism.

The United States Constitution guarantees freedom of speech - the opportunity to express our support for our government's decisions, as well as present dissenting opinions. Among the Jewish community, there are those who agree with President Bush's desire to open war on Iraq, and, there are other Jews who are active in the anti-war movement. The organized Jewish community (our Federations, organizations like the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, and the United Jewish Communities) is not opposed to, nor does it support the anti-war movement. It has spoken out about the need to vigorously address the danger posed by Saddam Hussein and his weapons of mass destruction to the United States and its allies, supporting the use of military force only as a last resort.

The texts chosen for this section support our connections and responsibilities to the larger community.

I. Our ties to the broader community

Text #11

Sh'muel said:

The Law of the land, is the Law.”

Babylonian Talmud *Gittin* 10b

Text #12

Hillel said, "Do not separate yourself from the community."

Pirke Avot 2:5

Text #13

The tribes of Gad and Reuben ask Moses for permission to be given the land on the side of the Jordan that does not have to be conquered. Moses responds:

Shall your brothers go out to battle while you settle here?

They respond:

We shall build here pens for the flocks and for our livestock, and cities for our small children. We shall arm ourselves swiftly in the front of *B'nai Yisrael* until we have brought them to their place. Our small children will dwell in the fortified cities before the inhabitants of the land. We shall not return to our homes until [*. . .B'nai Yisrael is safe.*]

Numbers 32:6 and 16-18

Text #14

We must learn to accept what is different about us in light of what we hold in common, which is allegiance to the country in which, together, we live, and faith in the God in whom, together, we believe. Our shared belief in God provides the strongest foundation for that sense of humility, responsibility, and purpose that in turn is the surest source of good values, good works, and respect for law that can bind us together as a moral nation.

Senator Joseph Lieberman, in a speech at the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding, June 23, 1996; quoted in *Jews, Judaism, and Civic Responsibility, TG*, by Zvi Nierman, Joshua Perry, Sid Schwarz, Michael Shepard, Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values, 1998.

EXTENDING THE TEXTS:

- What does Judaism say are our obligations and connections to the broader, civic community in which we live?
- How does the story of Gad and Reuben (from Text # 13) address our need to support the needs of the nation? What are the parallels to the current possibilities of war facing us?

ACTIVITIES:

- Find examples of current events that show how US citizens are living the words of Jewish tradition. Discuss these in light of the quotes. Where are there direct parallels and where are there deviations?
- After discussing the texts (or just one of your choice), ask students to brainstorm movements that illustrate the concepts. Put these together into a “dance *midrash*” of the current situation.
- View the video, “Convoy From Sarajevo” and discuss the actions of the Jewish community that showed a connection and responsibility to the broader world community.

II. Speaking up for what you believe is right**Text #15**

Rav and Rabbi Hanina, Rabbi Yohanon and Rabbi Habiba taught,

Whoever can stop a member of his household from doing wrong, and does not, is accountable.

Whoever can stop a fellow citizen from doing wrong, and does not, is accountable.

Whoever can stop the whole world from doing wrong, and does not, is accountable.

Babylonian Talmud *Shabbat* 54b

Text #16

Any one who has the power to prevent someone else [from doing wrong], and does not prevent it, is punished.

Babylonian Talmud *Avodah Zara* 18a

Text #17

The greatest menace to freedom is an inert people.

Louis D. Brandeis, quoted in *The Word: Jewish Wisdom Through Time*, by Noah ben Shea, Villard, 1995, page 187.

EXTENDING THE TEXTS:

- Why might President Bush feel that he is following the advice of Rav, Rabbi Hanina, Rabbi Yohanon and Rabbi Habiba?
- How do these quotes support President Bush's resolve to fight Iraq, so as to depose Saddam Hussein?
- What examples from today's news show "inert" people? What examples show people taking action?

ACTIVITIES:

- Take some time to discuss the quote from Louis Brandeis, making sure students understand the words, and then the meaning. Once a basic meaning is understood, ask students to "vote" to say whether they agree – thumb up means yes, thumb down means no, and thumb to the side means undecided. Use that as a basis of discussion. You may extend this discussion by adding in examples from Jewish history - like the Maccabees, Yohanon ben Zakkai, Theodor Herzl or Hannah Sennesh – would they have agreed with Brandeis? Students could research different Jews through history and use their stories to discuss the quotes of this section.
- Find examples of people or situations in the news that show people either standing up to stop what they believe is wrong, or that show people who do not take action (i.e., are "inert"). Divide them into the categories and discuss *their* reasons for their actions in light of these quotes.
- Create a bulletin board of newspaper headlines and articles of differing viewpoints about what is right or wrong in fighting a war with Iraq.

III. *The tension between responsibility to the community and a personal desire to speak out*

RECONCILING THE DIFFERING TEXTS:

- We have rules to follow in terms of supporting our government with civic loyalty, and we have laws about standing up for what's right and just. What are these responsibilities? How are they, at times, at odds with each other? How do we balance these sometimes opposing goals?
- What are students hearing in other settings (public/private school, in synagogue, home) that agree or disagree with Judaism's views on public discourse?

(con't)

ACTIVITIES:

- Ask students to imagine that they are “Thoughts,” voices of a rabbi, who is getting ready to discuss the role of American Jews in light of the current situation. Orchestrate a conversation between the “Thoughts” to help the rabbi decide what to say. You can address the students as “Thought Joe” or “Thought Anna,” and ask such questions as, “What will you say next?” or “What quote will you use?” or “How will you connect that Jewish idea to the issues of our responsibilities as citizens in the face of war?”
- Create a graffiti board for students to record their reactions. Encourage the inclusion of Jewish texts. If this board were in the hall, instead of a classroom, others could be encouraged to add to the board, including visiting adults. As a class, discuss the opinions on the board. [This could also be done via an Internet Bulletin Board.]
- Invite in speakers with differing views to speak to students (especially high school and above).

WAR AND HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS

There are many humanitarian issues wrapped up in a war. Judaism pays attention to the needs of soldiers (see, Deuteronomy 20), as well as to our imperative to focus on the innocents caught in the line of battle. Judaism's laws of war and conflict specifically protect the civilian population. Those in a surrounded city must have an avenue of escape, and women and children are especially protected in the event of a city's capture.

The outcomes of a war are inevitably the disruption of normalcy and the cost of lives, both those of soldiers and those they are trying to protect. The cost is high. But a discussion on the "rules" of war, whether from Jewish tradition or the Geneva Convention, brings some sense of civility to the conflict. Though our hearts ache for those caught in the conflict, our tradition offers imperatives that address issues of morality and right.

I. *Jewish tradition's five humanitarian rules of war - Text #18*

- 1) War must never be an end to itself. It must be a means to achieve peace.
 "Not by might, not by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord of Hosts."
 Zachariah 4:6
- 2) Prior to launching a battle, the other side should be offered the chance to create peace.
 "When you approach a town, you shall offer it peace."
 Deuteronomy 20:10
- 3) Protecting citizens, those not doing the fighting, is paramount.
 "When a city is besieged for the purpose of capture, it may not be surrounded on all four sides, but only on three, in order to give an opportunity for escape to those who want to flee to save their lives."
Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings and Wars, 6:7
- 4) Fighting has to be done in a way that God's creation is protected.
 "When, in your war against a city that you have to besiege a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding the ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city?"
 Deuteronomy 20:19
- 5) Prior to battle, the "Priest Anointed for Battle" has to read the soldiers the rules for war, so that they would not be forgotten, nor taken for granted.
 "You shall remove evil from your midst."
 Deuteronomy 13:6

EXTENDING THE TEXTS:

- Why do some people think that President Bush's reasons for declaring war fits Judaism's imperative that war not be waged "just for the sake of it," but to achieve peace? Why do some people think that President Bush's reasons for declaring war is "just for the sake of it?"

- Consider Judaism's rules in light of the actions of President Bush and the United States government. Where do the actions fit with Jewish law and where do they depart from it?
- The fourth rule of war is about protecting the environment so that the planet continues to offer us food and protection even after the conflict. This principle is called *בל תשחית* (*Bal Tashhit*). What are the applications to the concern that Saddam Hussein might blow up his oil fields or release biological or chemical agents?
- Why is it important for soldiers to be reminded of the rules of war before they set out to battle? What other rules would students like to tell the army?

ACTIVITIES:

- Ask students to write a letter to President Bush explaining Judaism's five rules of war and their opinion on his actions.
- Create a five-part bulletin board, each with one of the Biblical quotes as the title. Ask students to find news articles and photographs that illustrate each and post them in the correct columns.
- Have students create Jewishly-themed posters of protest for the environmental dangers that could emerge from a war.
- Ask students to create an imaginary IM (instant message) dialog between themselves and a soldier that includes information about Judaism's humanitarian rules for war. [If your school's computer-use policy allows, you might wish to have two students get online and each take one of the roles (the student or soldier) and create a dialog that can be printed out for sharing and discussion.]

II. Obligation to those in need

Text #19

I, God, called him in righteousness,
 And I strengthened your hand,
 And I protected you and gave you a covenant
 As a light to the nations,
 To light up blind eyes,
 To bring out the prisoners from the dungeon
 And from prison those who sit in darkness.

Isaiah 42:6-7

Text #20

Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor, I am Adonai.
 Leviticus 19:16

Text #21

For the believing Jew to be reticent about becoming involved in secular issues of Gentile culture is Halakhically inappropriate when it comes to questions of planetary survival. This is so not merely because of the danger posed by the bombs, but also because of our natural partnership in the earth with all people, regardless of race or origin. This lesson from tradition, then, is that the Jew must participate with others at whatever levels necessary – ideological, political and scientific – to ensure the continuity of the planet.

Rabbi Joseph Pollack, “Torah and the Megabombs,” *Judaism*, Fall, 1973.

Text #22

How do we know that if a person sees another person drowning, mauled by beasts, or attacked by robbers, s/he is bound to save him? From the verse (*Vayikrah* [Leviticus] 19:16), "You shall not stand by the blood of your neighbor!"

Babylonian Talmud *Sanhedrin* 73b

EXTENDING THE TEXTS:

- How do these texts help support President Bush’s desire to step in to help the Iraqi people, as well as those caught in the cross-hairs of terrorism?

ACTIVITIES:

- Find a variety of situations that both support and negate these quotes and summarize them for students in a paragraph, each. Divide students into groups and ask them to sort the situations as to whether they support or do not support the texts of this section
- Create a bulletin board with the various quotes. Have students find examples of situations in the news that support them, write a short summary on a file card, and post the cards next to the matching quotes.
- Ask students to find examples of ways Jews are reacting to the war at “whatever levels (are) necessary – ideological, political and scientific – to ensure the continuity of the planet.” [NOTE: These people and activities will be found on the websites of Jewish organizations listed in the bibliography of this curriculum.]

III. Attention to those caught in conflict**Text #23**

Rabbi Haninah, the *s’gan kohanim*, said, “One should pray for the welfare of the kingdom, for were it not for the fear of it, one person would swallow the other alive.”

Pirke Avot 3:2

Text #24

This means to say that a person should pray for the peace of the whole world and be troubled by the pain of others. And so is the way of righteous people, that a person should not make his petitions and his requests for his own need alone, but he should pray for all mankind that they should remain peaceful and with the peace of the kingdom, there is peace to the world.

Rabbenu Yonah, on *Avot* 3:2

Text #25

"Other people's dignity should be as precious to you as your own." (*Pirke Avot* 2:15) How is this to be understood? This teaches that a person should treat others with the same dignity as s/he treats his or her own (dignity).

Avot D'Rabbi Natan 14

Text #26

And, just as no one wants to have his or her own dignity trampled upon, so too a person should not want the dignity of others to be trampled upon.

Do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow,

And do not shed innocent blood.

Jeremiah 7:7

Text #27

If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat.

And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.

Proverbs 25:21

Text #28

This dictator, who is assembling the world's most dangerous weapons, has already used them on whole villages – leaving thousands of his own citizens dead, blind, or disfigured. Iraqi refugees tell us how forced confessions are obtained – by torturing children while their parents are made to watch. International human rights groups have catalogued other methods used in the torture chambers of Iraq: electric shock, burning with hot irons, dripping acid on the skin, mutilation with electric drills, cutting out tongues, and rape. If this is not evil, then evil has no meaning. And tonight I have a message for the brave and oppressed people of Iraq: Your enemy is not surrounding your country – your enemy is ruling your country. And the day he and his regime are removed from power will be the day of your liberation. . . . And if war is forced upon us, we will fight with the full force and might of the United States military – and we will prevail. And as we and our coalition partners are doing in Afghanistan, we will bring to the Iraqi people food, and medicines, and supplies ... and freedom.

President Bush, State of the Union Address, January 28, 2003

Text #29

The final purpose of government is not to rule, or bind by fear, not to demand obedience, but on the contrary, to liberate every person from fear so each may live his or her life with the highest security. . . . The true purpose of government is liberty.

Baruch Spinoza, quoted in *The Word: Jewish Wisdom Through Time*, by Noah Ben Shea, Villard, 1995, page 184.

Text #30

Therefore, humans were created alone to teach you that anyone who destroys a single person, the Torah accounts to him as if he destroyed the world. And, anyone who keeps alive a single person, the Torah accounts it to him as if he has kept alive a whole world.

Mishnah *Sanhedrin* 4:5

EXTENDING THE TEXTS:

- How do these texts help us understand our obligation to Iraq's citizens, who are caught in the middle of the conflict? In what ways can we be of help?
- The soldiers are putting themselves in harm's way to protect the rights of others to exist in freedom. What can we do to "not stand idly by" for the needs of the soldiers and their families?
- How does the message of President Bush to the citizens of Iraq mesh with Judaism's listing responsibilities to those in need?

ACTIVITIES:

- We are commanded to treat others with the dignity we would want for ourselves. Create a "manual" for soldiers that explains how they can act in accordance with this *mitzvah*. OR, write a letter to Iraqi citizens that explains President Bush's intended actions on their behalf.
- Create a collage of photographs from the news showing those who are enacting Judaism's imperative to treat others with dignity. Label the collage with the texts students feel are most appropriate.
- Have students create poetry that express the ideas of the texts in this section.
- Identify families in your area that have a loved one in the military and connect to them with cards, visits, phone calls, and small gifts for the soldiers or student-made toys for their children waiting at home.
- See if older students might wish to volunteer to spend time with the children of families with a parent serving overseas. [This is similar to being a "big brother or big sister."]

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Print Materials

Bogot, Howard. *Shalom, Salaam, Peace*. Illus. by Norman Gorbaty, CCAR Press, 1999.
A nicely designed and illustrated picture book, written in English, Hebrew, and Arabic calligraphy, about what a peaceful world is like from the perspective of young children. For Preschool – Gr.1.

Broyde, Rabbi Michael J. *Fighting the War and the Peace: Battlefield Ethics, Peace Talks, Treaties and Pacifism in the Jewish Tradition*. www.jlaw.com/Articles/war1.html

Craddock, Sonia. *Sleeping Boy*. Illus. by Leonid Gore. Simon and Schuster, 1999. An imaginative and allegorical picture book for grades 2 - 6 that subtly explores some of the motivations for war. Would be very good to read to children and then ask them some focused questions, such as:

- 1) Why does the soldier, Major Kreig, warn the baby that he will go off to war on his 16th birthday? (Implies that war is inevitable or inescapable).
- 2) Do Knabe Rosen's parents find a good way to protect him from war? Why not? (They isolate him. This doesn't work and it implies that isolationism also doesn't work: that nations or people must face their problems.)

Elcott, David. *Power, War, and Peace in Jewish Tradition*. CAJE & CLAL, 1991.
This resource has learner-directed units to help students address the Jewish uses of power. To support the reading and understanding, a glossary is included in the back.

Human Rights. *Tikvah: Children's Book Creators Reflect on Human Rights*. NY: Sea Star, 1999.

Words and art by famous illustrators. This could make a good introduction to different sections of the curriculum or as a sample of an activity wherein children write about human rights/war and peace and create artwork about what they have written. For Grades 4 and up.

Kort, Michael. *The Handbook of the Middle East. Twenty-First Century*. Milbrook, 2002.
Concise information is given for the region of the world called the Middle East. Countries in the region are grouped: Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon are discussed in one chapter. The writing is informative and impartial but the author, a social scientist, is quite clear in identifying the volatility, political instability, and authoritarianism of the region and the threat this is to world peace. For middle school-adults.

Rabbi Maurice Lamm, “Red or Dead: An Attempt at Formulating a Jewish Attitude,” quoted in *Preventing the Nuclear Holocaust: A Jewish Response*. Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism, UAHC, 1983, page 6.

While this book focuses on the issues surrounding nuclear war, it offers a very clear explanation of Judaism’s laws regarding wars. Not only a narrative, this book contains essays by a large number of rabbis and experts in the field.

Sasso, Rabbi Sandy. *Cain and Abel: Finding the Fruits of Peace*. Woodstock, VT, Jewish Lights, 2001.

A handsomely illustrated picture story of the two brothers whose love turned to hate, bringing conflict and violence into the world. For Grades 2– 6.

Albert Vorspan and David Saperstein, *Jewish Dimensions of Social Justice: Tough Moral Choices of Our Time*. NY: UAHC Press, 1998.

In the sections on Israel (chapter 6) and peace and international relations (chapter 7) there are right-to-the-point explanations of Judaism’s views on war, especially within the context of the 1991 Gulf War’s moral issues related to “just-war.”

Responding to Terrorism: Challenges for Democracy. Brown University, 2002.

National standards for civics and government, including units on defining terrorism, and civic responsibility.

Shifting Sands: Balancing U.S. Interests in the Middle East. Brown University, 2002.

A five-day classroom unit developed by the Choices for the 21st Century Education Program at Brown University, this analyzes the mix of interests and values that have drawn America into the Middle East. The units ask high school students to consider the principles and assumptions driving America’s expanded presence in the Middle East.

Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*. Basic Books 1992.

A superb book, originally published in 1977, which has set the stage for the discussion of just war theory for the past two decades. It contains a wealth of historical examples as well as theoretical insights.

Videos

Convoy from Sarajevo. UJA, 1992, 8:33 min.

Follow an Israeli rescue mission of Jews from besieged Sarajevo, through Serbian check-points to freedom in Zagreb Croatia in this intense video. This video could trigger discussion on the humanitarian aspects of helping those caught in a war.

Frontline/World: Truth and Lies in Baghdad. PBS. 2002, 60 minutes.

As the administration presses the United Nations to sanction a war to remove Saddam Hussein from power, a Frontline team journeys inside Iraq to investigate the claims and

counter claims about Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction, its brutal record on human rights, and the real opposition an invading military force will face.

Gunning for Saddam. PBS, 2001, 60 minutes.

Confronted by bio-terrorism, powerful forces in America believe Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is to blame. This documentary examines those activities that experts believe Saddam was involved in and discusses the diplomatic problems his overthrow would present.

Middle East. Schlessinger Media, 2001.

A history of American involvement in the Middle East since the Cold War. Teacher’s guide available.

Jewish American Patriots. Ergo, 1993, 60 minutes.

Jewish American soldiers have played an important role in the history of the United States from the time of the Revolutionary War up through Operation Desert Storm. Through archival photos and expert testimonials their patriotic acts are examined. In addition, the dedication and importance of the Jewish War Veterans organization is recounted.

Websites

CNN. CCN has a comprehensive website that provides information on the current situation. Called, “Showdown: Iraq,” it is located at <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2002/iraq/>

Jewish Law. http://www.jlaw.com/Articles/war_notes.html This page is an article called, “Fighting the War and the Peace: Battlefield Ethics, Peace Talks, Treaties, and Pacifism in Jewish Tradition.” [If the page does not come up easily, go to www.jlaw.com and do a search with the word, “war.”]

PBS. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle_east/iraq/index.html This is a full website from PBS (including a teacher resource link) with much background information on the building conflict with Iraq.

Time For Kids. This is a general studies news magazine for youth, with a wonderful searchable index . <http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/news/index.html> for articles of relevance to the current situation.

- A timeline on Iraq’s history may be found at:
<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/news/story/0,6260,362263,00.html>

United Jewish Communities. The UJC – <http://www.ujc.org> - represents and serves 156 Jewish federations and 400 independent Jewish communities across North America. It reflects the values of social justice and human rights that define the Jewish people. The UJC’s index may be searched for information in the event Israel is brought into a war with Iraq.

United Nations. Latest news on the UN sponsored weapons inspections and other UN interests in terrorism around the world may be found at <http://www.un.org/news>, a page that links to information on Iraq, terrorism, and Middle East issues.

The Washington Post. <http://www.washingtonpost.com> - The Washington Post (as most other newspapers) have archives of information and background on Iraq, Saddam Hussein, and other pertinent issues.

- General background may be found at:
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/world/iraq/front.html>
- A video of President Bush's State of the Union speech is available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/mmedia/politics/012803-50v.htm> and an indexed written version is found at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/transcripts/bushtext_012803.html