

The Peacemaker in Jewish-Rabbinic and Arab-Islamic Traditions

This paper examines four questions regarding the peacemaker as found in Jewish rabbinic and Arab-Islamic traditions: 1) Who is the ideal peacemaker? 2) Should the peacemaker pursue peace only through acts of humility and nonviolence, or do certain situations warrant the use of force? 3) Should an offender approach a victim directly or send a peacemaker first? 4) Is the peacemaker permitted to lie in order to promote peace? Each of these questions is examined in light of normative rabbinic and Islamic legal sources and supported by descriptive accounts of peacemakers acting within Arab and Jewish societies.

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To the extent that local manifestations of religion accept and teach the peaceful doctrines of their traditions, they can contribute to the development of indigenous peacebuilding.

–Heather Dubois ^[1]

Both the Bible and the Qur'an hold an abiding belief in peacemaking as a moral value and encourage believers to be peacemakers. Psalm 34, for example, commands believers to "seek peace and pursue it" (4), and in the Qur'an the believer is told that "if two parties of the believers quarrel, make peace between them" (49:9). ^[2] According to both the Mishnah and the hadith, the sayings of Islam, a person who helps bring peace is rewarded with a share in the world to come. Mishnah Peah 1:1 states:

These are things the fruits of which a man enjoys in this world, while the principle remains for him in the World to Come ... bringing peace between a man and his fellow." ^[3]

In the hadith of Sunan Ibn Majah (Etiquette, 3692), it is said on the authority of Abu Hurairah:

By the One in whose Hand is my soul, you will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another. Shall I tell you something which if you did you would love each other? Spread peace amongst yourselves. ^[4]

In rabbinic and Islamic law, a distinction is made between a judge engaged in arbitration (*tahkim* in Arabic, *borerut* in Hebrew) and a peacemaker engaged in conciliation (*pius* in Hebrew, *solh* or *sulha* in Arabic) or mediation (*al wasata* in Arabic, *peshara* in Hebrew). ^[5] This paper examines four questions regarding the peacemaker as found in Jewish rabbinic and Arab-Islamic traditions:

1. Who is the ideal peacemaker?
2. Should the peacemaker pursue peace only through acts of humility and nonviolence, or do certain situations warrant the use of force?
3. Should an offender approach a victim directly or send a peacemaker first?
4. Is the peacemaker permitted to lie in order to promote peace?

Each of these questions is examined in light of normative rabbinic and Islamic legal sources as well as descriptive accounts of peacemakers acting within Arab and Jewish societies. ^[6]

The Ideal Peacemaker

In Jewish rabbinic tradition, Aaron, the older brother of Moses and the first high priest of the Israelites, is the ideal peacemaker, known for “loving and pursuing peace.” ^[7] Aaron would “pursue peace between a man and his fellow, husband and wife, family and family, tribe and tribe.” ^[8] Aaron himself is described as never having fought with anyone: “If a man curses him, he says to him, ‘Peace be upon you!’ Should a man quarrel with him, he keeps silent.” ^[9] In rabbinic literature, the high priest (and eventually the rabbi) was the model peacemaker. One early legend found in the Babylonian Talmud tells the following story:

There were once two men who, being egged on by Satan, quarreled with one another every Friday afternoon. Rabbi Meir once came to the place and stopped

them from quarrelling and settled them down for three Friday afternoons. When he had finally made peace between them, he heard Satan say, “Alas for this man [Satan] whom R. Meir has driven from this house!” ^[10]

In this story Rabbi Meir, one of the most respected rabbis of his time (second century CE, Palestine), made peace between the two individuals just by staying with them, thereby exorcising Satan from the house. ^[11]

One of the primary roles of the local rabbi, or *hacham*, was to promote peace in the community. In the sixteenth century, however, a small Jewish community under Ottoman rule believed it better for the communal peace that they not have a hacham. As time went by, communal conflicts increased and the community came to the realization that only a hacham could unite them all again and “mediate the peace, love and brotherhood” between them. ^[12]

In Jewish rabbinic tradition, the peacemaker was not always a holy or religious leader. Even jesters, according to a legend in the Babylonian Talmud could bridge differences:

Rabbi Beroka Hoza’ah was standing in the market of Debey Lapat. Elijah came and appeared to him. [R. Beroka] asked, “Who, in this market, has a share in the world to come?” He replied “No one.” ... In the meantime, two [people] passed by and [Elijah] remarked, “These two have a share in the world to come.” [Rabbi Beroka] asked them, “What is your occupation?” They replied, “We are jesters. When we see people depressed we cheer them up; furthermore, when we see two people quarrelling we strive to make peace between them.” ^[13]

These jesters, while not appearing to the human eye to be particularly righteous or holy, are identified by the prophet Elijah as having a share in the world to come for their meritorious deeds, such as making peace through the use of humor. ^[14] In a similarly-themed legend, a distinguished character, though not a rabbi, identifies himself as a peacemaker; according to the legend, he is portrayed as more righteous than the rabbinic figure in the same story who focuses solely on the study of Torah. ^[15]

In Jewish history, there were individuals referred to as *rodfei shalom* (pursuers of peace) or

mitavchey shalom (peace mediators). These peacemakers were active in communities from eleventh-century Muslim Spain through fifteenth-century Christian Prague and until twentieth-century Morocco. Unlike earlier traditions, such as Aaron, the pursuer of peace, these peacemakers were not holy or religious leaders but generally well-respected laypeople. Also in contrast to Aaron, these peacemakers did not act alone in their pursuit of peace. ^[16] It is interesting to note that mentions of these community peacemakers ended with the immigration of Jews to Israel from North Africa in the 1950s.

In Islamic tradition, Muhammad, known as the Prophet and Allah's Apostle, is considered the ideal peacemaker. For example, in the hadith of Sahih al-Bukhari, several accounts of Muhammad making peace are narrated by Sahl bin Sad:

There was a dispute amongst the people of the tribe of Bani 'Amr bin 'Auf. The Prophet went to them along with some of his companions in order to make peace between them. ... Once the people of Quba fought with each other till they threw stones on each other. When Allah's Apostle was informed about it, he said, "Let us go to bring about reconciliation between them." ^[17]

In several Arab-Islamic societies today, such as rural Jordan, ^[18] northern Israel, ^[19] Bedouin groups of Israel's Negev region, ^[20] and Sunni communities in Lebanon, ^[21] the mediator or peacemaker is a well-respected lay leader. ^[22] These peacemakers may be referred to as members of the *jaha* (delegation), which in Arabic, according to Elias Jabbour, a peacemaker in northern Israel, "suggests that these people have attained a high level of respect in the region." ^[23] The respect given to the peacemaker may be due, for example, to his advanced age, leadership position in the community, or wealth. ^[24] These peacemakers almost always act as part of a delegation and not alone. ^[25]

Alternatively, in some Arab-Islamic societies, the peacemaker is a holy or religious leader. For instance, amongst the Berber Bedouin in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco, it is insufficient to be a respected member of society; to be a peacemaker one must also be born into the sect of the "saints." ^[26] According to Gellner, these saints serve the Bedouin people living around them, "not only to mediate with God, but also to help with inter- and intra-tribal political mediation." ^[27] Gellner also writes that the saints "claimed not to feud or litigate at all. A mediator who was himself involved in a network of hostilities and alliances would not be much use for mediation and sanctuary." ^[28] According to Ginat, the saint, as

opposed to the peacemaker of Bedouin and rural Arab societies, works alone in mediating conflicts. ^[29]

Hamzeh has noted that in Shia communities in Lebanon there has been a shift in recent years from the model of respected lay leader as peacemaker to the model of religious leader associated with the Hizbullah as peacemaker. ^[30] Abu-Nimer also notes that in Gaza, the peacemaker is often a religious leader, such as an imam who may be “the most trusted person in the community because of his strict observance of Islamic values and traditions.” ^[31]

Both Jewish rabbinic and Arab-Islamic traditions regard the identity of the peacemaker in two ways. One way is that of the religious and holy leader—a high priest, rabbi, saint, or imam, for example—who acts alone in making peace. The second is that of the respected lay leader who generally acts as one member in a delegation of peacemakers. Both of these models sharply contrast with the Western image of the peacemaker or mediator where the peacemaker rejects any claim to power or authority over the conflicting parties; The peacemaker is, instead, responsible only for the mediation process itself. ^[32]

Humility and the Peacemaker

In Jewish rabbinic tradition, the peacemaker is described as one who acts out of humility in pursuit of peace:

There is no one more humble of spirit than he who pursues peace. Consider, how can a man pursue peace if he be not lowly of spirit? How does he act? ... If two men have quarreled, he humbles his spirit, approaches them and effects reconciliation between them. ^[33]

In addition, Aaron is portrayed as never rebuking conflicting sides, telling one or the other that they are wrong, but rather pursuing peace between them. ^[34] In early rabbinic literature, several stories describe how respected rabbis allowed themselves to be denigrated as a means of bringing peace, particularly in conflicts between husband and wife. ^[35] One relatively late tradition relates how Aaron allowed a wife to spit in his eye in order to help reconcile her to her husband. ^[36]

However, Jewish rabbinic tradition also, at points, opposed the tactic of making peace through the humiliation of the peacemaker. These factions argued instead that the peacemaker should make peace by humiliating the side considered to be problematic. For example, instead of the rabbi allowing himself to be humiliated by the aggrieved husband, it was suggested that the authorities “bring him [the husband] and flog him at the stock until he reconciles with his wife!” ^[37] Rabbi Ephraim of Sudilkov (1748–1800, Poland), the grandson of the Ba’al Shem Tov (founder of the Hassidic movement), writes that Aaron would only degrade himself in order to pursue peace when he knew that as a result the two conflicting sides would

regret their actions of their own accord as soon as they realized that Aaron, the high priest, needed to trouble himself and go to each of them and speak with them in regard to the disputed matter in order to mediate peace, as was his way and method, and for this they would become ashamed of their actions and repent for their bad deeds. ^[38]

But if one of the conflicting sides happened to be “foolish and of crude nature” and did not appreciate the fact that Aaron, the high priest, was willing to lower himself, speak with this individual, and help him make peace with his friend:

Aaron would have to change his method and pursue that man, defeat him, humiliate him, show him his shortcomings and his lowly value in order that afterwards he [Aaron] could make peace between him and his friend and between him and his Father in Heaven.” ^[39]

In Islamic tradition, as well, humility is seen as an important means of preventing conflict, as it is said in the hadith of Sunan Abu-Dawud, “The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: ‘God has revealed to me that you must be humble, so that no one oppresses another and boasts over another.’” ^[40]

Elias Jabbour tells the story of a well-respected peacemaker who acted out of humility to bring peace. ^[41] Upon his arrival with the *jaha* delegation at the house of a murder victim, the women of the house went up to the roof and poured ashes on their heads; with the delegation still outside of the house, ashes fell down to the extent that “this good man’s black beard turned gray because of the ashes.” The peacemaker, however, did not get angry

and rebuke them for this; rather, he said to them “You have the right to do that. Go on, go on.” According to the story, the women wondered to themselves: “What kind of ‘angel’ do we have here? Perhaps we should be ashamed.” Jabbour explains:

They wanted to express their anger. In this respect the role of the delegation may often have to serve as an anger or shock absorber for the other side. “You are angry? Don’t throw it on your enemy—throw it on us. We will take the anger on ourselves.” [42]

However, the peacemaker in Arab-Islamic societies is not always successful in bringing peace out of humility; sometimes the peacemaker is forced to ensure peace through the use of force, as the Qu’ran states:

And if two parties among the Believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them: but if one of them transgress beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the Command of Allah; but if it complies, then make peace between them with justice, and be fair: for Allah loves those who are fair and just. (49:9)

Hamzeh, describing Hizbullah peacemakers in Lebanon, points out that avoiding vendetta “requires not only spiritual influence but also physical force.” He quotes Sayyid Ibrahim Amin al Sayyid, a Hizbullah peacemaker, who says:

In preventing vendetta, we avoid using force. ... In some conflicts ... the vendetta was prevented and a truce established without using force. In other conflicts, however ... a truce was established first by force then followed by a mediator’s visit to both parties. [43]

Similarly, Fredrik Barth quotes Nalkot Pacha, a saint and peacemaker among the Swat Pathans in Pakistan, as saying that in order to make peace “both holy status and force” are required. He goes on to tell of a case in which one of the conflicting sides appeared at a peacemaking gathering armed with weapons in an attempt to impose its will. The peacemaker, however, outsmarted them, revealing his own hidden armed men who subsequently helped establish a balanced and peaceful settlement between the two sides. [44]

Jabbour concludes his discussion on this topic—which he refers to the *jaha* as the “anger absorber” by saying, “Everything in *sulha* depends on how wise the members of the *jaha*

are.” In other words, the peacemaker must know when and how to act humbly and absorb other peoples’ anger in order to bring peace. ^[45] In a similar manner, Rabbi Ephraim of Sudilkov likens the peacemaker’s very necessary skill of knowing when to act humbly and when to humble the arrogant to the medical skill of a doctor knowing how to heal a patient—both skills, if attempted by the unskilled, would only bring death and destruction. ^[46] The related dilemma—when should a peacemaker employ the use of force?—is prevalent in Western culture, in particular in the context of international third-party peacemakers. ^[47]

The Peacemaker as Emissary of the Offender

A well-known rabbinic tradition tells how Aaron, the high priest, pursued peace by portraying himself as the emissary of the offender, sent to reconcile and ask for forgiveness from the victim.

Such, indeed, was the procedure of Aaron, the righteous. When he heard of two men who were fighting with each other, he would go to one and say to him, “So-and-so, peace be upon you, my master!” and he replied, “Peace be upon you, my master and teacher! What does my master seek here?” He then said, “So-and-so, your friend, sent me to you to appease you, because he declares, ‘I have offended my friend.’” Immediately the man reflects, “A righteous man like him has come to appease me!” and exclaims, “Master, it was I who offended him.” [Aaron] then went to the other man and said the same to him. When the two would meet on the road, one would say to the other, “Forgive me for the offense which I did to you” and the other would speak likewise. ^[48]

According to this tradition, Aaron portrays himself as the emissary of the offender sent to ask forgiveness and reconciliation from the victim. However, this model of a peacemaker is the exception and not the rule. Among the many legends that tell of peacemaking and reconciliation in early rabbinic literature, only one tells of an attempt on the part of the offending side to reconcile with the victim through the use of emissaries, and this attempt is described as a failure. ^[49] On the other hand, many rabbinic legends tell of the offending side directly approaching the victim in his home and humbly asking for forgiveness. A good example of this may be found in a story from the Babylonian Talmud that tells of Raba (end of the third century, Babylonia) asking forgiveness of his former teacher, Rabbi Yosef, who

happened to be blind, after showing him disrespect:

When the eve of the Day of Atonement approached, the latter [Raba] thought, “I shall go and pacify him.” ... Proceeding to Rabbi Yosef’s house he found his attendant engaged in mixing for him a cup of wine. “Give it to me,” Raba said to him, “and I will mix it.” He gave it to him and the latter duly mixed it. As he [Rabbi Yosef] tasted it, he remarked: “This mixing is like that of Raba.” “I am here,” the other answered. “Do not sit down upon your legs,” Rabbi Yosef said to him, “before you have explained to me these verses.” ^[50]

Rabbi Yosef proceeded to ask Raba to explain the meaning of a verse from the Bible, (Numbers 21:18-20), whose exegetical meaning was “If a man allows himself to be treated as the wilderness upon which everybody treads, the Torah will be given to him as a gift,” and eventually “he rises to greatness ... but if he is haughty, the Holy One, blessed be He, humbles him. ... ” In this story, the offender does not first send a peacemaking emissary, but rather approaches the insulted party directly and in utter humility.

In rabbinic law, Rabbi Jacob Ibn Haviv (1445–1516, Ottoman Salonika) observed that it was a common custom in his time for the offender to send a peacemaker on his behalf to the victim. However, he claimed that this practice was misguided and not a reflection of normative Jewish custom.

Rather the offender must go himself to reconcile the insulted and this shame and humiliation are to atone for him and for what wrong he has done to his friend, even if he only insulted him with words. ^[51]

As a result of this position, many subsequent codifiers of Jewish law ruled that ideally the individual himself must go and ask for forgiveness and reconciliation; only if the first attempt is unsuccessful, or if the individual knows for certain the insulted side will not agree to reconcile without an emissary first, is he permitted to send such a representative. ^[52]

In Arab-Islamic tradition, by contrast, the general rule is that the offending side must first approach peacemakers and beg them to serve as *jaha* emissaries. ^[53] Elias Jabbour writes:

The *jaha* should tell the offended side, “We are asked by the offender and his family to come and pay you a visit in order to have the honor of offering their

repentance and to express their sorrow for what has happened and to ask you to be kind—to have a great deal of honor on your own part and to let us take the case into our hands and see how we can help to restore peace between you.”

[54]

In general, there is no direct contact between the two sides until the peacemakers first broker a settlement. [55] Therefore, an offender who approaches his victim directly is considered to be an exceptional and strange case. Ginat describes such a case among the Bedouin in Israel’s Negev region, in which a relative of the murderer approached the tent of the victim directly:

In this case the senior relative humiliated himself by crawling into the tent. Prostrating himself he refused to be served the traditional cup of coffee until the family of the murdered man agreed to a settlement of the dispute. In order to preserve his honor regarding the Bedouin tradition of offering hospitality even to enemies, the paterfamilias relented and agreed to an end of the blood dispute. This unprecedented behavior was frowned upon by mediators because it indicated that blood disputes could be settled without their services, albeit by strange behavior. [56]

It appears, therefore, that while direct peacemaking without the initial intervention of a peacemaker is considered the norm in Jewish rabbinic tradition, it is a very rare exception in Arab-Islamic practice. The appointment of an emissary is considered the rule in Arab-Islamic traditions and the exception in Jewish rabbinic traditions. In this regard, the Jewish rabbinic tradition is more similar to accepted practice in Western culture where the offender is expected to approach the offended party and apologize without the introduction of a mediator. [57]

The Honesty of the Peacemaker

Aaron the high priest, according to the tradition cited above, lied to both sides in a conflict, telling each that the other side wished to reconcile until eventually they would indeed reconcile with one another. In Jewish rabbinic tradition, it is generally accepted that one is permitted to lie for the sake of peace, as Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (1138–1204, Spain and Egypt) ruled that a person is not considered a liar if “he made peace between two people

and added and subtracted from the statements each one of them made to heighten their feelings of closeness. Such deceptions are permitted.” ^[58]

An example of a peacemaker lying to promote peace may be found in the words of Rabbi Meir ben Isaac Katzenellenbogen (1473–1565, Italy), who claimed once to be acting in the “ways of the pursuers of peace (*rodfei shalom*), who change the truth for the sake of peace”; in that case, he told each side in a conflict that the other side would win if the case were brought to court, and that they should therefore drop their claims and reconcile. ^[59]

However there were also dissenting opinions within rabbinic literature that sought to limit the practice of lying for the sake of peace. One such example may be found in a nineteenth-century compilation of Hassidic writings:

For certainly the main attribute of peace is founded upon the path of truth, because from the attribute of truth comes forth the attribute of peace. And therefore, the person making peace must also speak the truth and distance himself from lies. However, since on occasion it is impossible to bring forth peace without lying, it is therefore permissible to change [the truth] for the sake of peace. ... But in truth it is like a despicable thing ... that peace should be achieved through lying. And even though in the end, when peace has been achieved, the lie become canceled and forgotten entirely out of the great love and connection between them, nevertheless, at the outset, when he emits a lie out of his mouth, it is considered pursuit [in a negative manner]. ... And this was the method of Aaron the priest, who loved and pursued peace.” ^[60]

In Arab-Islamic tradition as well, a peacemaker is permitted to lie for the sake of peace. In the hadith of Sahih al-Bukhari, a tradition is brought in the name of Um Kulthum bint Uqba, who heard Muhammad saying, “He who makes peace between the people by inventing good information or saying good things is not a liar.” ^[61] A good example of this may be found in Ginat’s account of a conflict that took place between Druze and Christians in the Galilee during which one of the peacemakers suggested lying to the two sides in order to help broker the peace:

He suggested to the other mediators that they wait for an hour among the olive trees instead of entering the village, and then return to the Christian family and say that Druze notables had agreed to ‘atwa [initial payment in exchange for a

ceasefire]. He reasoned that any condition imposed by the Christian family would be humiliating to the Druze notables. He felt that it would not be difficult to persuade the Druze villagers to agree to 'atwa and begin negotiations for sulha, but he did not want a surfeit of conditions imposed by the Christian family to be a stumbling block to the negotiations. ^[62]

It is evident that in both Jewish rabbinic and Arab-Islamic traditions the peacemaker is allowed to lie for the sake of making peace. These traditions stand in contrast to Western models of peacemaking and mediation, which generally assume "transparent honesty" and trustworthiness of the mediator, ^[63] not to mention the problem of credibility such a mediator would face in subsequent peacemaking efforts. ^[64]

Conclusion

At the core of both Jewish rabbinic and Arab Islamic traditions are values of shame, honor, and humility, and, therefore, peacemaking efforts focus on avoiding shame, restoring honor, and encouraging humility. ^[65] Additionally, as these societies are hierarchical in nature, the peacemaker must either be holy or a well-respected leader in the community. ^[66] The peacemaker must know how to act humbly at times, and at other times humble one of the disputing sides in order to make peace. The difference between the two traditions regarding the initial sending of a peacemaker as an emissary or attempting a face-to-face encounter between the two sides is also a function of balancing opposing needs of honor and shame. In the Arab-Islamic tradition, avoiding additional shame to the victim and restoring his honor are achieved by the offender sending an emissary to the victim, while in Jewish rabbinic tradition, the shame of the offender and consequent return of honor to the victim is achieved by the offender humiliating himself and approaching his victim directly in a request for forgiveness. In both traditions, Jewish rabbinic and Arab-Islamic, the goal of peacemaking is primarily to reestablish social harmony and not necessarily to solve conflicts. ^[67] This too is reflected in both traditions by the permission granted to the peacemaker to lie in the service of peace and harmony.

Within many traditional Arab-Islamic communities today, peacemakers still pursue peace as described in this paper. However, within the Jewish community models of peacemaking reflect Western society where the vast majority of Jews live. ^[68] Nevertheless, comparative

studies can be very useful in training religious and interreligious peacebuilders. Academics and practitioners in the field of peace and conflict studies would do well to delve further into the rich history and lore of peacemaking in all religious traditions in order to continue to “contribute to the development of indigenous peacebuilding.”^[69]

1. 1. Heather Dubois, “Religion and Peacebuilding: An Ambivalent yet Vital Relationship,” *Journal of Religion, Conflict, and Peace* 1:2 (Spring 2008).
2. 2. Translation from Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Holy Qu’ran* (Lahore and USA: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, 1991), 1006.
3. 3. Translation from S.M. Lehrman, ed., *Soncino Babylonian Talmud, Seder Zeraim* (London: Soncino Press, 1949). Unless otherwise indicated, translations from Hebrew in this essay are my own.
4. 4. Translation from “Daily Hadith Online,”
<http://dailyhadithonline.com/2010/10/01/spread-peace-then-you-will-love-....>.
5. 5. For a discussion of arbitration and mediation in Islamic law, see Fathi Kemicha, “The Approach to Mediation in the Arab World,” paper presented at the International Conference of Mediation, Geneva Switzerland, 1996,
<http://www.wipo.int/amc/en/events/conferences/1996/kemicha.html>. See also Said Bouheraoua, “Foundation of Mediation in Islamic Law and its Contemporary Application,” <http://www.apmec.unisa.edu.au/apmf/2008/papers/11--Said.pdf>. For a discussion of arbitration and mediation in Jewish law, see Ira Yitzchak Kasdan, “A Proposal for P’sharah: A Jewish Mediation/Arbitration Service,” <http://www.jlaw.com/Articles/psharah1.html>.
6. 6. The title of this article, “The Peacemaker in Jewish-Rabbinic and Arab-Islamic Traditions,” is intended to reflect this dual examination of normative rabbinic and Islamic legal texts, as well as descriptions of Jewish and Arab societies.
7. 7. “Hillel said: Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace” (m. ‘Abot 1:12). In his book *Between Eden and Armageddon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), Marc Gopin refers to Aaron as the “Ideal Jewish Peacemaker,” and writes “The rabbis make the biblical figure Aaron, the high priest and brother of Moses, into the paradigmatic peacemaker” (182).
8. 8. H. Enelow, ed., *Mishnat Rabbi Eliezer*, vol. 4 (New York: Bloch, 1934), 73.
9. 9. M. Heiger, *Kalah Rabati* (New York: Debei-Raban, 1936), 3:1.
10. 10. Rabbi Dr. I. Epstein, *Soncino Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nashim* (London:

Soncino Press, 1937), b. Gittin 52a.

11. 11. On the ability of a respected third side to end a conflict just by being with the conflicting parties, see William Ury, *The Third Side* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000): “A simple experiment will reveal, in its most elementary form, the influence of the third side. Introduce a neutral person into any argument between two people. Even if the third person does not talk, the parties’ tone will usually begin to moderate and their behavior will become more controlled. If the third person commands special respect, the effect will become more pronounced” (15).
12. 12. Rabbi Chayim Shabti, *Responsa Torat Chayim*, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Zichron Yackov, 2003), responsum 32.
13. 13. b. Ta’an, 21b–22a.
14. 14. Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (or Rashi, eleventh century, France), in his commentary on the Talmud, here notes that the jesters made peace between them “through words of humor.” On the use of humor in peacemaking see Bruce D. Bonta, “Conflict Resolution among Peaceful Societies: The Cultures of Peacefulness,” *Journal of Peace Research* 33, no. 4 (1996): “Humor is undoubtedly a useful strategy for reducing tensions and resolving conflicts in many societies. ... When a leader in a Paiyan community becomes involved in helping to resolve a conflict, he will often use joking or soothing to defuse the situation” (407).
15. 15. Lev. Rab. 9:3.
16. 16. See Daniel Roth, “The Tradition of Aaron Pursuer of Peace between People as a Rabbinic Model of Reconciliation” (PhD dissertation, Bar-Ilan University, 2011), section 1.3.
17. 17. *Sahih Bukhari*, vol. 3, book 49 (855, 858), <http://www.usc.edu/schools/college/crcc/engagement/resources/texts/musli...> For further examples of the Prophet serving as a third party peacemaker see *Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam: Theory and Practice*, by Mohammed Abu-Nimer (Gainesville: Florida State University Press, 2003), 61-63.
18. 18. Richard T. Antoun, “Institutionalized Deconfrontation: A Case Study of Conflict Resolution among Tribal Peasants in Jordan,” in *Conflict Resolution in the Arab World: Selected Essays*, edited by Paul Salem (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1997), 140-175.
19. 19. Joseph Ginat, *Blood Revenge: Family Honor, Mediation, and Outcasting*

- (Portland: Sussex Academic, 1997), 55-97. Elias Jabbour, *Sulha: Palestinian Traditional Peacemaking Process* (Montreat: House of Hope, 1996).
20. 20. Ginat, *Blood Revenge*, 55-97.
 21. 21. Laurie King-Irani, "Rituals of Forgiveness and Processes of Empowerment in Lebanon," in *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts*, edited by I. W. Zartman (Boulder: Lynn Rienner Publishers, 2000), 129–140.
 22. 22. G. E. Irani and N. C. Funk, "Rituals of Reconciliation: Arab-Islamic Perspectives," in *Peace and Conflict Resolution in Islam*, edited by A. A. Said, N. Funk, and A. S. Kadayifci (Lanham: University Press of America, 2001).
 23. 23. Elias Jabbour, *Sulha*, 27-28.
 24. 24. Abu-Nimer, *Nonviolence*: "The age of the third-party members also plays a role. They are usually older men who, according to local social and cultural standards, are classified as elders who command the communities' respect" (105). Ginat, *Blood Revenge*: "Many of the Negev Bedouin mediators are heads of tribes or of co-liable groups. It is most often the case, but not always, that mediators are persons of means" (84).
 25. 25. In *Sulha*, Jabbour writes that the number of the jaha members depends on the severity of the case. In less serious cases, two to three mediators may be enough, while in the most serious of cases the number may come to as many as twenty-one. It is almost unheard of to have only one peacemaker (28).
 26. 26. Ginat, *Blood Revenge*, 58–59. Ginat notes that this is true regarding the saints of Cyrenaica in Libya and the saints of the Swath Pathans in Pakistan.
 27. 27. Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 8.
 28. 28. Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 126.
 29. 29. Ginat, *Blood Revenge*, 82: "Only one Saint at a time serves as the mediator. ... In Bedouin and rural Arab societies there are cases where only one mediator is used but it is more usual, and always in blood disputes, for there to be more than one mediator." Ginat states that this was relayed to him by Gellner in a personal communication (n. 19).
 30. 30. Nizar Hamzeh, "The Role of Hizbullah in Conflict Management within Lebanon's Shi'a Community," in *Conflict Resolution in the Arab World: Selected Essays*, edited

bu Paul Salem (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1997): “The roles of the arifa (knowledgeable persons who act as mediators among clans), the wujaha’ (prominent persons), the political zuama, and the state, have been substituted by Hizbullah’s mediation. ... The mediator is usually a prominent Sayyid or Shaykh” (100-111).

31. 31. Abu-Nimer, *Nonviolence*, 105.
32. 32. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, “Contrasts in Conflict Management in Cleveland and Palestine,” in *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts*, edited by I. W. Zartman (Boulder: Lynn Rienner Pub., 2000), 141–152. Abu-Nimer states: “Mediators in Western dispute resolution have no substantial power or authority over the disputants except their control of the process; therefore the cost and benefits of the agreement are the main motivation for the parties to continue in the bargaining. In the Middle Eastern case, mediators are very powerful and highly respected among the disputants, therefore the disputants will try to maintain good relations with the mediators” (150).
33. 33. Kallah Rab, 3:1.
34. 34. Jacob Neusner, *Sifra: An Analytical Translation* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 136–137. According to this source, all of Israel cried when Aaron passed away “because Aaron never said to a man or to a woman, ‘You have done wrong.’” However, not everyone cried when Moses passed away “because he rebuked them.”
35. 35. y. Sotah 1:4 (16d). See Gopin, *Eden and Armageddon*, 184–185.
36. 36. Pseudo-Rashi commentary on m. ‘Abot 1:12 (Vilna: Romm, 1880).
37. 37. y. Sotah 1:4 (16d).
38. 38. Rabbi Moshe Chaim Ephraim of Sudilkov, *Degel Machaneh Ephraim* (Bardischov, 1809), Leviticus, Achrey Mot.
39. 39. Ephraim, *Degel Machaneh Ephraim*.
40. 40. Hadith of Sunan Abu Dawud, 2294.
41. 41. Jabbour, *Sulha*, 56–57.
42. 42. Jabbour, *Sulha*, 56–57.
43. 43. Hamzeh, *Hizbullah*, 111–112.
44. 44. Fredrik Barth, *Political Leadership among Swat Pathans* (London: Athlone Press; New York: Humanities Press, 1968), 99.
45. 45. Jabbour, *Sulha*, 48.
46. 46. Ephraim, *Degel Machaneh Ephraim, Leviticus, Achrey Mot*.
47. 47. Katja Favretto, “Should Peacemakers Take Sides? Major Power Mediation,

Coercion and Bias,” *American Political Science Review* 103 (2009): “Without prejudging what type of offer the third party will make, two ideal types emerge in equilibrium: the third party can either make an offer both sides are certain to accept or it can make an offer that will only be accepted if the threat of military intervention is credible” (248-263).

48. 48. Kallah Rab, 3:1.
49. 49. y. Ta’an., 3:1: “He [Rabbi Judah] sent [messengers] to appease R. Pinchas” (66b).
50. 50. b.’Erub., 54a.
51. 51. Rabbi Yackov Ibn Shlomo Haviv, Ein Yackov (Salonika, 1516), on y. Yoma 8.
52. 52. See for example Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, “Laws of the Eve of the Day of Atonement,” *Mishnah Berurah* (Jerusalem: Pe’er Hatorah, 1977), 606:1:2.
53. 53. Jabbour, *Sulha*, 26-28.
54. 54. Jabbour, *Sulha*, 31-32.
55. 55. Jabbour, *Sulha*: “The members of the accused family speak through the mediators. They cannot speak to the family of the deceased directly. We talk to them as if we are acting on behalf of the killer” (42). Similarly, Ginat writes in *Blood Revenge*: “In the societies under discussion, when mediation is required in matters of blood disputes, the disputing parties are always physically separated. Thus, in blood disputes the mediator or mediators are always also ‘go-betweens’; the role is one and the same, and indeed, this term precisely defines their function” (59).
56. 56. Ginat, *Blood Revenge*, 80.
57. 57. N. Tavuchis, *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991): “As the offender ... I cannot have someone apologize on my behalf. ... To request, encourage, allow or be subjected to such mediatory actions violates both the logic and spirit of apology... such interventions are in short, self-defeating and antithetical to the apologetic agenda, which calls for direct exchange between particular wrongdoers and their victims. ... It is most commonly found in what has been termed ‘honor-sensitive’ societies and in cultures where groups or collective membership interests and claims as well as institutionalized hierarchical arrangements take precedence over individuality and egalitarianism” (49-50).
58. 58. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, translated by Eliyahu Touger. See "Laws of Robbery" and "Lost Objects" (14:13).

59. 59. Rabbi Meir ben Isaac Katzenellenbogen, *Responsa of Maharam Pedua* (Krakow, 1882), responsum 29 .
60. 60. Yeshoshua Heshel of Rymnov, *Siftei Tzadikim* (New York: Mishor, 2000), commentary on Ecclesiastes 3:15.
61. 61. *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol. 3, book 49, p. 857, cited in Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Nonviolence*, 63.
62. 62. Ginat, *Blood Revenge*, 70.
63. 63. James D. D. Smith, “Mediator Impartiality: Banishing the Chimera,” *Journal of Peace Research* 31, no. 4 (1994), 445.
64. 64. Andrew Kydd, “Which Side Are You On? Bias, Credibility, and Mediation,” *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 4 (2003), 597-611. Kydd writes, “Thus if the mediator is unbiased and simply wants to minimize the chance of war, she will face an insuperable incentive to lie. Lying will make peace more likely, telling the truth will make war more likely. Thus the unbiased mediator faces a serious credibility problem.”
65. 65. David W. Augsburger, *Conflict Mediation across Cultures* (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), 107: “In contemporary honor- based societies ... the community exists within an all-embracing system of honor.” In *Nonviolence* , Mohammed Abu-Nimer says, “Many dispute resolution practices in such communities are aimed at preventing shame, restoring respect, and saving face” (98).
66. 66. Augsburger, *Conflict Mediation*: “Honor is a hierarchical concept. ... In hierarchy ... it is honorable to be protected by an authority, humiliating to be protected by an inferior” (102).
67. 67. Abu-Nimer, *Nonviolence*: “The goal of dispute resolution mechanisms is to restore order and the disrupted balance of power rather than to change power relationships and the status quo” (102). See also Richard T. Antoun, “Institutionalized Deconfrontation: A Case Study of Conflict Resolution among Tribal Peasants in Jordan,” in *Conflict Resolution in the Arab World: Selected Essays*, edited by Paul Salem (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1997) : “The sulha does not remove the antagonism created by the original breaches of normative behavior—despite the expressions of forgiveness” (163).
68. 68. The two possible exceptions to this are the ultra-Orthodox community and the

- Ethiopian Jewish community, both of whom still practice more traditional, non-Western approaches to peacemaking. For a contrast of Western and non-Western (Arab-Islamic) models of conflict resolution, see G. E. Irani and N. C. Funk, "Rituals of Reconciliation: Arab-Islamic Perspectives," in *Peace and Conflict Resolution in Islam*, edited by A. A. Said, N. Funk, and A. S. Kadayifci (Lanham: University Press of America, 2001). See also Paul Salem, "A Critique of Western Conflict Resolution from a Non-Western Perspective," *Negotiation Journal* 9, no. 4 (1993): 361-369.
69. 69. Heather Dubois, "Religion and Peacebuilding," *Journal of Religion, Conflict, and Peace* 1, no. 2 (spring 2008).