

# HAVRUTA



The Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies ■ December 2014 / Kislev 5775



**Living & Learning in Israel:**  
Observing *shmitta* in modern times 8

Pardes students at Machane Yehuda market, Jerusalem

**Alumni Check-In:**  
Maimonidean music,  
desert life, one wish

5

**Jewish Spirituality:**  
Forgiving &  
forgetting

10

**Ukraine:**  
Behind the  
headlines

11

**Tzfat:**  
R. Karo and  
the city of  
*Kabbalah*

15



## From the Top

These continue to be extremely exciting times for Pardes. Through the generous support of the Jim Joseph Foundation, the AVI CHAI Foundation and the David S. and Karen A. Shapira Foundation, we recently completed a major business planning process that positions us to achieve significant growth and institutional sustainability over the next five years. Our plans include continued growth in North America, construction of a new, state-of-the-art facility in Jerusalem and the addition of critical development resources to help raise the funds needed to support our growth and success.

Already we have seen important validation of these plans. Over the last year, multiple foundations have collectively invested more than \$4 million in Pardes. These investments have included major grants from the Jim Joseph Foundation (up to \$3.7 million over four years to support the Pardes Center for Jewish Educators (PCJE)), the Crown Family (in support of PCJE) and the David S. and Karen A. Shapira Foundation (for general support). In addition, the AVI CHAI Foundation has also provided Pardes with significant support recently, awarding a multi-year grant of \$3.2 million for PCJE development.

This outstanding support is most gratifying as we move to expand the opportunities Pardes provides for open, diverse and intellectually challenging text-based learning. Today, more than 1,000 Pardes graduates work as Jewish professionals in a variety of sectors in the Jewish community, including more than 300 educators, 100 Hillel professionals and 365 rabbis across all movements. The business planning process and these significant grants chart a course toward sustainability and empower us to develop even more talented and passionate graduates who will go on to inspire Jewish learners from all backgrounds and walks of life every single day. We are enormously proud of the impact our students have at the very heart of Jewish life and literacy, and we are grateful to our supporters for enabling us to continue this important work.

May we continue to go from strength to strength!

*Michael Rosenzweig (PELS '07-'14) is the President and CEO of Pardes.*

# Program

## PARDES CENTER FOR JEWISH EDUCATORS



Day school and experiential educators collaborating

We are proud that this year's graduates of the **Pardes Day School Educators Program – Two-Year Master of Jewish Education** in collaboration with Hebrew College, are teaching in schools across the U.S.: Luria Academy, Brooklyn; Hannah Senesh Community Day School, Brooklyn; Kohelet Yeshiva High School, Philadelphia; Ronald C. Wornick Jewish Day School, Foster City, CA; Frankel Jewish Academy, Detroit; Austin Jewish Academy; Sager Solomon Schechter of Metropolitan Chicago; Melvyn J. Berman Hebrew Academy of Greater Washington and American Hebrew Academy, Greensboro, NC.

Graduates of the **Pardes Day School Educators Program – One-Year Certificate in Jewish Studies** are teaching at the Atlanta Jewish Academy, Chicagoland Jewish Day School, and the Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Boston.

Graduates of the **Pardes Experiential Educators Program – One-Year Certificate in Jewish Studies** are serving across the experiential Jewish spectrum: as Senior Jewish Educator at the Hillel of U.C. Berkeley; as Associate Director of Youth and Teen Engagement at Congregation Rodeph Sholom in New York City; as Director of Teen Education at Pittsburgh's Agency for Jewish Learning; and as Program and Engagement Director at San Francisco's The Kitchen.

Graduates of all PCJE programs join the **Pardes Educators Alumni Support Project**, and we are thrilled to welcome these talented and highly committed individuals to our educator community.

## NORTH AMERICA

In the past year Pardes significantly strengthened its presence in **North America**. Our faculty taught at Moishe House retreats and events (Pennsylvania, New York, Boston, California, Washington, DC, Chicago), at Limmuds (New York, Los Angeles, Boston, Miami, Chicago) and at many campuses, including NYU, Columbia/Barnard College, Princeton, Stern College, Arizona State, Berkeley, University of Miami, Harvard, Ohio State, Rutgers and University of Toronto.

In addition, faculty member **Yaffa Epstein (Kollel '03-'06, '13-'14)** is currently based in the U.S. and has lined up a packed teaching schedule for the year.

For the first time, Pardes partnered with the Silicon Valley Beit Midrash and Congregation Kol Emeth in Palo Alto, CA to hold a two-week program in June, bringing Pardes-style learning to the West Coast. Almost forty students participated and raved about their experience.

Participant Max Friedmann commented, "Before the program, I had not participated in Jewish learning since my Bar Mitzvah. I had been looking for an avenue back into Judaism, but going to Shabbat services felt awkward or like a chore. This was a beautiful re-entry. I had no idea that diving deeply into one page of Torah or Talmud for hours could be so fulfilling and spiritual. It was a turning point in my Jewish journey, and I am profoundly grateful."



Dean David Bernstein teaches a shiur in New York

## PARDES EXECUTIVE LEARNING SEMINAR



PELS participants visit Rav Kook's house

In June, over 60 executives and community leaders took part in the 17<sup>th</sup> **Pardes Executive Learning Seminar** with a powerful program exploring the works and life of Rav Kook.

First-time participant **Leah Lesch (PELS '14)**, a Senior Director for Edmonds.com in Los Angeles, was effusive about the program. "I have amassed so much knowledge in such a short time; I am bursting and have had the privilege of experiencing something truly exceptional."

The Executive Seminar runs twice a year, for five days – during the winter and summer – and those who missed it in June have another opportunity to study Rav Kook in late-December 2014. For the first time, the upcoming Winter 2014 seminar will include an optional pre-Seminar tour and Shabbaton. The Summer 2015 seminar will explore the Golden Age of Tzfat.

For more information and to book, visit [www.pardes.org.il/executive](http://www.pardes.org.il/executive).

## SUMMER PROGRAM



Summer students tour Jerusalem

In July, over 70 students from diverse backgrounds and ages came to study, tour, sing and experience the intensive, inspiring and magical three-week **Summer Program**. Amongst our student body, we had 10 Hillel professionals who went back to campuses to inspire others.

Students *kvelled* over their time in our beit midrash. "PHENOMENAL! I had no idea text study could be so eye-opening, meaningful and fun. I met great people and learned I want to keep learning," said **Lauren Rouff (Summer '14)**, Program Associate, Hillel Metro Detroit. "The Pardes program has been one of the most influential experiences I've had as an adult. The program is current, relevant and extremely useful for any application of our Jewish faith. For someone with very little formal Jewish education, this has been an excellent journey, giving shape to previously vague concepts," said **Janu Mendel (Summer '14)**, Engagement Associate, University of Miami Hillel. Dates for Summer 2015 are July 6-23.

## PARDES CENTER FOR JUDAISM & CONFLICT RESOLUTION (PCJCR)



In February an estimated 100,000 people worldwide, through 60 partner organizations across the religious and political spectrum, joined us in marking **9Adar: Jewish Day of Constructive Conflict**. Individuals, schools and communities commemorated the day in a variety of ways,

including text study, 'fasting' from destructive speech and professionally facilitated conversations on pressing and difficult subjects facing the Jewish world today. The 9<sup>th</sup> of Adar will be commemorated again between February 21-28, 2015. Visit [www.9adar.org](http://www.9adar.org) to get involved.

In addition, this year 12 U.S. Jewish middle schools are participating in the **Rodef Shalom School Program**, a joint venture with the Pardes Center for Jewish Educators, which offers curricular units that integrate classic rabbinic texts with contemporary conflict resolution theory and practice, as well as a certification program to become a "Rodef Shalom Certified School."

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION



Community Education Director Alex Israel

Last year the **Community Education Program** continued growing with increased enrollment and several new programs. Building upon successful morning classes, innovations included a new Thursday "lunch and learn" studying Parashat Hashavua. Wednesday evenings were dedicated to lectures by Menachem Leibtag, Levi Cooper, Jennie Rosenfeld, Gila Fine and Yael Ziegler, and the Hershendorfer Kantrowitz Brettler lectures given by Professor Marc Brettler. The popular Tour with Text course ended the year with a two-day trip to the Golan.

This year we have an exciting choice of classes in Midrash and Bible, Israeli Literature, Life-coaching, Rav Kook, Psalms, The changing world of Halakha & Gender and Jewish Prayer. The Community Education Program offers classes, lectures and tours for those visiting and living in Israel.

## VISITING SCHOLAR



Pardes is honored that **Rabbi Dr. Irving (Yitz) Greenberg** is our Distinguished Visiting Scholar for this academic year.

A long-time supporter of Pardes, Rabbi Greenberg's rich career encompasses his work as a congregational rabbi, a world-renowned

scholar and theologian, a uniquely influential author, and a beloved teacher who has profoundly affected the lives of thousands of students.

Rabbi Greenberg will be visiting Pardes several times this year and is teaching the Pardes Kollel (long a dream of Pardes Director Danny Landes, who has studied and worked with Rabbi Greenberg for over forty years). He addressed the entire student body in Shiur Klali in October and will be delivering a public lecture later in the year.

Rabbi Greenberg is the founder of multiple institutions at the center of American Jewish life, including CLAL, SAR Academy and the Jewish Life Network/Steinhardt Foundation. He also was a leader in the movement for Soviet Jewry. His life's work reflects a deep commitment to diversity, tolerance, openness and Jewish learning - the very same ideals on which Pardes has been built.

## Elmad: Pardes's digital library

[www.elmad.pardes.org](http://www.elmad.pardes.org)

**Original  
podcasts,  
words of  
Torah and  
recorded  
lectures**

Follow us on:



# Alumni check-in



## INSIGHTFUL RESEARCH

In September 2014, after returning to Toronto from a year at Pardes with his new wife **Annie Matan-Gilbert (Year '09-'10, PEEP '12-'13)**, **Stuart Matan-Lithwick (Year '12-'13)** began a PhD program at the University of Toronto, studying the cellular causes of hereditary blindness. Getting the opportunity to study blindness at the graduate level was and continues to be an incredible gift for Stuart, because he himself is a patient with hereditary blindness, diagnosed during a routine visit to the optometrist's office in 2003.

Before Pardes, Stuart worked as a high school science teacher. "I was adept at sharing my passion for science with my students and helping them to make sense of the world," he says. "However, I had not engaged in rigorous academic study in a long time and Pardes gave me the opportunity to study again in significant depth."

Although Stuart had been an active Torah reader at synagogues across Toronto for almost 12 years, at Pardes for the first time he truly understood and engaged with the text he was chanting. "By studying with partners, my ability to communicate effectively, listen intently and think critically, grew faster than it had ever before in any academic institution."

Most of all, leaving Toronto and spending a year at Pardes enabled Stuart to listen to his heart. "I needed to discover that while teaching was something I was good at, even passionate about, I loved and deeply missed being a scientist."

Midway through his year at Pardes, Stuart applied to the University of Toronto and contacted a scientist whom he had met through the blindness community. She was working on a treatment for hereditary blindness using cell transplantation and was looking for a PhD student. Although he had not worked in a laboratory in 10 years and was losing his sight, she was willing to put her faith in him.

"I firmly believe that my year at Pardes made the dream that I am now living possible. I had to have the courage to leave my previous life behind, even just for one year, to look inside myself and discover my calling."

## A HEALTHY TUNE



**Patricia Hellman Gibbs (PELS '12, '13)** describes herself as "a physician and student of sacred text." She is also a medical activist, Jewish communal leader, mother of five, accomplished downhill skier and bluegrass musician.

Patricia co-founded the San Francisco Free Clinic, where she is the attending physician. The clinic provides primary care to individuals without health insurance, and since its opening in 1994 has seen over 100,000 patients. Her work, she says, is "inspired by the work of the Medieval 'Prince of Physicians,' Rabbi Moses Maimonides." Like Patricia, Maimonides treated the needy for free. She is currently researching other ideas expressed in his Commentary on the First Aphorism of Hippocrates, envisioning how this treatise might help us address the deficiencies of America's medical system.

Patricia is a Wexner Heritage alumna and recently completed her master's degree in Jewish Studies at the Graduate Theological Union. She has attended two Pardes Executive Learning Seminars, "an outstanding learning opportunity for someone like me, who has a deep interest in Jewish text study but cannot spare a lot of time away," Patricia says.

Before she discovered medicine and Jewish texts, Patricia excelled at athletics, representing the U.S. internationally as part of the 1976-78 U.S. Alpine Ski Team.

As for the bluegrass, Patricia's father, Warren Hellman z"l, generously founded a free bluegrass festival in San Francisco in 2000 that now attracts close to a million patrons each year and features well-known artists, as well as a Maimonidean physician who plays guitar and sings with her family.

Above: Tricia performing with her son, Matt Gibbs  
Below: Tricia practicing with her father, age nine





## ONE WISH

Joseph Shamash (Year '12, PCJE '12-'13) calls himself a Jewish Persian Cowboy. Born in Dallas, Texas to Iranian immigrants, he has lived most of his adult life in Los Angeles, where he graduated from UCLA. Before coming to Pardes, Joseph worked in the entertainment industry as an editor, producer and research manager for major media outlets, such as Fox Sports, AOL and DIRECTV.

During his time at Pardes, he created the One Wish Project, combining his love of film and education. Joseph describes the project as a "documentary film and education initiative that seeks to create a more unified and connected world by giving voice to the marginalized individuals we have come to think of as 'other.'"

In the short film "One Wish Jerusalem," Joseph and his team ask Jerusalemites what their one wish would be. They uncover some meaningful and diverse answers, highlighting the complexity of this region. Joseph's second film in the project, "One Wish for Iran, Love Israel," shows the shared humanity of Israelis and Iranians. The third film, "One Wish Skid Row," visits the streets of Los Angeles known for their homeless population to hear the stories of people living there. Among the Project's many accolades, "One Wish for Iran, Love Israel" won Best Concept, Best Directing and First Place in the Short Documentary category at the Los Angeles New Wave International Film Festival.

Joseph is also pursuing his rabbinical ordination and Masters of Arts in Education at American Jewish University.

## LEAP OF FAITH

Andy Shapiro (PEP, Kollel '01-'03) and Emily Katz (Summer Faculty) met while Andy was studying in the Educators Program and the Kollel, and Emily was studying in the Melton Senior Educators Program. They moved to Atlanta to take up posts at the Weber School and the Atlanta JCC. "We had a good community of friends, but never quite felt at home, motivating us to create something of our own," Andy says.

Andy and Emily helped start Pardes Atlanta, which brought Pardes-style learning to the Atlanta community. After two years and two daughters, Andy accepted a job at the Jewish Community High School in San Francisco. Emily started a new adult education program at Temple Emanu-El. "It was a leap of faith," Emily says. "We moved to San Francisco's Mission District to join a fledgling independent minyan."

"Our house was centrally located," Andy adds, "and became the informal gathering place for the minyan. We hosted Sukkot davening, large Passover seders and other events. Emily co-chaired the 2nd Independent Minyan Conference. The Mission District became a destination for serious, young, San Francisco Jewry."

Five years later the Shapiro Katzes decided to settle in Beer Sheva. Once again, they sought like-minded people to create an independent, partnership minyan. "We are now over 35 families. We meet every week, and have learning and social events," Emily says.

Andy concludes, "The kind of community we found at Pardes was unique, and we've been searching for something like that ever since. But we also left Jerusalem with the tools, wherewithal, and passion to start new communities elsewhere."



## EXPERIENCING EDUCATION

"You don't have to run to rabbinical school to be the Jewish professional you want to be," insists Leah Kahn (PEEP '13) who is the Senior Jewish Educator at Berkeley Hillel.

Leah started her Jewish career in 2005 as Director of Engagement at the University of Chicago Hillel. She worked closely with the Executive Director to rejuvenate Hillel's presence on campus and built a successful Birthright Israel program.

During this time Leah also completed a Masters in Jewish Professional Studies and Experiential Education at Spertus. Upon finishing, she realized she wanted additional traditional text-based training and she did not want to become a rabbi. With this in mind, Leah found her way to Pardes.

Meanwhile, the Pardes Experiential Educators Program, a perfect match for Leah's interests, was in its embryonic stages. She became the program's pilot student, working closely with faculty and staff to help craft the curriculum and coursework that would later define the program after its formal launch.

"Pardes prepared me for the exact job that I wanted," Leah says. "The mentorship from the teachers was really special. The faculty and professionals were really invested in my growth, and to have those contacts while back in the field is invaluable."

While in Jerusalem, Leah, a trained dancer, joined the Jerusalem-based Merchav Mechol dance ensemble. She performed throughout Jerusalem and hopes to continue dancing in Berkeley.

## LIFE AS A RABBI



Jill Levy (Year '99-'00, Fellow '00-'01) recently moved back to her hometown of Houston, TX, with her husband Matt and their children Nava and Miri, to serve as the Director of the Center for Jewish Living and Learning at the Evelyn Rubenstein JCC of Houston.

Shabbat blessings at home on Friday night are often Jill's fifth Shabbat service of the day. A typical Friday at the Houston JCC may mean Shabbat activities at the Early Childhood Center in the morning, then off to tennis camp to meet with campers, a program for seniors during lunch, and then heading over to the main camps in the afternoon. This is just one small example of life as a rabbi at a JCC.

Since her move, Jill has enjoyed the diversity of life as a JCC rabbi. This fall, she is teaching two classes for the Florence Melton School of Adult Learning, overseeing the annual Rice University Jewish Studies Lecture Series, leading Shabbat and Holiday programs for early childhood families, and competing in her first triathlon for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Jill says, "Working, teaching and programming in a multi-denominational environment feels so natural to me after attending Pardes. At the JCC I help build communities with everyone, regardless of background or affiliation." She says she feels continually blessed to be a part of the Pardes community, where she didn't gain friends for just a year, but for a lifetime.

## #justafewmore #soproudfouralum

Cara Abrams-Simonton (PEP '12-'14) received the Professor J.K. Miklitzanski Fund Prize for a career in Jewish education from Hebrew College. Cara is teaching at the Ronald C. Wornick Jewish Day School, Foster City, CA.

Sydni Adler (Year '12-'13, Fellows '13-'14) began at the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies.

Nili Auerbach (Year '04-'05, PEP '05-'07) is the Director of Admissions & Marketing for the Lookstein Virtual Jewish Library.

Shira Berenson (Summer '07, Year '08-'09) is Western Director of Organizational Advancement at Moishe House.

Kate Briggs (Part-Time '04) is the Rabbi of Glasgow Reform Synagogue in Scotland.

Hannah Elovitz (Year '13-'14) is working as a Communications Associate at Hillel International in Washington, D.C.

Ben Friedman (Year '13-'14) won the "Golden Blaster" for best short screenplay at the National Irish Science Fiction Film Awards and received a grant to start production.

David Harris-Gershon (Year '00-'01, PEP '01-'03) received the 2014 Grinspoon Award for Excellence in Jewish Education.

Carolyn Gerech (PEEP '13-'14) is working for the Agency for Jewish Learning in Pittsburgh.

Rachel Isaacs (Part-Time '06) was named one of America's Most Inspiring Rabbis by the Forward.

Heather Kantrowitz (PEP '12-'14) is teaching at the Austin Jewish Academy.

Lonnie Kleinman (Year '13-'14) is the Community Engagement Fellow at the Institute for Southern Jewish life.

Michal Kohane (Summer '13) launched Rejewvenate.info serving Jews over 40.

Hannah Laner (Year '10-'11) received rabbinic ordination from ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal.

Phil Levin (Year '13-'14) began working for PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Sarah Levy (Year '07-'08, PEP '08-'10) received her EdD from Northeastern University and Hebrew College.

Rebecca Menashy (Year '13-'14) began her specialization in family medicine in the UK.

Jessica Minnen (Year '05-'06) was included in the Jewish Week's "36 Under 36."

Tobias Moss (Year '13-'14) began rabbinical school at Hebrew Union College.

Alicia Jo Rabins (Year '98-'99, Fellow '99-'00) received the Covenant Signature Grant.

Mordechai Rackover (PEP '02-'04) is the Director of Education at Camp Yavneh.

Ben Schneider (Year '13-'14) began a PhD in Chemistry and Chemical Biology at Harvard University.

Wendy Siegel (Year '08-'09) is the cantor at Temple Sinai of Cranston, Rhode Island.

Sam Stern (Year '13-'14) is teaching for Teach for America.

# Observing Shmitta in Modern Times

Three faculty members discuss the challenges of observing shmitta this year in Israel.

*"In the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath of complete rest, a sabbath of the Lord: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard...You shall count off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years...and you shall hallow the fiftieth year. You shall proclaim release throughout the land for all of its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: each of you shall return to his holdings and each of you shall return to his family...but the land must not be sold beyond reclaim for the land is Mine, you are but strangers resident with me."*



**Meesh Hammer-Kossoy:** This year there are many inspiring modern environmental-social initiatives around *shmitta* (sabbatical year.) At the beginning of the year, my Social Justice Track visited Rabbi Yedida Sinclair at Energia Global, one of the leading global solar energy providers. It

was exciting to hear about how he and Israeli society have found special ways to commemorate the shmitta: government attempts to annul debts of some of the poorest families, bans on fishing to allow the over-fished Kinneret to repopulate, initiatives to open private spaces for public Torah study or yoga classes, attempts to limit company email to the hours of 7am-7pm. These seem like inspiring ways to get at core values of shmitta – narrowing growing social gaps, properly utilizing our national resources, stepping back from unending acquisition and making time to rejuvenate. However, looking at these verses, I wonder if we aren't missing something essential. What strikes me is the centrality of the Land so clearly missing in these initiatives. Simultaneously, the agricultural aspects of shmitta seem to be fraught with avoidance.

**Zvi Hirschfield:** I have questions about the social justice push connected to shmitta. First, as you mention, what about the Land of Israel? A big message of shmitta is appreciating the *kedusha* (holiness) of the Land. For me this is another way of connecting to God and deepening

my relationship with Him. Just as Heschel reminds us to meet God in time, perhaps shmitta reminds us to find God in the Land. It appears to push us in a direction that is different from social justice. Also, what happens when halakhic limitations negate social justice needs? When mehadrin means buying produce from outside the land and putting Israeli farmers at risk, isn't there a problem?


**Leah Rosenthal:** I agree with you Meesh. Once again, we are confronting the distance that exists between our primarily urban lives, and the basic recognition of our dependence on and connection with the physical land that sustains us, even now, with much of our needs and livelihood – and it seems that shmitta would be a time to return to that awareness. However, for me the presence and recognition of the Master of the Universe, God, is absent. The verses emphasize land and God equally. Shmitta demonstrates the limits of mankind's ownership of the world (not responsibility!) Like Shabbat, shmitta re-orientates us in the world and gives expression to God's presence in ways not manifested during other times. Shmitta without God may be inspiring and meaningful, but that is something significantly different from what is described in the Torah.

**Meesh:** Those are powerful points - the centrality of God, shmitta as a social justice mitzvah, and what happens when technical observance of halakha seems to miss Torah values.

Zvi, I hear you that shmitta may not be reduced to social justice, but I do think that it embodies three core social justice values: the humble place of humans in the universe; inclusiveness; and distributive justice (i.e. reducing social gaps).

Beginning with Leah's point that shmitta is about centralizing God and temporarily sidelining human beings. Lynn White famously inaugurated the tension between the environmental movement and what he called "Judeo-Christian theology," by blaming the Torah





for empowering us to dominate the world (Gen. 1:28) and thus anchoring human greed, acquisition, and abuse of the world in Divine right. Shmitta seems to counter his charge by reminding us that domination must be balanced by the articulated goal of Adam's placement in the Garden in Genesis 2:15, "to serve and preserve it." (Jeremy Benstein's catchy translation)

Similarly, the justice value of reducing social gaps is actualized during shmitta by releasing debts and giving everyone equal access to land and its produce. In the hyper-shmitta Jubilee year, this is achieved on a deeper level when everyone returns to their ancestral plot.

Finally, inclusivity is exhibited first and foremost in the way everyone rests, studies Torah and reflects over the course of the year. This is highlighted in the hakeel commandment which Ibn Ezra suggests is a kind of "closing ceremony" to the shmitta year. Everyone, man, woman and child, must unite for the public Torah reading because they all participated in their year of learning. Finally, while holiness usually manifests itself by restricted access (i.e., sacrificial foods or terumah), in shmitta it is manifested in its universal availability. So I don't think there is any question that social justice is at the core of shmitta, and I call on our rabbis to determine modern halakhic practice in a way that aligns not just with technical observance but also reflects values of humility, distributive justice and inclusivity.



**Leah:** I too am wondering about some of the halakhic challenges of shmitta, in relation to making halakhic decisions. Should the focus be on the individual (how can I best keep the shmitta, its practical aspects and its theological and ethical content) or on the community (how will we, as a synagogue, neighborhood, school, etc.

apply these values) or on a full national scale (what shall we, as a country, army, modern economy and participant in international relations be doing during this year)? It does seem that the same halakhic questions require different answers when relating to different scales. Can the *otzar bet din* (Rabbinic distribution of seventh year produce) be a viable solution on the national

scale? Does the *heiter mechira* (seventh year produce grown on land sold to non-Jews) dull the personal experience? Perhaps the full challenge of living Torah and halakha is simultaneously observing shmitta on a local and national scale.



**Zvi:** Meesh, I find your theme of inclusivity ironic given the effects of shmitta observance in Israel today. While I agree that our textual tradition endorses social cohesion and shared responsibility, I find it striking how the observance of these laws can generate the opposite effect.

Suddenly, fruits and vegetables, which in normal years are foods we of different standards of observance can share, have become minefields within religious communities. We are struggling to figure out our own standards in terms of heter mechira, otzar bet din, nochri, etc. Not only must we confront our personal halakhic dilemmas, we must consider the social and communal impact. What do I do if my standards are not accepted by friends and family? Or dining with others whose standards are different from my own? How can otzar bet din be mehadrin if the Jerusalem Rabbinat will not call it mehadrin? How is it possible that in the shuk there are products endorsed by the Chief Rabbinat (Heter Mechira) that the Jerusalem Rabbinat will not endorse?

I am concerned that the ritual observance of this framework will undo all the positive social initiatives you mention. What comment is this making about the tension between halakha and personal meaning and growth? It's one level of problem if there is a disconnect. I believe there is whole additional problem if they work in cross-purposes to one another.

*Meesh Hammer-Kossoy is the Director of the Pardes Social Justice Track and also teaches Talmud.*

*Zvi Hirschfield teaches Talmud, Halakha and Jewish Thought.*

*Leah Rosenthal teaches Talmud and Talmudic Personalities.*



# How to Forgive According to Rabbi Moshe Cordovero

by James Jacobson-Maisels



**F**orgiveness is a year round challenge. Despite our intentions and hopes, we may find that forgiveness - both requesting it for ourselves and granting it to others - is much harder than we imagine.

Theoretically we are committed to forgiving others, but in reality we are more interested in maintaining our anger towards others than willing to let go of the resentment and blame we are carrying around. Even when we genuinely want to release our anger we can find it extremely difficult to do so, our mind continually returning to patterns of blame and recounting the story of how the person in question hurt us or acted unjustly.

Rabbi Moshe Cordovero and Rabbi Isaac Luria, the leading kabbalists from sixteenth-century Tzfat, describe various strategies by which we might encourage ourselves to forgive by modeling ourselves on God's forgiveness and forbearance. Based on these teachings in R. Cordovero's *Tomer Devorah* and R. Luria's *Gate of the Holy Spirit* and mindfulness meditation practice, here are a few techniques that can help us open the heart to forgiveness:

1. Notice that the anger is hurting you. Anger is painful and unpleasant. When you are caught in anger you suffer. R. Luria describes anger as a demon tearing us in two, making us feel possessed by a foreign spirit. Does this feel familiar? We lose ourselves, we lose who we really are. It causes us to act in ways of which we are not proud. By noticing that loss, the pain of anger (the unpleasant sensation in the body), and how anger leads us astray, we can notice that the anger is actually hurting us and develop the intention to let it go.
2. Recall the good qualities of the person. Dwelling on the good qualities of the person, despite the damage they might have done, makes it easier for us to forgive them, says R. Cordovero.

3. Picture the person you wish to forgive as a baby, with the knowledge that every baby is innocent and full of good.
4. Reflect on times when you have been forgiven and how wonderful it felt, the release, freedom and gratitude which can arise from an act of forgiveness. Use that as a motivation to forgive.
5. Stop dwelling on the hurt, nursing it and retelling the story in your mind. Rather, focus on the bodily-felt sensation of the hurt mindfully, accept it, and then notice how the anger and resentment can dissipate.
6. Notice that you are not separate from the person with whom you are angry. As R. Cordovero puts it, we are all, literally, intertwined with each other. We too have acted in damaging and mistaken ways. If we pay attention, we can notice that we have done so because we have been caught in anger, judgment, defensiveness, fear, anxiety, selfishness and the like. The same is true of the person who hurt us. He or she is not out to get us, but is simply trapped in his or her own difficulties and acting from those difficulties with a lack of wisdom and compassion. If we recognize that we have been in the same place and acted from similar mistaken sources, we can develop understanding and compassion for the person and the forgiveness we are seeking.

If we reflect in these ways, R. Cordovero tells us, it can become easier to imitate the Divine and grant the healing of forgiveness to those who have harmed us, whether intentionally or not. It provides the opportunity for our hearts to open to another and to respond with love and compassion rather than distance, anger or blame. It is a challenging process, but a crucial step in our ongoing Jewish quest to "walk in His ways," becoming more divine with every step.

James Jacobson-Maisels (Kollel '01-'04) teaches Jewish Thought and Meditation. He also directs the Pardes Spirituality Retreat.



## Ukraine Beyond the Headlines: A Personal Story by Jeremy Borovitz

**O**n arriving in Ukraine in March 2010, I was as far away from Judaism as I had ever been. A Solomon Schechter student and the son of a Reform rabbi, being Jewish was an inherent part of my character. So part of my impetus for joining the Peace Corps was that it was very un-Jewish, it was American. Being a rabbi's son in this environment would hold much less meaning and pressure. Or so I thought.

I had been in a small village of 600 people for a few months before I heard about the cemetery. I hadn't kept my Judaism a secret, but after I finished helping my neighbor dig up his potatoes, a passer-by casually mentioned how close we were to the old Jewish cemetery. Old? Jewish? Somewhere in the midst of building my outdoor toilet and getting water from the well, I had failed to realize that I had been living in a former *shtetl*.

Jews lived in Boyarka since the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. By 1900, 700 Jews, then 40% of the village, had built a prosperous trading center and *shtetl*. In 1919-1920, a series of pogroms killed hundreds and caused most of the remaining Jews to flee. The great Ukrainian famine, the Holocaust and Soviet repressions wiped out any traces of Jews, until a son of a rabbi from New Jersey found the old cemetery, and began heading there every week to say *kaddish*.

It's hard to explain why I felt compelled to pray for the souls of these Jews, and harder still to describe why I began lighting Shabbat candles in the window of my small Ukrainian cottage. Then out came the *siddur*, which had belonged to my great grandfather, then the *tefillin* my father insisted I bring on my journey. Then the phone turned off on Shabbat and the computer too, and I started wearing the fringes under my clothes. One day, two years into my Peace Corps service, I looked into the mirror and saw a *frum* Jew looking back at me.

My first day at Pardes was beautiful. There aren't many places where after a few hours you already feel like a part of the community. But leaving Ukraine didn't prove easy. I found myself referring to my experience in almost every conversation and relating Talmud and Tanakh to long-forgotten Jewish customs and

memorials I had discovered.

When the protests in Ukraine began last year, my nostalgia multiplied and I was pained by the pictures I saw of students and journalists beaten by their government. At the first opportunity, in early December, I flew to Kiev, a ritual that was observed nearly every month after that.

On February 20, when dozens of the protesters were being sniped on the street, I broke down. In the Pardes dining-room during community lunch, I was unable to gather myself together to read a Psalm for those who had been shot and killed. But the community at Pardes stepped up, as they always do, and as I sat with my head in my hands, they prayed around me.

Over the next few months, I tried to do everything I could for Ukraine, its people and its Jewish community, meager as my efforts may have been. I organized a Megillat Esther reading via Skype by Pardes students for the Jews of Crimea after all of the rabbis had fled. I conducted a series of shabbatons for young Jews in Kiev. And when a group of non-Jewish injured protesters was sent to Israel, I helped as much as I could. I translated documents, I visited the injured and I made a whole new group of friends: Russian-speaking Jews in Israel who devoted their time, money and energy to taking care of more than a dozen people and raising the funds necessary for their care.

It may seem strange, this obsession with Ukraine, this addiction to a land that hasn't always been kind to our ancestors. But it was in Ukraine that I found not only myself but also my *neshama*, my Jewish soul. And it is at Pardes where this soul has been allowed to develop and grow, to learn, to become enriched not only by my teachers but also by the community as a whole.

The situation in Ukraine is still dire, but I know that when I go to squares or embassies to stand with the people of Ukraine, I have a whole community in Jerusalem standing behind me.

Jeremy Borovitz (Year '13-'14, PEEP '14-'15) is currently a student in the Pardes Experiential Educators Program.

# Thank you

Pardes would like to thank all of its generous Annual Campaign donors. Your contributions strengthen the Jewish people by providing student scholarships and organizational support that enable students to have a life-changing experience studying Jewish texts in Jerusalem and across the world.

## Director's Circle: Jerusalem Society (\$100,000 +)

The AVI CHAI Foundation  
The Crown Family  
Paula and Jerry Gottesman  
Hellman Foundation  
Jim Joseph Foundation  
Naomi and Peter Neustadter  
The David S. and Karen A. Shapira Foundation  
The Alexander Soros Foundation  
Moshe and Libby Werthan

## Director's Circle: Founder (\$50,000 +)

Abbie and Moshe Greenberg  
The Marcus Foundation, Inc.

## Director's Circle: Guardian (\$25,000 +)

Anonymous  
Anonymous  
The Robert M. Beren Foundation  
Robert Immerman  
Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Awards Committee  
Righteous Persons Foundation  
Rose Family Fund

## Director's Circle: Builder (\$10,000 +)

Debbie and Chaim Abramowitz  
Alan and Valerie Adler  
Jean and Andrew Balcombe  
Thomas and Jill Barad  
Giti and Jack Bendheim  
The Benmosche Family  
Russell Berrie Foundation  
Charlotte and Morry Blumenfeld  
Yisrael Campbell  
Tabby and John Corre  
Colleen and Richard Fain  
Nadia Glenville  
Paz and Rick Goldberg  
Francine M. Gordon  
Jesselson Family  
Bryan Kocen and Gail Gordon Kocen  
Karev Initiatives in Education  
Darell and Elizabeth Krasnoff  
David Kuney and Cathy Simon

Mark and Gloria Levenfus  
Ezra and Batya Levin  
Janet and David J. Lonner  
Juan Mesa-Freydell and Catherine Stoll  
Jay and Huti Pomrenze  
Charles A. and Ilana Horowitz Ratner  
Michael Rosenzweig and Shelli Bank  
Audrey Kaplan Scher and Harvey Scher  
Faygie and Phil Schwartz  
Deborah Shapira and Barry Stern  
Phil Shaw and Shira Gordon  
Alan B. Slifka Foundation  
Yael Taubman  
Jan S. Tuttleman Family Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation  
Irving S. Weinstein Philanthropic Fund  
Della Worms  
Marilyn Ziering

## Director's Circle: Partner (\$5,000 +)

Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Daniel Adler and Jenna Park Adler  
Susan and Aron Ain  
Edward and Marlin Barad  
David Barish  
Rabbi Neal Borovitz and Ann Appelbaum  
Sidney Brettler  
Capital Counsel  
Joshua Chadajo and Natalie Salem  
Michael and Lilach Naama Cummings  
Ruth Cummings and Rafi Lehman  
Carole Daman  
Geraldine Ellman  
Cheri Fox  
Adam and Lynne Weinstein Frank  
Jennifer Bayer-Gamulka and Daniel Gamulka  
Rachel Goldberg and Jonathan Polin  
Allison and Ned Gordon  
Dr. Monica Handler Penner and Ami Gires  
Deborah and Ed Heyman  
J. E. Joseph Charitable Trust  
Joseph Family Philanthropic Fund of the Jewish Federation of Greater Miami  
Daniel and Ruth Krasner  
Richard and Leora Linhart  
Barbara and David Messer  
Avi and Wanda Peretz  
Vicki and Gary Phillips  
Alan and Elisa Pines  
Lowell and Julie Potiker Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation  
Michael and Daniela Rader  
Rocker Family Foundation

Joanne and Adam Rose  
Nancy Rose and John Kimmelman  
Robert Russell Memorial Foundation  
Abraham Sacks  
K C Shasha Charitable Foundation  
Neil Schechter and Marjorie Corwin  
Joan B. Shayne  
Leslie Silver  
Ellen Singer z"l and Don Simkin  
Samuel and Helene Soref Foundation  
Betty and Bernard Werthan Foundation  
Whizin Philanthropic Fund

## Scholar (\$2,500 +)

Anonymous (2)  
Anonymous  
Hartlene and Henry Appelman  
The June Baumgardner Gelbart Foundation  
Robin and Allen Bodner  
Nancy and David Brent  
Suzi Brozman  
Jack Chester Foundation  
David Dangoor  
Deborah Denenberg  
Kenneth DuBow  
Ami-Da Institute/Rabbi Leonid Feldman  
The Fraiman Foundation  
Rabbi David Gedzelman and Judith Turner  
Caron and Steven Gelles  
Dr. Robert Gerwin and Ruth Assal  
Solomon and Julia z"l Green  
Dr. Jan Hackman  
Jack Norman Halpern  
Joseph and Anita Hara  
Hodie Kahn  
Kelly and Harold Kalick  
Ronald and Rochelle Karp  
Luis and Lee Lainer  
Bryna and Joshua Landes  
Rabbi Daniel Landes and Sheryl Robbin  
Chana and Yossi Lerba  
Nathan and Shari Lindenbaum  
Dan Rabinovitch and Liann Granovsky  
Dubbi and Elisabeth Rabinowitz  
Renee Rabinowitz  
Rabbi Joshua Ratner  
Rae Ringel and Amos Hochstein  
Shai and Judy Robkin  
Rachel Seiden  
Joseph and Marla Shafran  
The Nathan and Fanny Shafran Foundation

The Daniel and Barbara Shapira Philanthropic Fund of the UJF Foundation  
Benjamin Silberman  
Toby Ticktin Back  
TLK Foundation  
Jennifer and Leslie Wagner  
Dr. John and Julie Watkins  
Meyer Zeifman

## Fellow/Alumni Leadership Minyan (\$1,000 +)

Anonymous (3)  
Anonymous  
Ruth and Michael Adler  
Rise Ain  
Alper Family Philanthropic Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation  
Andi and David Arnovitz  
Rabbi Marc and Jill Baker  
Robert Baum  
The Marla Bennett Memorial Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation  
Colin Berkley and Tamara Litwin  
Ricki and Dr. David I. Bernstein  
Richard Biller  
Dr. Richard and Merry Bodziner  
Jamie and Carrie Bornstein  
Shira and Jared Boschan  
Mark S. Cohen and Roberta Weinstein Cohen  
Neil and Rachel Cohen  
Shira and Ariel Cohen Goldberg  
Rabbi Darryl Crystal  
Eunice and Norm Denenberg  
Barbara and Judah Elstein  
Beth and Andrew Elster  
Paulayne and Arthur Epstein  
Stephen Feingold  
Hersh Felson  
Charles and Aviva Freedman  
Murray and Lynn Friedman  
Miriam and William Galston  
Dorothy and Albert Gellman  
Barbara Gochberg and Steven Pretsfelder  
David and Amanda (Katz) Goldblatt  
Gary and Cari Gross  
Larry and Linda Gross  
Robert and Dara Grossman  
Stephen Grynberg and Susan Winfield  
Michael and Eva Hammelberger  
Dr. Meesh and Yoni Hammer-Kossoy  
Bruce and Susan Heitler  
Rabbi Hayim Herring and Terri Krivosha  
Jordan and Anne Herzberg  
Greg and Brett Heyman  
Steven and Ellen Hirsch

Maasha and Zvi Inbar  
The Panama Street Fund  
Jewish Federation of Nashville and  
Middle Tennessee

Abby Joseph Cohen and David Cohen  
Isadore and Yetta Jashowitz Charitable  
Foundation

Jerome Kaplan/Kaplan Family Charitable  
Trust

Debbie Kapp

Larry and Josie Kluger

David and Faye Landes

Wayne and Phyllis Lazarus

Dr. Brian Lester and Shirah Rosin

Irwin Levin

Michael Levy

Dr. Russell Linden and Ms. Jacqueline  
Lichtman/The Samuel and Evelyn Linden  
Scholarship Fund

The Lipton Family

Sacha Litman

Sheldon and Diana Lutz

Frank and Virginia Maas

Ilene and David Nechamkin

Elliott Oshry

Ann and Jeremy Pava

Noa and Joseph Perez

Sherwin and Shoni Pomerantz

Shifra and Stephen Pride Raffel

Elliott Rebhun

Sharon Reiss-Baker and Tom Baker

Carmen Ringelmann

Paul and Sheri Robbins

Sharon and Russell Roberts

Donald & Sylvia Robinson Family  
Foundation

Leona Z. Rosenberg

Rodney and Lynne Rosenblum

Shep and Shari Rosenman

Randy Ross and Jill Smith

Valerie Salkin

Steven and Sheira Schacter

Matthew and Shirley Schein

Ruth and David Schreiber

Jeremy Shapira

Michael Simon and Dr. Claire Sufrin

Suzanne and Max Singer

Scott Soloway

Robert Stark and Marla Comet Stark

Michael and Rachel Stein

Milton and Miriam Waldbaum Family  
Foundation

Dorith and Mark Weinbaum

Drs. Tova and Joel Weinberg

Jeremy Werthan

Melissa Werthan

Nancy Werthan

Drs. Barry and Ruth Wexler

Arnee R. and Walter A. Winshall

Musa and Lika Yenni

Dr. Shelley and Ari Zak

Patti Zetlin

Fred Zimmerman and Sharon Bell

Havruta Partner  
(\$500 +)

Anonymous (3)

Anonymous

Marjorie Abend-Wein and Joel Wein

Judith Asher

Alison and Edward Bermant

Robert Blum and Sarah Rindner

David Brown

Dr. Iwona Burzynska

Drs. Shai and Rebecca Cherry

Nina and Charles Cohen

Philip H. Cohen and Susan Rudd Cohen

Michael Doppelt

Rabbi Lyle Fishman and Debra Rosenman

Phyllis Shapiro and Martin Flashner

Mark Freedman and Leslie Klein

Richard Friedman and Erica Raphael

Sheila and Dr. Alan Friedman

Sarah Gershman-Silverberg and Daniel  
Silverberg

Ayelet Rosen and Michael Gillis

Andrew Ginsberg

Bruce Goldberger and Esther Sperber

Stephanie Green and Ezekiel Vanderhoek

Dr. Debra and Martin Greenberg

Helen Harkaspi

Graham Hoffman

Thomas and Nissa Johanix

Caroline and Kevin Kelly

Susan and Edward Kopelowitz

Bob Korda

Dr. Seth Krosner and Phil Johnson

Samantha Kur and Evan Hochberg

Lee Lasher

Kim Lerner

Maggie and David Lissy

Avivah Litan

Steven Mazer

Michael and Carol Mittel

Cheston and Lara Mizel

Henry and Maureen Molot

Rabbi Leon A. Morris and Dasee  
Berkowitz

Libby Novack

Henry Rabinowitz

Joseph and Eliane Rackman

Sarah Rubinstein

Miriam and Daniel Scharf

Marvin and Sandra Schottland

Michael Shibley and Carol Soble

Jack and Ferne z"l Skiba

Michael and Elizabeth Soroudi

Alina Spaulding

Eddie and Ava Sterngold

Matthew and Jean Thomas

Meredith Trauner

Sivie and Nahum Twersky

Dr. Michael Weingart

Michael and Helen Werthan

Toni and Peter Wiseburgh

Sarah and Avi Zollman

Friend  
(\$180 +)

Anonymous (6)

Anonymous (5)

Molly and Stanley Abramowitz

Maury and Beverly Alcheck

Peter Alter

Adam Levine

Shelley and Steve z"l Baker

Rabbi Michael Balinsky

Albert and Brenda Banker

Philip and Pessy Baskin

Rabbi Gordon and Dina Bernat-Kunin

Rabbi Josh Feigelson and Natalie Blitt

Jody and Brian Blum

Michael and Roberta Bornstein

Jessica Botwinick

Rabbi Sara and Hyim Brandes

Elise Braverman-Plotkin and Shalom  
Plotkin

Daniel Brill

Harvey and Marsha Brin

Jeremy Brochin and Rabbi Reena

Spicehandler

Dr. Melvin and Barbara Bubrick

Jay Chaskes

Daniel Chiat

Vivienne Cohen

Lisa and Jason Colton

Gali Cooks and Keren Rosenbaum-Cooks

Sarah and Rabbi Levi Cooper

Chaim and Rebecca Cutler

Robert Dale

Richard and Sarah Dine

Kirk and Barbara Dornbush

Dr. Howard Ellis

Jenna and Samuel Englander

Helena Fantl

Marissa Feinman

Dr. Reed and Jody Ference

Rabbi Michelle Fisher

Evan Fisher

Courtney and Robert Fishman

Avi and Elina Flax

Tracy Fogel

Jason Freed

Herbert and Marianne Friedman  
Family Philanthropic Fund of the  
Jewish Community Foundation

Dr. Jonathan Fuchs and Dr. Larry Rand

Bruce and Shelley Gaynes

Diana Geller

Matthew Gershuny

Dr. Abigail Gilbert and Ron Skupsky

Rabbi Laura Gold

The Goldberg Family Philanthropic  
Fund of the United Jewish Federation  
Foundation

Raina Goldberg

Roberta Golden

Irving and Janice Goldfein

Rebecca Bardach and Eliot Goldstein

Michael and Paula Gottlieb

Cassandra and Sheldon Gottlieb

David and Diane Gould

Dr. Larry z"l and Dr. Wendy Goulston  
Heligman

Rabbi Yitz and Blu Greenberg

Judye Groner

Howard Haas

Helga Hanelin

Barry and Ruth Herman

Noa Heyman and Tim Gore

Sanford and Thelma Hochberg

Kenneth and Janet Hoffman

## Remember. Honor. Celebrate.

Commemorate a significant  
occasion by sponsoring  
a Day of Learning at Pardes.

For more information  
contact [jamief@pardes.org](mailto:jamief@pardes.org).

This listing includes Annual Campaign donations to Pardes from September 2013 through the first week of September 2014. If one or both donors are alumni, they are listed in red. We apologize for misspellings, omissions and other mistakes. Please send corrections to [info@pardes.org](mailto:info@pardes.org).

Jess and Naomi Hordes  
 Emily Jackson  
 Jewish Charities of America  
 Richard and Esther Joel  
 Shana and Rabbi Shalom Kantor  
 Abbey and Dr. Leonard Kapelovitz  
 Yisrael and Batya Kaplan  
 Rabbi Michael and Sharon Kaplowitz  
 Shira Cantor Katchen and Rabbi Aaron Katchen  
 Rabbi Melissa Klein and Neysa Nevins  
 Adam Kleinbaum and Rachel Barenbaum Kleinbaum  
 Kenneth and Felicia Kramarz  
 Marshall and Hannah Kramer  
 Dr. Elyse Lackie  
 Rose and Morton Landowne  
 Alison and Alan Lebovitz  
 Livia Levine and Noah Moline  
 Ellen and Michael Levitt  
 Albert and Paula Madansky  
 Dr. Gilbert Mayor and Dr. Jacqueline Holubka  
 Anna Melman and Ari Bronstein  
 Robert and Amy Messing  
 Melissa Meyers  
 Abigail Michelson-Porth and Jason Porth  
 Naomi Michlin  
 Searle Mitnick  
 Stephen and Dr. Irene Moff  
 Ronald and Paulette Nessim  
 Rabbi Hillel and Johanna Norry  
 Yakov and Lydia Peretz  
 Amanda Pogany and Aaron Bisman  
 Pogany and Pogany  
 AnneMonique and Edward Rapoport  
 Victoria Raun  
 Emily and Michael Rehaut  
 David Richman and Linda Siegel Richman  
 Joseph and Wendy Rosner

Rabbi Ronald Roth  
 Joan and Kenneth Saliman  
 Jamie Salter and Cindy Nathanson  
 Jonathan Sarna and Ruth Langer  
 Lieba and Dan Savitt  
 Amanda Schanfield  
 Shoshanah Schein  
 The Amy and Bret Scher Family Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation  
 Dr. Gary Schnur and Nancy Gluck  
 Lilian and David Serviansky  
 Bruce and Julie Shaffer  
 Sarene Shanus and Harold Treiber  
 Rabbi Rona Shapiro and David Franklin  
 Nikki Sieger and Andres Terech  
 Rabbis Eric and Jenny Solomon  
 Rabbi Avi and Tikvah Spodek  
 Dana and Michael Stein  
 Rabbi Peter Stein  
 Michael Steinman and Rabbi Dorothy Richman  
 Alvin and Ann Stillman  
 Rabbi Suzy Stone  
 David and Erica Sudikoff  
 Stefanie Jadd Susnow and Matthew Susnow  
 Marion Talansky  
 Marni Thompson-Tilove and Adam Tilove  
 Jessica and Jeff Trey  
 TripAdvisor Gift Matching Program  
 Suzanne Wachsstock and Elliot Fishman  
 Fred and Leslie Wachter  
 Rabbi Joshua Waxman and Aimee Kahan  
 Hedva and Michael Weinberg  
 Michael and Lisa Weis  
 Howard and Kayla Weisband  
 Etan and Amy Weiss  
 Judy and Steven Werlin  
 Glen Weyl and Alisha Holland  
 Rebecca and Evan Winerman  
 Adrian and Linda Winick  
 Rabbi Edmund and Roberta Winter  
 Dr. Margo and Doug Woll  
 Shelby Zitelman



The Moshe and Libby Werthan Beit Midrash

The year at Pardes started with a special surprise for students, faculty, staff and board members who had joined together in the beit midrash for the launch of **Mifgash 5775**, a program created to bring together students and Israel Board members, to gain perspective and build relationships.

Pardes President and CEO Michael Rosenzweig expressed to those gathered that there were two Israel Board members in particular he wanted to introduce: Libby and Moshe Werthan, former Israel Board Chairs and "chairs of probably every committee Pardes has ever had."

Michael went on to say, "Libby and Moshe have studied in this beit midrash, celebrated in this beit midrash, mourned in this beit midrash. One could claim that they have enabled what takes place in this beit midrash every day, perhaps more so than any other Pardes supporters. We want you to remain with us in this beit midrash, bringing us strength and blessing us with all the love you have for Torah study."

He went on to announce that, "from this moment forward, the Pardes beit midrash will bear their name and will be The Moshe and Libby Werthan Beit Midrash."

Pardes would like to acknowledge and thank **Masa Israel Journey** for its ongoing partnership and support, including scholarships and grants that assisted more than 25% of students studying in Pardes's academic-year programs. This support provides key assistance that deeply enables Jewish young adults to engage with Jewish texts and explore Israel within Pardes's unique, diverse and supportive community.



## Pardes Summer Executive Learning Seminar

June 28-July 2, 2015, Jerusalem [www.pardes.org.il/executive](http://www.pardes.org.il/executive)

## Nourish your Mind

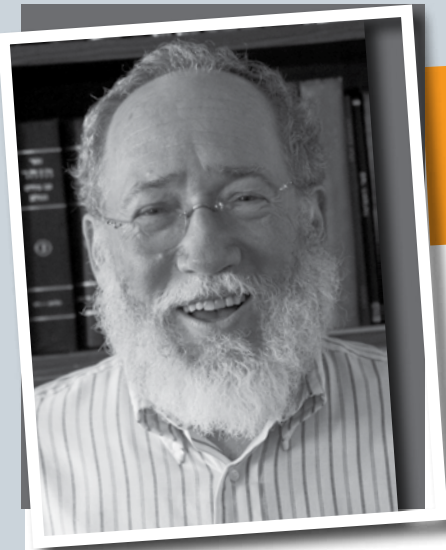
Pardes Community Education 2014-15 / 5775



The Pardes Community Education Program. Short-term classes all year round.

Visit [www.pardes.org.il/ce](http://www.pardes.org.il/ce) or contact [alex@pardes.org.il](mailto:alex@pardes.org.il)

# The Last Word by Daniel Landes



I love and breathe Jerusalem, but my mind is often in Tzfat. One reason is Rabbi Yosef Karo (Spain and Safed, 1488-1575), the author of the classic commentary on Maimonides's

(Spain and Egypt, 1135-1204) *Mishneh Torah*, the monumental Beit Yosef on the Halakhic Code, the *Tur* (Germany and Spain, 1269-1343) and of course the *Shulkhan Arukh*, which is the representative work of Jewish Law of the past 500 years. Intimidated by R. Karo's voluminous creation, many have tried to stereotype the *Shulkhan Arukh* as "stagnant," but it's a bad rap. And false. In truth all of his works pulsate with life and with controversy. Even when he attempts resolution of complex issues and ideas, he inevitably provokes further dispute and discussion.

More than fascinating, R. Karo had a private and profound mystical life. At night he was visited by the Mishnah personified, who taught, engaged and gave him ethical instruction and rebuke. All this R. Karo kept in a personal diary that was evidently not meant to be published, called *Magid Meirsharim*. Consider this (my translation):

*And your pilpul (sharp, logical analysis; literally "pepper") on the words of Moshe: it is clear that in that matter you intended well, but your three answers are not true. Nonetheless don't erase them – for such pilpul is dear to the Holy One; even though it is not true, it is as the pounded fired piece of iron by the blacksmith, which brings forth sparks in all directions... as it says "Are not my words as fire," says the Lord, and as a hammer smashing the rock" (Jeremiah 23:29).*

This is a fascinating portal for our understanding of R. Karo – commonly and warmly referred to as the *Mechaber* (the Author). In his works he does attempt to discover, create and invent 'The Last Word.' But he is reminded by his own teacher that not everything he says is accepted without proof. And his proofs may be faulty! But even so, they are not rejected. Even those effervescent opinions that just don't work out well, if they are hammered out by sound reason and wonderful intent, are fiery sparks of Torah.

So who was his teacher? The Mishnah, an angelic being or R. Karo's projected dream-self? I have no problem in seeing them as all three – as R. Karo deeply personalized his learning and world leadership and was consistently self-critical of his learning and his relations with others, urging that he be more rigorous with the former, and less with the latter.

## So who was his teacher? The Mishnah, an angelic being or R. Karo's projected dream-self?

In Tzfat R. Karo built a wonderous place of Torah study, where terrific students learned, debated and sought the elusive last word – Judaism's holy grail – under the tutelage of many other colorful mystical and legal masters. And this is the teaching we do at Pardes.

**Daniel Landes** is the Director of Pardes.

*The Summer 2015 Pardes Executive Learning Seminar in Jerusalem (June 28 – July 2) will explore The Golden Age at Tzfat. For more information visit [www.pardes.org.il/executive](http://www.pardes.org.il/executive).*



# 2015 *coming up*

## December

**28 - Jan 1** Yaffa Epstein and Daniel Roth @ Limmud UK

**31 - Jan 7, 14, 21**  
2015 Hershdorfer Kantrowitz Brettler Lecture Series: The Transformation of Biblical Women  
Elisheva Baumgarten

## January

**TBA** Daniel Roth in Philadelphia

**TBA** James Jacobson-Maisels in NYC

**1, 8, 22** Tour with Text: Jeroboam and the Divided Kingdom  
Michael Hattin

**11-16** Pardes/Heritage Seminars  
Poland Trip

**12** Community Education  
Spring Semester begins

**18** Second Semester classes begin

**18-Feb 19** Southern Hemisphere  
Summer Program (session 2)

**29, Feb 5, 12** Tour with Text: Elijah  
Zvi Grumet

## February

**TBA** Alex Israel in the U.S.

**TBA** Meesh Hammer-Kossoy  
in the U.S.

**1** Yaffa Epstein @ Limmud Vancouver

**4, 11, 18** Lecture Series:  
The Biblical Tool Box  
Judy Klitsner

**13-16** Meesh Hammer-Kossoy  
@ Limmud NY

**21-28** 9Adar: The Jewish Day of  
Constructive Conflict

**22** Yaffa Epstein @ Limmud Miami

**25, Mar 11, 18** The Alan and Valerie  
Adler Lecture Series in Memory of Ida  
Hoffmann z"l: The Maggid of Mezritch:  
the Empowering Force of Hasidism  
Levi Cooper

**26** Tour with Text: Ahab and the Wars  
with Aram  
Howard Markose

## March

**TBA** David Bernstein in the U.S.

**4-23** Judy Klitsner in the U.S.

**8-10** PCJE @ NAJDS Conference

**19-22** PCJE Alumni Reunion,  
Waynesboro, PA

## April

**13** Community Education  
Omer Program Begins

## May

**TBA** Judy Klitsner in the U.S.

## June

**28 - July 2** Summer Executive Learning  
Seminar: The Golden Age of Tzfat

## July

**6-23** Summer Program

**7-14** PCJE Summer Curriculum  
Workshop, Waynesboro, PA

## Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies

מכון פרדס לחנוך יהודי ע"ר  
Harry H. Beren  
Center for Torah & Ethics

Michael Rosenzweig  
President and CEO

Rabbi Daniel Landes  
Director

Dr. David I. Bernstein  
Dean

Joel Weiss  
Chief Operating Officer, Israel

Mirta Eifer  
Director of Finance, Israel

Joshua Chadajo  
Executive Director, North America

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ISRAEL

Chair: Brian Glenville  
Secretary: Jean Balcombe

Deborah Abramowitz  
Alan Adler  
Toby Ticktin Back  
Charlotte Blumenfeld  
John H. Corre\*  
Adam Frank  
Michael Gillis\*  
Rachel Goldberg  
Jerry Goodman\*  
Abbie Greenberg  
Naomi Neustadter  
Audrey Kaplan Scher\*  
Suzanne Singer  
Leslie Wagner  
Howard Weisband  
Libby Werthan\*  
Moshe Werthan\*  
Toni Wiseburgh  
Past Chair\*  
Founder: Michael Swirsky  
Legal Advisor: Richard Aron

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS, NORTH AMERICA

President: Deborah Shapira  
Treasurer: Bryan Kocen  
Secretary: Neil Schechter

Thomas K. Barad\*  
Giti Bendheim  
Jack Bendheim  
Rabbi David Gedzelman  
Francine M. Gordon\*  
Michael Jesselson  
Daniel Krasner  
Darell Krasnoff  
David Kuney  
Mark Levenfus\*  
David Lonner  
Rae Ringel  
Selig Sacks\*  
David Shapira  
Michael Stein  
Lewis Warshauer  
Past President\*  
Senator Joseph Lieberman  
Honorary Board Member

Design: Natalie Friedman  
Cover photo: Yitz Woolf

Events in Jerusalem unless otherwise stated.

For up-to-date international travel schedules and more information about our programs visit [www.pardes.org.il](http://www.pardes.org.il).

POB 8575, Jerusalem 9108402 Israel | T + 972 2 673 5210 | F + 972 2 673 5160 | [info@pardes.org.il](mailto:info@pardes.org.il)

5 West 37th Street Suite 802, New York NY 10018 USA | T + 1 212 447 4333 | F + 1 212 447 4315 | [info@pardes.org](mailto:info@pardes.org)