



Dilemmas 2006

This unit contains five dilemmas, which follow an introduction on the subject of Jewish values (for information on this subject, see the appendices in the "Instructions for War and Jewish Ethics" teaching unit). The class is divided into groups, and each is assigned a dilemma. After discussing the dilemma and reaching a decision, each group presents its considerations and conclusion to the class.

It can be helpful to give examples from the news to demonstrate the relevance of these dilemmas.

Dilemma #1

Behind enemy lines

During a raid into Lebanon to destroy missile-launch sites an Israeli Armored Personnel carrier drove over a mine. Four soldiers inside the vehicle were killed. Heavy fighting has continued in the area between Hezbollah fighters and the IDF. So far Israel has not been able to retrieve the bodies of the fallen soldiers.

Sending additional troops in to retrieve the bodies will endanger more soldiers but the families of the men are in great distress unable to bury their loved ones.

What should the Israeli Army do?



Dilemma #2

Do I stay or do I go?

The Michaeli's have four children aged 8, 13, 17 and 23. Living in the quiet town of Shelomi close to Rosh Hanikra and Israel's border with Lebanon the Michaeli family had been used to occasional missile attacks and ketuysah rockets on their town over the years.

However in the last week things have escalated dramatically. They have been unable to leave their home and have been confined to their bomb shelter. The two younger kids were supposed to be attending the community summer camp but all activities have been suspended. In addition to the threat of the missiles the local resident's biggest fear is of terrorist infiltration across the border.

Yona and Eti Michaeli's have four children aged 8, 13, 17 and 23. Yona's parents, Azaria and Mina also live in Shelomi nearby. They are both in their eighties and Mina is not in very good health. Azaria refuses to leave Shelomi declaring that he will not allow the terrorists to drive him away from his home.

Many residents of the town have left for the safety of the center or south of the country. Others remain at home. The Yona and Eti are concerned for the safety of their children and for Yona's parents. They are also conflicted about the message they will be giving to their children if they abandon their home. What should they do?



Dilemma #3

Working under fire

Boaz Lehav lives with his wife and young child in Haifa. Boaz works as a technician for the Electrical Company.

The family has been under great strain because of the Hizbulla rockets falling on the town. Yesterday a rocket fell in the adjoining neighborhood and many people were seriously injured.

When missiles are fired at Haifa the warning siren gives people less than a minute to take cover. This is difficult to do if you are caught outside in the street away from shelter.

Boaz's wife Lilach is very frightened and wants Boaz to stay at home. However Boaz's boss has called to say that the attacks have been causing power failures across the city and technicians are desperately needed to repair the power supply.

What should Boaz do?



Dilemma #4

Collateral Damage

The Israel Army has specific intelligence of the location of a Hezbollah cell in Southern Lebanon. The cell has been firing missiles into Northern Israel from inside a populated village. The Israel Air Force wants to bomb the village to destroy the terrorist infrastructure and ability to launch attacks at Israel. They have issued warnings to residents of the village to leave and have dropped flyers in Arabic warning people to flee to the North. However despite this some residents of the village have remained home.

Should the Air Force carry out their attack despite the risk of civilian casualties?



Dilemma #5

Negotiating for Prisoners

Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit was kidnapped from Israel by Hamas operatives in Gaza. Hamas offered to return Shalit in return for a large number of Palestinian prisoners inside Israeli jails.

Israel has always maintained that it will not negotiate with terrorists and it does not want to encourage more kidnappings. While there is much support for this position the Government is under increasing pressure to negotiate. There is precedent from the past where the Government has released prisoners for captured Israelis and even for the remains of fallen soldiers most recently in 2004. There is also the fundamental Jewish principle of Pidyon Shevuyim under which one must do everything possible to release captives.

Should the Government open negotiations with Hamas for the return of Gilad Shalit?