



**P A R D E S**  
P R O J E C T

**Inevitably  
a Jew  
stands out....**

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Many of the topics included in the Pardes curriculum are far-reaching and have broad ramifications. The intent of Pardes is to promote sensitivity and spiritual growth through exposure to a variety of Torah sources. It is not within the purview of Pardes to arrive at conclusions relevant to decisions of Halacha. Please consult your Rabbi for personal decisions.

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## Introduction

**I**NEVITABLY A JEW STANDS OUT. Dress sets some of the religious apart while name and face mark most of the less observant. This is the reality of being a Jew; there is no room for moral dilemmas in confronting what is inevitable. The same can't be said for the choices we make that bring us as individuals and, like it or not, as representatives of all Jews into the glare of the public eye.

Some frown when they see a Jew walking through the street wearing his Talis, yet enjoy the sight of Sukkahs standing proudly in front yards. Almost every Jew feels more than a touch of pride when the world acclaim the Jewish mind even as we become a little nervous about lavish public displays of Jewish wealth. Of course our leaders must make their voices heard on Capitol Hill, but when individual Jews bring a moral issue to the press some feel that all Jews have been dragged unwillingly into the threatening world of publicity.

Was the retiring ghetto Jew of Europe safer or are we, the integrated public Jews of America,

safer? Does the Torah require Jews to pursue their religion in the exile without watching the world out of the corner of our eyes to ensure that we aren't running afoul of public sentiment or are we cautioned to tread cautiously for fear of arousing enmity and violence.

Are we meant to seek the preacher's soap box and emulate Abraham our Forefather, educating the world in the universal lessons of truth and loving kindness; or are we to keep our own council and allow the nations to find their own paths to their destinies?

And above all, who among us can make decisions that can affect all of us?

## How Would You Respond?

**1** The predominantly gentile neighborhood has strict zoning regulations that uniformly restrict the construction of houses of worship. As one of several observant families who have moved into the area, you are participating in the group's exploration of expanding the current local basement prayer group into a synagogue. Some members of the committee maintain that any synagogue building to be proposed must conform to local zoning regulations. Others of the group, however, assert that as full-fledged, taxpaying citizens, the committee should demand a zoning variance to allow the construction of a proper, full-sized structure. Which side do you take?

**2** You're working your way up in a law firm that does not list Yom Kippur as an official day off. Your mentor advises you to take it as a vacation day. This offends you. Your non-Jewish colleagues do not have to use a vacation day in order to observe their holiest day, Christmas. Why should you have to use a vacation day to observe your holiest day? Your instinct is to protest but part of you says take Yom Kippur as a vacation day. Should you be a Jew quietly?

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It is customary to recite the following prayer  
before entering into a Torah discussion:

*Shulchan Aruch O.H. 110*

**M**ay it be Your will, Hashem my G-d and G-d of my fathers, that You illuminate my eyes with the light of your Torah and that You save me from all stumbling blocks and errors, whether it be in discussions of what is prohibited and what is permitted or in monetary matters, whether it be in any other Halachic decisions or just in theoretical study. I pray that I do not make any mistakes, and if I do, my study partners should not take delight in them. I pray that I should not proclaim the impure pure or the pure impure, the permitted forbidden or the forbidden permitted. I pray that I should not derive joy from the errors of my study partner. Open my eyes and allow me to see the wonders of Your Torah because it is from G-d that all wisdom comes forth, it is from His mouth that I will acquire wisdom and understanding. Amen.

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלקי ואלקיי אבותי שלא יארע בדבר תקלה על ידי ולא אכשל בדבר הלכה וישמחו בי חברי ולא אומר על טמא טהור ולא על טהור טמא ולא על אסור מותר ולא יכשלו חברי בדבר הלכה ואשמח בהם. כי ה' יתן חכמה מפיו דעת ונתבונה. גל עיני ואביטה נפלאות מתורתך.

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**RAV SHOLOM SCHWADRON, the noted Maggid of Jerusalem, was once walking to shul on a shabbos morning in the town of Golders Green in London. The beloved Maggid was a robust cheerful man and he made his way briskly and spiritedly. He was a sight to behold as he wore a tallis over his long black coat, a Yerushalmi shtriel on his head, all the while talking animatedly to the people who accompanied him.**

**Suddenly a car riding behind him on the street pulled closer to the sidewalk and slowed down. The driver stared at this uncommon phenomenon in London. In the early 1960's no one wore a tallis over their coats and very few if any people in Golders Green wore a shtriel.**

**Rav Sholom paid no heed to the driver and walked on but as he walked the driver drove his car at the same pace of Rav Sholom's walk, all the while examining this stranger and his unique type of dress.**

**Rav Sholom was beginning to feel a bit uncomfortable and was relieved that he had to turn the corner to get to shul. The driver, however, made the same turn! The driver drove about twenty feet ahead of Rav Sholom, stopped his car, got out and ran towards Rav Sholom and shouted, "You are making a Chillul Hashem!" (An embarrassment to G-d's name)**

—Recorded by Rabbi Paysach Krohn

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## Points for Study

**1** Yehudah ben Tema said: Be as brazen as a leopard .... to carry out the will of your Father in Heaven. He used to say: The brazen goes to Hell, but the shamefaced goes to the Garden of Eden.

Pirkei Avos 5; 23  
Source, pg. 17

Is Chutzpah a positive or negative trait?

**2** Here is a great principle when it comes to fulfilling a Mitzvah. Sometimes one wishes to perform a Mitzvah but refrains because of embarrassment. One should be brazen faced before those that ridicule you and not let it stop you from doing the Mitzvah.

Tur, Orach Chaim 1  
Source, pg. 18

**3** But you should not argue with them because chutzpah is a terrible trait and one shouldn't use it at all, even for serving G-d, because it will instill this trait within your soul and it will manifest itself in other areas of life.

Rabbi Y.M. Kagen, the Chofetz Chaim in Mishna Berura ibid. 5  
Biography, pg. 12 Source, pg. 19

**4** If you find yourself in a situation where you are being laughed at (for doing what is right) do not take heart to their laughing; rather laugh right back and bring them shame.

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto; Mesilos Yeshorim Chap. 5  
Source, pg. 20

Should we preach  
to the world what  
we believe to be the  
truth?  
At what expense?

**5** At forty years old Abraham discovered G-d. He immediately began to debate the issue of G-d with the people of Ur Kasdim and told them of their erroneous ways. He broke their idols and preached against them and told them that only G-d should be worshipped ... when he overpowered them with his proofs of G-d the king sentenced Abraham to death but a miracle occurred and Abraham escaped to Charan. He then began to preach to the entire world that there is only one G-d and it is only He that is worthy of worship. He preached as he traveled from city to city and from Country to Country until he reached the Land of Canaan...

Maimonides, Laws of Idol Worship 1; 3  
Biography, pg. 13 Source, pg. 21

**6** "Everyone bowed down to Haman. But Mordechai the Jew did not kneel or bow to him."

Book of Esther Chap. 3  
Source, pg. 22

**7** Even though by doing so he was endangering the entire Jewish community.

Maharal, Vilna Gaon  
Biography, pg. 11 Source, pg. 23

**8a** Anyone who has the ability to protest wrongdoing in his household and does not is liable for the wrongdoing of his household. The same is true with one's city and with the entire world.

Talmud Shabbos 54b  
Source, pg. 24

**8b** The entire world in this context refers to the entire Jewish world.

Rashi ibid.  
Biography, pg. 14 Source, pg. 24

**9** The protests inspired by the radical activists after the blowing of the Shofar at the Western Wall.<sup>1</sup> ... greatly weakened the affection that existed between our people and the British government. The Tel Aviv protests last month provoked the Arab attacks<sup>2</sup> that have not ceased till this day...

In times past every Jew felt responsible for his nation, and was therefore careful in his private expressions, and certainly in his public statements, to avoid causing harm to his people. However, today the spoken and written word have become an open city and there is no restraining anything that passes through the head of someone capable of speech... No doubt the question of boycotting German products will be on the agenda and it will be approved. Has not the time arrived to open our eyes and see the great harm this has brought us heretofore?

Rabbi Yosef Eliyahu Henkin, Writings V. 2, pg. 242 (1936)  
Biography, pg. 15 Source, pg. 25

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<sup>1</sup> After the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate had granted the Jews a recognized national status in Israel, tremendous significance was given to the Western Wall. Many intracommunal conflicts about the Western Wall occurred in the 1920's. In order to antagonize the Jews, a gate was opened by the Muslims at the southern end of the street by the Wall, thus converting it into a thoroughfare for passersby and animals. In addition, the Muslims deliberately held loud voice ceremonies in the vicinity. They also complained about the placing of accessories of worship near the Wall and a partition between men and women was forcibly removed by the British police on the Day of Atonement 1928.

The British Set up a committee of inquiry and consequently an International committee was appointed by the League of Nations to resolve "The Problem of the Wall." The committee came to three main conclusions: a) The Muslims had absolute ownership of the Wall. b) The Jews had the uncontested right to worship and to place seats in the streets. c) The Jews were not to blow the Shofar there. The Jews accepted it, except for the prohibition to blow the Shofar which was considered a searing humiliation. Indeed each year Nationalist youths would blow the Shofar near the Wall at the termination of the Day of Atonement which would always lead to the intervention of the British police.

A controversy broke out amongst the religious leaders of Judaism whether it was correct to provoke the British for the sake of the honor of the Western Wall.

<sup>2</sup> Rabbi Henkin was referring to the Hebron Massacre of 1929.

**10** Let Israel know what happened to the remnant of its most cherished spot. (The Western Wall)... And let all the civilized nations and especially the British nation know! And let them correct the infamy and never again touch the inheritance of the holy of holies. And let them realize and recognize who is the One that stands behind our Wall.

Rabbi A.Y. Kook, *Our Wall in Chazon HaGeulah*, pg. 43 (1929) Biography, pg. 11 Source, pg. 26

**11** I recall a Shabbat (Sabbath) morning when I stopped off to pray at the Mirrer Yeshiva where I have studied for thirteen years and had been ordained. Following the service, I went over to the Dean and wished him a "Gut Shabbos" (Good Sabbath). He took my hand and held it saying in Yiddish "You are murdering Russian Jews." I had no desire to argue with him and attempted to move away but he held on tightly and repeated his words "You are murdering Russian Jews." I looked at the Dean of the Yeshiva whom I had known for so many years, before he had reached his present position;

"Let us say that you are right, let us agree that protests, public demonstrations are bad for Russian Jews but I sat in this Yeshiva for thirteen years and I can not recall even one time when Psalms (the traditional supplication to G-d) were said for Russian Jews. I do not remember even one fast day called for Russian Jews. I do not remember the subject mentioned. Surely those things do not hurt Russian Jews."

"The Story of the Jewish Defense League"  
by Rabbi Mayer Kahane, founder of the J.D.L., pg. 31  
Biography, pg. 16

## Source Biography

### Maharal of Prague (1525-1609)

**R**abbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel was a renowned talmudist, philosopher, ethical teacher, and mathematician. Much of his work was in extracting the inner meaning of aggada to find a deeper philosophical and moralistic understanding of the Gemara. His piety and knowledge made him popular within the Jewish as well as non-Jewish world of sixteenth century Prague.

—M.G.

### The Vilna Gaon (1720-1797)

**R**abbi Elijah ben Solomon Zalman, also known as Ha-Gra, was the foremost scholar-sage of Lithuanian Jewry in the eighteenth-century, and has become the spiritual forefather for much of the non-Chassidic yeshiva world. Known for his greatness in Talmudic and Kabbalistic study, he likewise mastered astronomy, mathematics and music. His system of Talmudic study focused on trying to find the true meaning intended by the sages in the text. The Gra was a fiercely outspoken opponent of Chassidism, fearing the movement would erode the centrality of Torah learning in Judaism, and was pivotal in galvanizing the split between the Chassidic and non-Chassidic world.

—M.G.

### Rabbi Abraham Isaac Hacoen Kook (1865-1935)

**K**nown as the "Father of Religious Zionism," Rabbi Kook, a brilliant scholar and Jewish leader, was born in Latvia and emigrated to Palestine in 1904. After staying in London during the First World War, he returned to Palestine to become the first Ashkenazic chief rabbi of Palestine. His yeshiva, Merkaz Harav, focused on the study of

religious texts dealing with the land of Israel, and issues relating to the Temple services. Seeing the growth of Zionism as a stepping stone to the Messianic Age, Rav Kook developed close relationships with non-religious Zionists who he saw as being an integral part of the building of the land that was leading to the Redemption. Most other orthodox leaders were against the Zionist movement because of its predominantly secular nature. Rav Kook's teachings over settling the land have provided the basis for modern Religious Zionist ideology. —M.G.

### **Rabbi Israel Meir Kagan, The Chofetz Chaim (1838-1933)**

**F**or almost one hundred years he lit up our world. His was a soul from on high whose only desire in life was to fulfill the wish of his Creator through lifting the worth of individual lives as well as the life of the Jewish people as a whole. This was the substance of the marvelous life of this giant of justice and kindness.

He could find no peace when contemplating the state of the nation regarding the grave sin of slander, until he composed his first work which carried the name with which he has been identified ever since: Chofetz Chaim...He also was inspired to produce a work, Ahavas Chesed (Love of Kindness) detailing the laws between man and man.

The emigration to America made him fearful for the well-being of Judaism in places where Jewish settlements were not well organized. He recognized the trials of the new immigrants and to fill their needs he wrote Nidchei Yisrael (Dispersed of Israel), replete with detailed laws specifically related to the new life of the emigres and heartfelt words of inspiration and encouragement to strengthen them in overcoming obstacles and preserving their Judaism. And his caring eye observed the young conscripts forced to live far from any semblance of Jewish life and desperately in need of special guidance. For them he composed Machne Yisrael (The Camp of Israel).

In spite of all the writings of his predecessors he found that he must clarify many laws of the first portion of the Shulchan Aruch, and composed his famous Mishna Brura, which is firmly established as an authoritative source.

And within his heart there burned a holy fire: the hope for the full salvation. The final redemption of Israel was his constant concern. For the arrival of that event the laws of Kodoshim must be clear. But he saw that such learning was much neglected and so composed a monumental work on the order Kodoshim, Likkutei Halachos.

In spite of all these undertakings he was totally involved in all matters of Torah support with youthful enthusiasm even when he was well into his nineties, traveling to anywhere he might help to strengthen activities on behalf of Torah.

This is but a too-brief overview of the life of an extraordinary man whose saintly presence we were fortunate to encounter and from whose saintly life and pure character we were privileged to feel the impact.

Excerpts from an article by Rabbi Avrohom Yitzchak Kook which appeared in the journal *HaHaid*. Translated by Matis Greenblatt for Fall 1983 issue of *Jewish Action* magazine.

### **The Rambam (1135-1204)**

**M**oses Maimonides is known as the greatest Jewish philosopher and codifier of Jewish law in history. Born in Cordova, Spain, he was forced to flee from fanatical Moslems at the age of thirteen, where he traveled with his family to North Africa, and ten years later to Palestine. As a result of the devastation left by the Crusaders, Palestine was virtually uninhabitable, forcing the family to move to Fostat

(current day Cairo). Throughout these journeys, the young Maimonides had concentrated on Torah studies under the guidance of his father, and by the time he reached Fostat had become a famous scholar. Supported by his merchant brother, the Rambam was able to write copiously, gaining international acclaim in both Jewish and secular fields of knowledge. After the tragic death of his brother, the responsibility of supporting his family fell on the Rambam's shoulders, and through his fame he was appointed chief physician of the Sultan. Despite the immense workload that was required, not only with his responsibilities to the royal family, but to the entire Egyptian community as the official Nagid (royally appointed leader), and to the halachic questions of world Jewry known as responsa, the Rambam was remarkably able to complete some of his greatest Jewish works, including his introduction and commentary on the Mishna, his philosophical work *The Guide for the Perplexed*, and his magnum opus the *Mishna Torah* - the great codification of all Jewish law. While he was considered an undisputed leader of world Jewry at the time, there was bitter opposition to much of his works because they incorporated much of Aristotelian philosophy that went against the traditional purist ideology of much of Ashkenazic Jewry, and others believed his codifications would make much of the role of the rabbi and the oral tradition obsolete.

-A.B.

### Rashi

**R**ashi, Rabbi Solomon Yitzchaki (Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac) was born in Troyes, France in 1040, and died in Worms in 1105. He studied in the yeshivot of Troyes, Mainz, and Worms. His teachers, Rabbi Jacob ben Yakar and Rabbi Isaac ben Judah, were students of Rabbenu Gershom Me'or Ha-Golah (q.v.). In 1070, Rashi founded his yeshivah in Troyes, which was attended by students from far and

near. Rashi had no sons, but his daughters' sons included such illustrious scholars as Rabbenu Tam and Rashbam, both of whom were among the founders of the Franco-German Tosafist school of Talmud study. Rashi wrote commentaries on the Bible and the Talmud, which are considered indispensable for the study of these works. His responsa were collected and published by Israel Elfenbein in 1943. —M.G.

### Rabbi Yosef Eliyahu Henkin (1880-1973)

**R**av Henkin was an original, independent person who was a unique blend of forcefulness and modesty. He was unaffiliated organizationally, but related to every segment of the Orthodox spectrum. His integrity was incomparable (when taking a phone call unrelated to his work he deducted the time) and though his views were not always accepted, they always commanded respect. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik once remarked that when he saw Rav Henkin he could imagine Adam before the fall.

Born in Belorussia, he applied to the Slutzker Yeshiva under R. Isser Zalman Meltzer at a tender age. When R. Isser Zalman tested him on Tractate Eruvin, he soon realized that the boy knew it better than he. In addition to R. Meltzer, he was ordained by R. Boruch Ber Leibowitz and the Aruch HaShulchan. After serving as rabbi and Yeshiva head in a number of Russian towns, he emigrated to America in 1922 and in 1925 became Director of Ezras Torah, which provided assistance to scholars. He served in that capacity until his death. He was paid a meager salary and when he attained an advanced age and reduced his work day, he insisted that his salary be correspondingly reduced.

Rav Henkin was one of the leading Halachic authorities of his generation and was particularly expert in the laws of divorce. He was thor-



oughly knowledgeable concerning the issues of the day and wrote many articles expressing his frequently critical viewpoint. He urged each community to hire a dayan, besides the rabbi, who could decide all questions of halacha. He strongly attacked self-styled Jewish leaders who jeopardized Jewish lives to advance their political ambitions. He held that witnessed civil marriages were halachically binding. He believed that once the State of Israel was established it should be supported by all Jews, except in matters contrary to Torah. Most of his writings are collected in two volumes printed by Ezras Torah.

Indicative of the esteem in which Rav Henkin was held, is R. Yaakov Kamenetzky's statement at Rav Henkin's funeral that he had always thought that Rav Henkin would be our representative to greet the Messiah.

—M.G.

### Rabbi Meir Kahane

**R**abbi Meir Kahane was the founder of the Jewish Defense League, an organization which sought to fight for the rights and safety of the Jewish people in Israel and the Diaspora.

Rabbi Kahane received his Rabbinic Ordination from the Mirer Yeshiva in New York. He also earned an M.A. from New York University and an L.L.B. from New York Law School.

He authored several books on the rights of the Jews to Israel and on the subject of Jewish Pride.

Rabbi Kahane formed a political party in Israel and won a seat in the Knesset. His Kach Party ultimately was banned from the Israeli Parliament for being racist. Rabbi Kahane was assassinated on November 5, 1990.

—Y.R.

## Sources

1 Pirkei Avos 5; 23

פרקי אבות/פרק ה

ישראל<sup>1</sup> ירבעם בן נבט חטא והחטיא את הרבים, חטא הרבים תלוי בו, שנאמר: „על חטאות ירבעם אשר חטא, ואשר החטיא את ישראל“<sup>2</sup>

[כב] כל מי שיש בידו שלשה דברים הללו, הוא מתלמידיו של אברהם אבינו; ושלשה דברים אחרים, הוא מתלמידיו של בלעם הרשע. עין טובה, ורוח נמוכה, ונפש שפלה, תלמידיו של אברהם אבינו. עין רעה, ורוח גבוהה, ונפש רחוקה, תלמידיו של בלעם הרשע. מה בין תלמידיו של אברהם אבינו לתלמידיו של בלעם הרשע? תלמידיו של אברהם אבינו אוכלין בעולם הזה, ונוחלין העולם הבא, שנאמר: „להנחיל אהבי יש, ואצרתיהם אמלא“<sup>3</sup>. אבל תלמידיו של בלעם הרשע יורשין גיהנם, ויורדין לבאר שחת, שנאמר: „ואתה אלהים תורדם לבאר שחת, אנשי דמים ומרמה לא יחצו ימיהם, ואני אבטח בך“<sup>4</sup>

[כג] יחודה בן תימא אומר: הוי עו בנמר, וקל כנשר, רץ כצבי, וגבור כארי לעשות רצון אביך שבשמים.

[כד] הוא הנה אומר: עו פנים לגיהנם, וכשת פנים לגן עדן. יהי רצון מלפניך יהוה אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו שיבנה בית המקדש במהרה בימינו ותן חלקנו בתורתך.

[כה] הוא היה אומר: בן חמש שנים למקרא, בן עשר שנים למשנה, בן שלש עשרה למצות, בן חמש עשרה לגמרא, בן שמונה עשרה לחפה, בן עשרים לרדוף, בן שלשים לבת, בן ארבעים לבינה, בן חמשים לעצה, בן ששים לזונה, בן שבעים לשיבה, בן שמונים לגבורה, בן תשעים לשות, בן מאה כאלו מת ועבר ובטל מן העולם.

[כו] בן בג בג אומר: הפך בה והפך בה, דכלה בה; ובה תחזי, וסיב









קדושת הארץ

חי מה הוא להם שריד הקדוש הזה, תמצית כל המחמדים אשר  
לעמ בארץ.

וביום הגדול והקדוש, ביום הכסורים, אשר כל האומה בכל  
תפוצותיה הזגת נכאים בזכרון גאון קדשה מימי קדם, אשר שבועתים  
יגדל או רשם הכבוד, אשר יחקק על לב כל עם וכל איש בעל  
תרבות ונימט לעומת הגוי האיתן הזה המסיץ מזוהר נשמתו קרני  
אויזת קודש על פני תבל, יחידי העם שהם ברוחו באי כחו מכל  
אפסי ארץ, עומדים ומתרוממים ברוממות קודש, מתיסחים  
ומתמוגגים מעוצר רעה ויגון מכל אשר עבר עליהם מידי מרכאהם  
חנם, מתנחמים הם באור הנשמה הגדולה, נחלת המרומים אשר אתם,  
שהיא ערובת חייהם לנצח.

והנה באו אלה שהם כמו שלוחים של העם התרבותי  
הגדול, - העם האנגלי - ובעקב שטנת הבאה מחוסר תרבות  
ומצרות עין, הרסו בגסות את כל מחשבות הוחר, את כל בניני  
האצילות המתרקמים בנשמות המתסללים, שליחי הצבור הישראלי  
מכל אפסים.

האומה התפלצה מיגון וכאב נעבר, ורשמי קטנות המוח  
ואטימת ההרגשה נגד הודי עולם זה עוד הולכים ומתגלים, על  
ידי עילות, ששויים הוא קליפת השום. ידע ישראל, את אשר נעשה  
לשריד מחמדו! וידעו עמי התרבות כולם וחברי-הלאומים והעם  
הגריטי בעל המנדט ביחדו ויראו לתקן את המעוות ולא יוסיפו  
לנגוע עוד בנחלת קודש קדשים.

וידעו ויכירו מי הוא זה העומד אחר כתלנו,