

### JCI CURRICULUM: *UNIT 1: CHAPTER 1 – CALL TO ACTION* LESSON 1: INSPECTORS OF THE EARTH

#### LESSON 1: INSPECTORS OF THE EARTH (45 mins -1hr 15mins)

##### Time

For a shorter lesson:

Shorten the framing exercise by stopping after the question in step 4.  
Skip steps 5 & 6 in the main lesson

For a longer lesson:

Add whole-class discussions to step 5 in the opening activity  
Do option 2 of the conclusion as an in-class experience

##### Goals

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##### Materials

- Slips of paper with “Inspected by #1,” #2, etc – as many as you need to give to groups of 3-4 students
- Paper
- Pencils
- Screen or poster to cover writing on the board
- Packets of quotes (same number as needed above, one for each group of 3-4 students), cut into slips or pasted onto postcards (See page 5-6 for the quotes)

##### Procedure

#### 1) Framing exercise (15 -20 mins)

In advance: Write “*And G-d saw everything that He had made and behold, it was very good.*” – Genesis 3:1 on the board. Cover it with a screen or poster.

- a) Divide the class into groups of 3-4 students each. Hand each group a slip of paper with “Inspected by #1”, #2, etc.
- b) Tell the class that they are to be responsible for the most important quality control project in the history of humanity. Millions of innocent consumers are dependent on their good judgment. They must be vigilant and not let a defective product onto the market.
- c) Uncover the quote on the board.
- d) Ask the class: Are things on earth still good? Don’t wait for an answer but quickly assign each team one part of earth to inspect (e.g. the environment, life in the inner cities, life in Africa, education, human relations).

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- e) Each group should make a list of the defects they find. Share the results with the class. Have a student (or yourself) write them on the board. As you write each defect, you can write “in need of *tikkun*” next to it.

#### 2) Main Activity (30 mins)

- a) Hand out the packets of quotes. Ask the students to read through the quotes as a group.
- b) When they seem to be winding down, interrupt the students to give them instructions: Each group is to divide the quotes into no less than 4 groups. These groups can be defined however you decide, there is no right or wrong.
- c) When they have finished, ask each group to write on the board the names of their groups (categories).
- d) Ask each group to pick their largest category and put the remainder of the texts back neatly. With this one group of quotes, ask the students to look at them closely. What differences are there? What does that tell you about the authors? Can you tell when the texts were written? If they were written in an urban or rural setting? From a rich person or a poor person? To be read only by Jews or also by non-Jews? What else might have led to the differences?
- e) Share some of the ideas generated.
- f) Each of these categories represents a way of looking at Judaism’s relationship to creation. Share the following text with the group:

“Judaism sees creation as perfect and imperfect. When we consider the perfect G-d who made it [the earth] in goodness and proclaimed it to be good... we must acknowledge its perfection. But when we consider the evolutionary aspect of life, always striving to greater perfection, we must call it imperfect.... This striving must be an integral part of any Jewish conception of creation – a conception that allots to humanity the responsibility for furthering the evolution of creation and bringing to completion the works of G-d.” (Alon Goshen-Gotteschien, “Creation” in Contemporary Religious Thought, eds. Arthur Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr, Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, 1987.)

#### 3) Conclusion (5-10 mins)

- a) Ask each student to choose one quote that particularly speaks to them. Have them copy it onto a sheet of paper with their name on it.

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- b) Option 1: Have them hand in the papers. Bring them back out later in the year. Ask them if the text still speaks to them.

Option 2: Have them draw a line down the middle of the page. Have them carry the sheet of paper with them until the next class. As they go through the week(s)/month(s), ask them to write down any instances that supported the quote on the left, and any that did not on the right.

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### Appendix

**“Judaism sees creation as perfect and imperfect. When we consider the perfect G-d who made it [the earth] in goodness and proclaimed it to be good... we must acknowledge its perfection. But when we consider the evolutionary aspect of life, always striving to greater perfection, we must call it imperfect.... This striving must be an integral part of any Jewish conception of creation – a conception that allots to humanity the responsibility for furthering the evolution of creation and bringing to completion the works of G-d.”**

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Inspected by #1

Inspected by #2

Inspected by #3

Inspected by #4

Inspected by #5

Inspected by #6

Inspected by #7

Inspected by #8

Inspected by #9

Inspected by #10

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#### Primary Source Material

In this packet of material you will find a series of quotations from various Jewish texts. Please read through them carefully. After you have done so, categorize them in any way that you think makes sense. The only criteria that will be used to evaluate your performance will be how well you can support your decisions.

You don't need to rewrite the whole quote when you sort the material. Use the citation only as an identifying phrase.

Once you have grouped the texts, decide on a label for each category. Write that in the space that has been provided.

(1) “Shout praise to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with joy; come before Him with singing. Know that the Lord is God; He has made us, and we are His, His people, and the flock of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; give thanks to Him, bless his name. For the Lord is good; His kindness is forever; His faithfulness endures to all generations. May the glory of the Lord be forever; may the Lord rejoice in His works. From the rising of the sun to its setting, let the Lord's name be praised. High above all nations is the Lord; above the heavens is his glory. O Lord, Thy name is forever; OI Lord, Thy fame is through all generations. The Lord has set up His throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth exult, and let them say among the nations, “The Lord is King!” (*Pesukei d’Zimra*)

(2) “A philosopher asked R. Hoshaya: ‘If circumcision is so precious, why was it not given to Adam?’ ...Observed he [R. Hoshaya]... ‘Whatever was created in the first six days requires further preparation, e.g., mustard needs sweetening, the bean plant needs sweetening, wheat needs grinding, and man too is in need of repair.’” (*Genesis Rabbah 11:6*)

(3) “Rabbi Bunam said; “The Lord created the world in a state of beginning. The universe is always in an uncompleted state, in the form of its beginning. It is not like a vessel at which the master works and finishes it; it requires continuous labor and unceasing renewal by creative forces. Were there a second's pause by these forces, the universe would return to primeval chaos.” (*Siah Sarfey Kodesh*)

(4) “Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the heights. Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts. Praise Him sun and moon; praise Him, all you stars of light. Praise Him highest heavens and waters that are above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for He commanded and they were created. He fixed them fast and forever and ever; He gave a law which none transgresses.” (*Psalms 148:1-6*)

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- (5) “Said the Sassover: the Torah begins with the words: ‘In the beginning God created.’ This means: the first thing to know is that God is the sole Creator of everything.” (*Menorah ha-Tehorah*)
- (6) “Every judge who judges with complete fairness even for a single hour, the Torah text gives him credit as though he had become a partner to the Holy One, blessed be He, in the creation.” (*Shabbat 10a*)
- (7) “For I am the Lord thy God, Who stirs up the sea, so that the waves roar; the Lord of hosts is His name. And I have put My words in your mouth, and have covered you in the shadow of My hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say to Zion: ‘You are My people.’” *Isaiah 51:15-16*)
- (8) “With respect to the verse ‘and to say to Zion You are My people’ (Isaiah 51:16); This means, to say to those gates of study and those words of Zion, ‘you are *ami*.’ The word *ami* (my people) may be read, *imi* (with me), meaning to be a collaborator with Me. For just as I made heaven and earth by a word... so do you.” (*Zohar, Volume 1:5a*)