

Prof. Ely Merzbach

Ely Merzbach was born in Paris on 24 Shvat 5710 - February 11, 1950. He is a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Mathematics at Bar-Ilan University, and a researcher in the field of probability theory. He immigrated to Israel at the age of 17 immediately upon graduating high school. He studied a year at the Be'er Yaakov Yeshiva, enlisted in the IDF and served in the Nachal. In 1972 he received a bachelor's degree with honors in mathematics and statistics from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and in 1974 he received a master's degree in mathematics. In 1979 he received his Ph.D. from the Ben-Gurion University in the Negev, and did postdoctoral studies in France at the University of Paris and the École Polytechnique. In 1980, he joined Bar-Ilan University as a lecturer, and since 1993 has served as a full professor in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science.

Over the years he published dozens of academic studies and was a partner in a variety of roles and initiatives in academia. Among them: He was head of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, academic head of Ariel University, Dean of the Faculty of Exact Sciences at Bar-Ilan University and Chairman of the PhD Committee of Bar-Ilan University.

His academic and public work includes writing books and articles, editing journals, organizing conferences and even establishing a "Science, Halachah and Education" academic curriculum as will be elaborated upon below. Prof. Ely Merzbach made a significant contribution to the application of Jewish law in modern life and to deepening the connection between the world of Jewish law and the world of academia and research.

Prof. Merzbach was the winner of the 2017 Lev Prize. In 2021, Prof. Merzbach retired and was appointed the president of the Jerusalem Girls College.

Prof. Merzbach established the "Foundation for the Study of Community Life According to Halacha" which fosters halachic research on community life in our time. It aims to prove that modern life in the State of Israel can be based on and administered on the foundations of Torah and Halacha.

In 2001, he spearheaded a research seminar on the subject of the "scientific basis of the Hebrew calendar." This project brought about a renewal of interest in the Hebrew calendar. Merzbach serves as chairman of the Institute of Mathematics and Astronomy in Jewish Sources.

He has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Tzomet Institute for many years and was involved in the publication of Tchumin. In 2004, he resumed the activities of the Torah and Science Association.

Prof. Merzbach founded and edited the journal "Hegayon-Research on the Jewish Sages' Ways of Thinking" with Prof. Moshe Koppel who is its present editor-in-chief. Badad is Bar Ilan University's scientific journal on Torah and scientific affairs that is published from time to time. The journal deals with the meeting point between modern science and general education, the Orthodox Jewish worldview and philosophy, and how religion deals with the challenges of science and higher education.

In 2009 he established a new and groundbreaking master's degree program at the Bar-Ilan University Faculty of Education: "Science, Halacha and Education", and headed the program for 12 years.

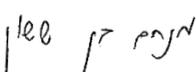
The purpose of the program studies is to investigate the characteristics and interrelationships between scientific and halachic thinking, and to foster research in areas where halachah and science converge to promote their integration in Israeli society.

The program is also designed to explore the history of the integration between science and halachah in various disciplines of knowledge. In each class there are about 30 male and female students, some of whom are writing a thesis and others are pursuing a doctorate.

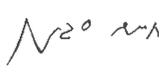
In 2021, he authored the book "The Standard Hebrew Calendar, History and Structure" with Eran Raviv.

He has written many books on Torah and science.

For his prolific and outstanding activities, we decided to award him the 5782-2022 Katz Prize.


Professor Menahem Ben-Sasson


Rabbi Shlomo Dichovski


Rabbi Haim Sabato