



TISHA B'AV FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES

Judy Klitsner has been teaching Bible and biblical exegesis at Pardes for nearly two decades. A disciple of the great Torah teacher Nechama Leibowitz, Judy weaves together traditional exegesis, modern scholarship and her own original interpretations that are informed by close readings of the biblical text. Judy lectures internationally and is the author of *Subversive Sequels in the Bible: How Biblical Stories Mine and Undermine Each Other* (Jewish Publication Society) which received the 2009 National Jewish Book Award for Scholarship.
www.judyklitsner.com

Rabbi Dr. Meesh Hammer-Kossoy teaches Talmud and the [Social Justice Track](#) at Pardes. Originally from Washington, D.C., Meesh has a B.A. in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Brandeis University, and a MA and Ph.D. from New York University. Her dissertation explored the courageous manner in which the rabbis of the Talmud created a new criminal punishment system. In 2015, Meesh completed her studies at Beit Midrash Har'el and received ordination from Rabbi Herzl Hefter and Rabbi Daniel Sperber. Meesh is also a graduate of [NATIV](#), Pardes, [Midreshet Lindenbaum](#), [MaTaN](#), [Drisha](#), and ATID. She has received many fellowships including Lady Davis, National Foundation for Jewish Culture, Memorial Foundation and ATID. She has also taught at NYU, Drisha and Midreshet Lindenbaum. Despite having written her dissertation about criminal punishment in the Talmudic period, Meesh is known by her husband and three children as a lover of mercy and kindness.

Tovah Leah Nachmani has been teaching Bible, Liturgy and Prayer and Relationships at Pardes for 14 years in the Summer Program and eight years as a full time faculty member. She holds a BA in Near Eastern Languages and Literature and Religious Studies from Indiana University and a Teaching Certificate in Tanakh and Jewish Thought from the Michlelet Herzog Seminary in Gush Etzion. She has written and guided experiential learning programs for mothers and their daughters of Bat Mitzva age at the [Women's Beit Midrash in Efrat](#), where she previously taught Prayer and Jewish Thought. Together with her husband Gabi, Tovah Leah was a Jewish educator and program director for many years for [Livnot U'Lehibanot](#) in Tzfat and Jerusalem. They co-authored the widely-used song book "Zemirot from Livnot." She also served as Assistant Educational Director for [Ayeka](#) – an international organization training Jewish lay and professional leaders to facilitate [Ayeka](#) spiritual education seminars for Jews of all backgrounds and affiliations. She believes in learning which connects the mind to the heart. Tovah Leah and Gabi, who live in Gush Etzion, have seven children and many grandchildren.

Rabbi Zvi Grumet teaches Bible and Pedagogy at Pardes. He holds a BA in Computer Science, an MA in Jewish Education and an Ed.D. from Yeshiva University where he was ordained. Prior to his aliyah, Zvi had extensive experience teaching teens and adults, both in North America and Israel, and was a day school leader in the U.S. Zvi is currently the Associate Educational Director at [The Lookstein Center](#) for Jewish Education, the editor of Jewish Educational Leadership, and the chair of the Tanakh department at [Yeshivat Eretz Hatzvi](#).





Gila Fine is an adjunct faculty member at Pardes. She is the editor-in-chief of Maggid Books (Koren Publishers Jerusalem). Gila is a teacher of Talmudic narrative, and has taught at the Hebrew University, Tel Aviv University, Pardes Institute and the Shalom Hartman Institute. She is the former editor of the quarterly journal *Azure: Ideas for the Jewish Nation*, and the ghost writer behind several well-known books.

Rabbi Dr. Leon Wiener Dow is a research fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute of Jerusalem and teaches at the Secular Yeshiva of Bina in Tel Aviv. His book *Your Walking on the Way* [Hebrew], an examination of the theory of Jewish law emergent from the writings of Franz Rosenzweig, was published by Bar-Ilan University Press, and his *The Going: A Meditation on Jewish Law* (2017) was published by Palgrave Macmillan. His writings have appeared in academic journals and in diverse publications such as *Haaretz*, *The Jerusalem Post*, *Lilith Magazine*, *The Times of Israel*, *Yediot Aharonot*, *Ynet*, and *The Reconstructionist*.

Rabbi Dr. Reb Mimi (Miriam Sara) **Feigelson**, the first female Orthodox rabbi, grew up in Israel. She is an international teacher of Chassidut, Spirituality and a storyteller. Reb Mimi formed and created, as a Modern-Chareidi-Chassidic-Rabbi, the role of the *Mashpiah Ruchanit* (spiritual mentor) in Rabbinical Seminaries in the United States since 2001, and in Jerusalem, since her return in the summer of 2017. Prior to this, Reb Mimi was the associate director of the Yakar Institute for Tradition and Creativity, and the Rosh Beit Ha'midrash I'Nashim. She was adjunct faculty at the Ma'aleh Film College and published regularly in the Ha'aretz Literary Supplement. Reb Mimi was granted her Doctorate at HUC-JIR (2016), titled: "On the Cusp of Life: From Scared to Sacred." It is an exploration and redefining of Jewish funerals. This is work she is eager to share throughout the Jewish community. She is the blessed and proud soul-mother to over a dozen soul-children.

Yiscah Smith is an adjunct faculty member at Pardes. She is a Jewish educator, spiritual activist and published author who addresses the spiritual dimension of authentic living. Yiscah employs her own story of the joys and struggles with her own spirituality, gender identity and commitment to authentic living. As one who transitioned from a Chabad man to an observant woman, she presents topics in an accessible and vivid style, from both a personal and a text-based perspective. In addition to teaching at Pardes, she produces a series of podcasts online on Jewish spirituality. In her private practice Yiscah provides spiritual guidance for authentic living. She is also a guest speaker both in Israel and abroad. Yiscah lives in Jerusalem.





Afternoon Program:

Rabbi Leon Morris is the President of Pardes and is the first alumnus to head the institution (Year Program alumnus '94-'95; Summer Program alumnus '93 and '94). Leon made aliyah with his wife Dasee Berkowitz (Pardes Year Program alumna '94-'95) and their three children in June 2014, after serving as the rabbi of Temple Adas Israel in Sag Harbor, NY. He was the founding director of the Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning at Temple Emanu-El (now the Temple Emanu-El Streicker Center) in Manhattan. Before coming to Pardes, Leon served as a Vice President for Israel Programs at the Shalom Hartman Institute and was a faculty member at Hebrew Union College.

Ordained from Hebrew Union College in 1997 where he was a Wexner Graduate Fellow, he has worked extensively with the Jewish community of India, beginning in 1990 when he served as a Jewish Service Corps volunteer for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. He was also a Mandel Jerusalem Fellow. Leon has taught at Orthodox, Conservative and Reform institutions and is a regular contributor to the Jewish, US and Israeli press. He is an editor of the new Reform High Holy Day machzor, *Mishkan HaNefesh* and is a contributor to *Jewish Theology in Our Time: A New Generation Explores the Foundations and Future of Jewish Belief* (edited by Elliot Cosgrove, Jewish Lights, 2010).

Jamie Salter is an alumnus of the Pardes Year Program ('99) and the Pardes Educators Program ('04-'06). He is a Jewish Educator and licensed Israel tour guide. Jamie earned his BA in Modern History from Oxford University and his MA in Jewish Education from Hebrew University. Jamie works in many different Jewish educational arenas. In recent years he has taught in a Jewish day school in America, guided British Members of Parliament on their trip to Israel and lectured in England on the most recent archaeological discoveries in the City of David. He is a regular guide and educator in Israel for Pardes, Hebrew Union College, Taglit Birthright and others. Jamie most recently worked as the educational director for the Ministry of Tourism's tour guide course at the Yad Ben Zvi Institute. Jamie and his family live in Jerusalem.

Dr. Elana Stein Hain is Scholar-in-Residence and Director of Faculty at the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America, where she serves as lead faculty, directs research teams, and oversees the content of lay and professional leadership programs.

A widely well-regarded teacher and scholar, Elana earned her doctorate in Religion from Columbia University with a dissertation on the topic of legal loopholes in rabbinic literature sponsored by Professor David Weiss Halivni.

A graduate of the Yeshiva University Graduate Program in Advanced Talmudic Studies and the Cardozo Interdisciplinary Fellowship in Jewish Law and Legal Theory, Elana has taught across the US and in Israel, including as a member of Wexner Institute faculty. Elana previously served as clergy member at Lincoln Square Synagogue and The Jewish Center, both in New York, as well as adjunct faculty at NYU. She is a board member of [Sefaria: A Living Library of Jewish Texts](#), co-founded the Orthodox Leadership Project (OLP) to support female leaders





working in the Orthodox Jewish community, and was recognized by *The Jewish Week* in its inaugural "36 Under 36" as an emerging Jewish leader. Elana lives on the Upper West Side of Manhattan with her husband Yonah and their two sons.

Aryeh Ben David taught at the Pardes Institute for 18 years. In 2008 he founded *Ayeka: Center for Soulful Education*. *Ayeka* educates day school staffs, rabbis, parents, and Jewish professionals in its unique educational approach of how to bring Jewish wisdom from our minds - to our hearts to our souls - and into our lives. He recently published his third book: *Becoming a Soulful Educator: How to Bring Jewish Learning from Our Minds to Our Hearts to Our Souls—and into Our Lives*.

