

## LimmudNY

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### [Limmud NY: Reform halakhah panel](#)

by [BZ](#) // January 15th, 2007

[Denominations](#), [Halakha](#), [LimmudNY](#)

(Crossposted to [Mah Rabu](#))

Hi from the Catskills (or should I say, the Catskill)!

On Shabbat afternoon I was on a panel on “[The Role of Halakhah in Reform Judaism](#)”, moderated by Rabbi Leon Morris of the [Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning](#). The other panelists were Rabbi Joan Glazer Farber of the [Union for Reform Judaism](#), and Rabbi Mark Sameth of [Pleasantville Community Synagogue](#) (So yes, I was the token non-rabbi on the panel.)

By request, here is some of the discussion from the panel as best I can recall. I’m mostly just going to post what I said (because I’m not worried about misrepresenting myself, but might misrepresent others), but if other panelists or attendees want to post their recollections, please do so in the comments.

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### [Limmud @ Friar Tuck](#)

by [shamirpower](#) // January 15th, 2007

[Arts & Culture](#), [Kitsch](#), [Mishegaas](#), [LimmudNY](#)

*Editor’s Note: The following is a guest post from my Canadian buddy [Feygele](#). Please forgive his Canadian-ness, including spelling and pronunciation of the word “sorry.”*

Prior to registering for this year’s



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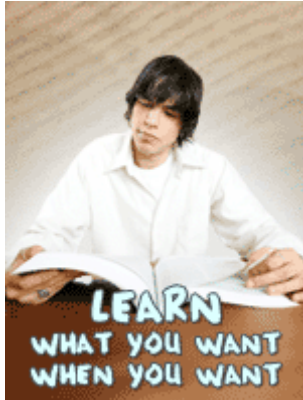
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[Limmud NY](#), I hadn't realised that there was a town of Catskill, NY - I always thought of the Catskills as a region only. But, lo!, I drove the four hours through the mountains to arrive at the [Friar Tuck](#). I assumed it would be a similar venue to last year's [Kusher's](#), full of [kitsch](#) and a bygone era of Jewish families vacationing for the summer. Instead, my first sight was that of a brick building with a castle-esque motif. It didn't stop there though, as I wandered the maze-like hallways, I found the interior design to be eclectic and eccentric. And the rooms! With names like "Buckingham Palace," "Camelot," "Scarlet," and "Sherwood," I felt like their ought to be [men in tights](#) (but probably not as Mel Brooks envisioned) strumming lutes and prancing about. It seemed odd fitting that those of you who were unable to join us in the learning, laughter, conversations, and great food, not only read about those aspects of [LimmudNY](#) but the setting as well. And so, for the second year in a row, we present the [photos of Limmud](#) - not of the people, but of the facility itself.

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## When we love people, we love people for their unique identities

by [shamirpower](#) // January 15th, 2007  
[Coexistence](#), [LimmudNY](#)

[ALG blogs](#) some reflections on [LimmudNY.org](#), as well as a reflection on a discussion of pluralism:

At [LimmudNY](#), I heard [Rabbi Yitz Greenberg](#) (who, incidentally, is surprisingly hilarious) speak about people being created in the image of God, what that means, and what that means for human sexuality and Jewish sexual ethics. What I got out of it is not directly about sexual ethics, but rather a more simple message that should be obvious, and might be obvious to others, but was just on the brink of obviousness to me. This pushed the nascent, recently-developed thought over the edge into unalterable reality.



It says in the Mishna in [Tractate Sanhedrin 4:5](#):

להגיד גדולתו של מלך מלכי המלכים, הקדוש ברוך הוא, שאדם טובע מאה מטבעות בחותם אחד, וכולן דומין זה לזה, מלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא טובע את כל האדם בחותמו של אדם הראשון, ואין אחד מהם דומה לחברו

[Translation](#) provided by the [Chief Rabbi of the UK's website](#):

"...to proclaim the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be He, for when a human being strikes many coins from one mould, they all resemble one another, but the supreme King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be

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He, fashioned every man in the stamp of the first man, and yet not one of them resembles his fellow.”

Adam and Eve were created in the image of God and we were all created from Adam and Eve. Yet, miraculously, we are all different from each other. No two people are alike. Our uniqueness and our Godliness are one and the same, since they come from the same place.

What of this uniqueness? Who cares?

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## [Shabbos @ LimmudNY](#)

by [LastTrumpet](#) // January 13th, 2007

[LimmudNY](#)

Just came from the *pisk, psalm & poem* open mic, hosted by Jewschool’s own [Shamirpower](#), featuring performances by the amazing [Chana Rothman](#) (a brand new song debut!) and [Yoshie Fruchter](#). Up next... a Y-Love concert! I bet you wish you were here.



**JEW FUSION!**

Shabbos was amazing - no surprises there. 6 davvenen options erev, and 7 more in the morning, plus sessions up the wazoo -

[Kabbalah Kirtan with Yofiyah](#), a hip hop tisch with Y-love & Yuri Lane, Niggun fest with yours truly, three different sessions on different Chassidic master (Sefat Emet, Piaseczner & Kedushat Levi), meditation, yoga, a panel featuring BZ on the role of halacha in Reform Judaism... I could go on, but I’m missing the concert.

Check back for more later.

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## [Converting the Pope](#)

by [LastTrumpet](#) // January 12th, 2007

[LimmudNY](#)

The Jewschool crew (BZ, Shamir & I) just attended a session with [David Solomon](#), known for his “[In One Hour](#)” talks. This



brains...  
More meat  
@1:41 pm

His profile is hilarious, I love that.

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## Chevra

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particular talk was titled [How to Convert the Pope: Successful and Failed Attempts to Bring the Messiah](#). Both fascinating, and challenging, on a number of levels. We looked at three figures, [Abraham Abulafia](#) (whose take on Kabbalah ultimately inspired the book and subsequent film [Bee Season](#)), [Solomon Molcho](#) and the [Ramchal](#) (R' Moshe Chaim Luzatto), all of whom at one point or another decided to attempt conversion of the Pope. Needless to say, none of them succeeded, but their little-known stories are certainly food for thought.

During the question and answer period, one of the attendees inquired as to whether or not the presenter thought that Jews should be out actively seeking converts (a question the Reform movement is [currently wrestling with](#), given Rabbi Eric Yoffie's comments at last year's Biennial). The response came as a no, but with a special exception for the Pope. Apparently, the first step in such a conversion, according to Mr. Solomon, would be a presentation of "[Jewish History in One Hour](#)." I'd sure love to be a fly on that wall.

Solomon also explained that he views Islam as over-transcendent (represented by the upward pointing triangle), and Christianity as over-immanent (the downward) and only when the two are reunified with their origin (picture a Magen David) will there be Moshiach.

Up next for me (after Lunch) - [Unified Denominational Theory](#) - [Ken Wilber](#) via [David Ingber](#). Should be fascinating. G'd willing, I'll find time to post again before Shabbos, but if not, Shabbat shalom to you all, and we wish you were here.

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## In the beginning...

by [LastTrumpet](#) // January 11th, 2007  
[LimmudNY](#)

LastTrumpet here, blogging from the lobby of the [Friar Tuck Convention Center](#) in Catskill, NY. [LimmudNY](#) is just about to get under way.

Everything has been pushed back an hour - something with the bus.

Folks are arriving, checking in, grabbing the bagged dinner (mmm, tuna) heading to their rooms (if they can find them), and maariv is in half an hour. Not all of the 800 folks will be here

tonight, but the ones who decided to come early have [some exciting options](#) this evening: [mystical peacemaking](#), [live acoustic music](#), [yiddish radio](#), [Rabbis & sex](#) just a taste of what's to come.



If I can keep my eyes open after the session, I'll give a holla.

If you're not here, and there's anything on the schedule you'd particularly like

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covered, hit me up in the comments and I'll see what I can do. Oh, and I just saw BZ taking pictures of the carpet.

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## [LimmudNY tomorrow!!!!](#)

by [LastTrumpet](#) // January 10th, 2007

[LimmudNY](#)

Tomorrow afternoon, G'd willing, I'll be making my way to the Friar Tuck Convention Center in Catskill, NY for the sold-out [LimmudNY conference](#) (my second). The schedule is jam-packed with goodness, (see previous [posts](#) for details), but I'd imagine there'll be a few moments for some live blogging. Check back over the weekend. If you're coming, leave us a comment, and let us know what you're the most excited about. If you'd like to guest post from the conference, come find me (tall-ish, big beard, gray kippah with green stripe).



This year's conference is taking place at the Robin Hood-themed [Friar Tuck Convention Center](#). It was pointed out to me today that the Limmud conference in England takes place in Nottingham. Coincidence? Divine providence? There's dvar in there about the little guy revitalizing Judaism, wrestling away the joy from the big institutions and redistributing it to the yidden, but I don't have time to write it.

See you there!

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## [Breaking News: LimmudNY Live!!!](#)

by [LastTrumpet](#) // December 15th, 2006

[LimmudNY](#)

Ladies and gentlemen, the [LimmudNY Program](#) (albeit a tentative one) is up! [Go and look at it](#). It's totally amazing, I kid you not. Movies, music, davvening, social justice, mysticism, arts & crafts... I could go on. (plus, you can put it on your iPod)



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There are 50 spots left, and the prices go up on Sunday!

[Register Now.](#)

Previous posts: [Music@LimmudNY](#), [Toirah@LimmudNY](#), [Encounter Point, JewFusion? \(start here if you're new\)](#)

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## Toirah @ LimmudNY

by [LastTrumpet](#) // December 5th, 2006

[Torah](#), [LimmudNY](#)

Because why else come?

[Register here](#)

[Irving \(Yitz\) Greenberg](#) - a seminal thinker in confronting the Holocaust as an historical transforming event and Israel as the Jewish assumption of power and the beginning of a third era in Jewish history. Has published numerous articles on Jewish thought and

religion, and *has written extensively on the theory and practice of pluralism* and on the theology of Jewish-Christian relations. [Click here](#) for mp3 of "Between Pluralism and Factionalism: Can the Unity of the Jewish People Be Restored?"

[Art Green](#) - Rector of [Hebrew College Rabbinical School](#). One of the world's preeminent authorities on Jewish thought and spirituality. [A prolific author](#), his most recent books include *Ehyeh: A Kabbalah for Tomorrow* and *A Guide to the Zohar*.

[Blu Greenberg](#) - Founding president of the [Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance \(JOFA\)](#). Helped found [One Voice: Jewish Women for Israel](#), a national coalition of Jewish women's organizations. Co-founder of The Dialogue Group (Jewish and Palestinian women), a member of the Jewish Women's Dialogue and co-chair of the Global Peace Initiative of Women.

[Mimi Feigelson](#) - [Female Orthodox Rabbi](#). Mashpi'ah Ruchanit and Lecturer of Rabbinic Literature @ [U.J. Rabbinic School](#). Her teaching weaves elements of mind and heart through rigorous text analysis, music and contemplation.

[Nathaniel Helfgot](#) - chair of the Bible and Jewish Thought departments, instructor of Jewish thought and talmud at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah

[Joel Grishaver](#) - Jewish writer, teacher, cartoonist, and storyteller. Started Torah Aura Productions with two friends. Founding board member of [CAJE](#), a consultant to the [Whizin Institute](#), the [author of more than 80 books](#), and a winner of the



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[Miriam Berkowitz](#) - writer, scholar in Boca Raton. Published in Women's Torah Commentary, Jewish Lights Spirituality Handbook, Journal of Pastoral Care, Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine, Jerusalem Report. Author of Spiritual and Practical Guide to [Mikveh](#).

[Judy Klitsner](#) - senior faculty member @ [Pardes](#)

[Kevin Hale](#) - [Sofer stam \(torah scribe\)](#)

[LimmudNY](#) is happening in the Catskills over MLK weekend.

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