



{TIME}

Learning Time

Working across the world dealing with time zones from the UK, Netherlands, Israel, New York, California and Canada does make you appreciate the vitally important roles that time and clocks play in our society. We had an ambitious international Chavruta Project, dealing with an ambitious subject: Time.

There are many different concepts of time in Jewish sources, often represented in the Hebrew words used. Some of them are very mundane, such as *Z'man* which is the present time – the normal sort of time that we experience. Then they also get a bit more specific, such as *Mo'ed* (a set time) which is used when talking about the festivals. *Yom* (day) sometimes means a regular day of 24 hours, but not always: it's used for the 7 Days of Creation (extreme past) as well as the *Yamim Achronim* (Last Days) which is the time of the Messiah (the extreme future). And we can move onto *Olam* (world or universe) or *Olamim* (worlds) which is often used in temporal contexts; perhaps this indicates an early idea of Space-Time?

We really wanted to explore some of the ways the concept of time was used, what sorts of time there were and all sorts of other philosophical and metaphysical ideas. But just as importantly (if not more so): how we could apply this to the way we manage time in our daily lives. After all, the goal of study in Judaism is to better ourselves with Torah!

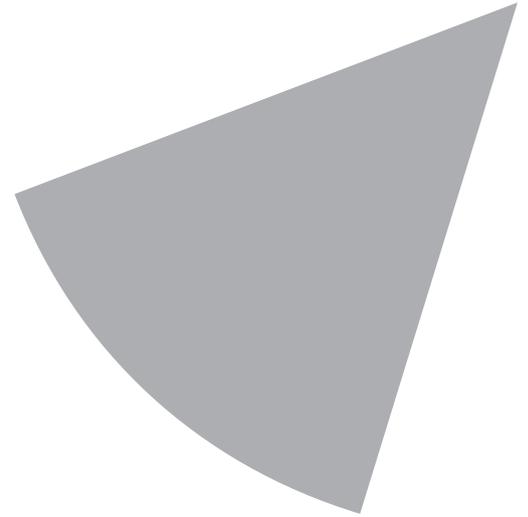
We have done this in this book of four sections, inviting you to join us and learn:

Section One, 'God's Time', led in Israel by **David Biton**, with **Merav Arbel**, **Elana Levi**, **Herztel Havosha** (all Limmud Galil), **Leaora Poliker** (Limmud Arava) and **Orly Richer** (Limmud Negev) delves into the heart of the question what is time, and is it absolute or relative? It begins by considering how time was created and then how God gave us our limited life-spans, asking if all time belongs to God or whether we have freedom of our own. Are we slaves of time, or is time our slave?

Section Two, 'My Time', led by **Albert Ringer** (Limmoed/Limmud Netherlands), **Anthony Sheppard** and **EJ Cohen** (both Limmud in the UK) asks how we should spend the time that we have and what Jewish sources think on this issue. When should we study, and for how long? What about prayer? Or relaxation? Or helping others?

Section Three, 'Our Time', led by **Mark Clamen** (Limmud Toronto), **Karen Radkowsky**, **Ellen Flax** (both Limmud NY), **Salvador Litvak** (LimmudLA), **Lynn Cooper** (Limmud Colorado), **Lonnie Schaffer** (Limmud NOLA) and **EJ Cohen** (this time with Limmud Boston) is concerned with our calendar and how it keeps the Jews all over the world together as a people. How is our communal view of time shaped and in what ways has it perhaps changed?

Section Four, 'All Time', led by **Jackie Gerber** with **Hannah Sassoon** (both in the UK) looks for the way time is used in all manner of sources and what this can mean for us: from the messianic days, to time-travel, to the manipulation of space-time, to memory, and the mad myth of eternal return.



I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has had a part in bringing the Chavruta Project 2010 together.

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Jeremy Tabick
Chair, Chavruta Project 2010