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THE AVI CHAI PRIZE - 5759

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A Commitment to the Jewish People, Judaism, and the State of Israel

AVI CHAI's primary goals are to encourage mutual understanding and sensitivity among Jews of different religious backgrounds and to increase understanding and appreciation of Jewish traditions, customs, and laws. Some programs in Israel currently supported by AVI CHAI are:

* **Tzav Pius:** a broad public campaign to encourage mutual understanding among Israeli Jews. The campaign calls for affirmation of two principles: "We respect Jewish tradition; we safeguard democracy." Tzav Pius initiates and supports a variety of educational activities and publicity efforts.

* **Tzohar:** rabbis dedicated to revitalizing the role of the rabbinate in Israeli society by engaging in meaningful dialogue with the secular world. Best known for conducting halachic weddings for secular couples, Tzohar is now in its second year of training a cadre of young community rabbis to serve the entire spectrum of Jewish residents in their communities.

* **Keshet School of Jerusalem:** now kindergarten through eighth grade, with plans to develop through high school. Keshet represents a learning community of students from religious and secular backgrounds, committed to respect for religious differences.

* **Beit Morasha of Jerusalem:** trains educational leaders to address the needs of contemporary Israeli society. A Sephardic rabbinic training track, intended to develop modern Zionist spiritual leaders of Sephardic background, was recently inaugurated. In addition, Beit Morasha provides educational services to the state school system and a variety of programs to the public.

* **Kolot:** an intensive year-long program of Jewish learning for executives in business, politics, and media.

* **Yahalom:** a program within state elementary schools, intended to expose immigrant families to Jewish texts by enabling parents and children to learn together. Yahalom also has begun to develop parent-child programs for elementary schools without significant immigrant populations.

* **Jewish/Zionist identity seminars in the IDF:** two-day seminars for cadets who participate in IDF officer training courses, in conjunction with Shorashim. The seminars encourage cadets to explore what being Jewish and Zionist means to them.

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* **Talmud Study for Women:** a new three-year program of advanced Jewish learning at MaTan. The program is intended to develop a cadre of female scholars able to achieve a new standard of excellence in Talmudic and halachic scholarship.

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* **The Center for Jewish Education in the Public School System:** a four-year program under the auspices of the Shalom Hartman Institute to train state (secular) high school principals and teachers to revitalize the study of traditional Jewish texts. The first cohort of educators from 30 schools has completed the initial training program; the Hartman staff will provide these schools with content and pedagogic support over the next two years.

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* **Parshat HaShavuah:** exposes students in state junior high schools to the weekly Torah portion. The curriculum enables pupils to become familiar with perspectives relating to Jewish tradition and culture and to become acquainted with texts from the classical "Jewish bookshelf." The project was piloted in Jerusalem and now plans to expand to other parts of Israel.

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* **Likrat:** an Internet-based project aimed at fostering dialogue between state and state religious junior high school students, via the joint study of literature.

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* **Open Batei Midrash:** a training program implemented in partnership with Beit Midrash Elul. Facilitators and potential coordinators from throughout the country receive intensive training at Elul and accept responsibility to establish a beit midrash in their home community.

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* **Siddur:** now in its final stages, the project seeks to develop clear and easy-to-use home and Shabbat siddurim for Israelis with little or no background. The siddur will be published during the coming year.

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* **Alma Hebrew College:** a liberal arts center in Tel Aviv for the study of Hebrew culture and contemporary Jewish identity.

* **Research:** as part of our efforts to encourage discussion about the Jewish character of Israeli society, AVI CHAI has commissioned a follow-up to the 1993 Guttman study of "Beliefs, Observances and Social Interaction Among Israeli Jews," to be completed during the year 2000. The Foundation also is funding: a study by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies of professional training programs for charedim, and via a study grant, an examination of the potential relevance of Mizrahi Jewish culture to the challenges facing Israel society.

AVI CHAI also works to promote its goals through a variety of projects in North America.

The AVI CHAI Prize in Israel

The AVI CHAI Prize is being awarded for the seventh consecutive year.

The aim of the Prize is to recognize and reward individuals who contribute toward increasing mutual understanding and sensitivity among Israelis Jews of different backgrounds and commitments to Jewish heritage.

The Prize may be conferred on any resident of Israel (not an institution, organization, or any other public body) who has made a significant, ongoing or innovative contribution to creating a bridge between Jews with different approaches to tradition, and whose activities stem from an approach of understanding and appreciation for the various facets of Jewish life.

The Selection Committee is composed of nine people of public stature in Israeli society who represent a broad spectrum of approaches to Jewish tradition.

The AVI CHAI Prize in Israel - 5759 is in the amount of NIS 75,000.

The AVI CHAI Prize in Israel - 5753 was awarded to **Dr. Daniel Tropper**, initiator and founder of GESHER. GESHER's goal is to bring together students of different orientations to Jewish tradition in order to strengthen their Jewish-Zionist identity and nurture respect between religious and secular.

The AVI CHAI Prize in Israel - 5754 was awarded to the late **Arye Ben-Gurion**, founder of the Inter-Kibbutz Holiday Archives. The Archives seek to integrate Jewish tradition within kibbutz life and to foster innovative Jewish cultural models for the kibbutz and all of Israel.

The AVI CHAI Prize in Israel - 5755 was awarded to **Dr. Zvi Zameret**, Director of Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi. Dr. Zameret's career and life provide a personal example of the successful dialogue between Jews of different religious backgrounds, and his actions foster respect for, and knowledge of, Jewish tradition in all sectors of Israeli society.

The AVI CHAI Prize in Israel - 5756 was awarded to **Rabbi Menachem Fruman** for his many initiatives to increase understanding and sensitivity, and his continuing search for a common language with which to develop respectful co-existence between all sectors of the Jewish people. His approach inspired the formation of Tekoa, where residents with different Jewish lifestyles live and study together with mutual respect and openness.

The AVI CHAI Prize in Israel - 5757 was awarded to **Ms. Ruth Calderon Ben-Shachar** and to **Mr. Moti Bar-Or** for their joint initiative in the establishment of Beit Midrash Elul in Jerusalem. They developed a communal learning method where men and women of different approaches to religion and tradition learn to study together with respect, cooperation, and tolerance. Today, Elul serves as a model and source of inspiration for communal learning frameworks for religious and secular around the country.

The AVI CHAI Prize in Israel - 5758 was awarded to **Professor Avraham Shapira** of Tel Aviv University for his efforts to educate the kibbutz movement and the general public in the Jewish heritage. By virtue of his numerous spiritual, cultural, and educational endeavors, Avraham Shapira has demonstrated that differences of belief and conviction can be bridged and that dialogue between people of different approaches to religion can be fostered.

The AVI CHAI Prize in Israel - 5759 is being awarded to **Mrs. Tova Ilan** at the Bible Lands Museum in Jerusalem.

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The AVI CHAI Prize for 5759 is awarded to Mrs. Tova Ilan for her diverse educational activities, which culminated in the establishment of the Yaacov Herzog Center for Jewish Studies ten years ago and her work as its director since its founding.

Tova Ilan's ongoing educational work at the Yaacov Herzog Center and in the Religious Kibbutz Movement, and her efforts on behalf of numerous Jewish cultural institutions and associations that consult with her, represent a model of how to conduct study and dialogue in a multicultural society such as Israel.

At the Yaacov Herzog Center, Mrs. Ilan has succeeded in imparting Jewish values to diverse groups in Israeli society, improving and strengthening relations between religious and secular Jews, and inspiring generations of teachers, thinkers, and educators.

Her achievements owe much to her admirable talents in initiating and implementing programs and to her modest and pleasant manner.

Mrs. Tova Ilan's educational activities serve as an inspiration to all those who seek to develop in Israel a society that is multicultural and spiritually rich, and that respects the values of tradition and democracy.

The Prize Committee

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Mrs. Tova Ilan

Tova Ilan has been a member of Kibbutz Ein-Tzurim since 1951.

A 1948 graduate of the Lewinsky Teachers College, she earned a bachelor's degree cum laude in Jewish history from the Hebrew University. She also earned a master's degree magna cum laude from the Hebrew University in education and in training teachers in remedial education.

She headed the Guidance Department of Bnei Akiva and worked in guidance and teaching in the "youth societies" of Youth Aliyah from 1951–1960.

She served as principal of the Shapir Comprehensive Regional High School, one of the earliest models of integration and reform in the educational system from 1961-1974.

She is active in various committees on education, educational administration, social affairs, and Judaism, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, the Religious Kibbutz Movement, and other organizations.

She chairs the Meimad council and is a member of numerous steering committees: for example, the Framework for Contemporary Jewish Thought and Identity at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, Shatil, Sapir College, and other organizations. She is active in the Partnership 2000 project and in the educational centers of the kibbutz movements.

She co-founded the Yaacov Herzog Center for Jewish Studies at Ein-Tzurim in 1988 and has served as the director since its founding. The aim of the Center is to acquaint diverse groups of Israeli Jews with their Jewish heritage and to create a dialogue between different trends and voices in Israeli society.

Tova Ilan is married to Rafi; they are the parents of two married daughters, Rachel and Ronit.

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