



Message from the President and Chair, HUC-JIR Board of Governors

Dear Friends:

Once Honi was walking along the road when he saw a man planting a carob tree.

He asked, "How long before it will bear fruit?"

The man answered, "Seventy years" [Ta'anit 23a].

Honi asked, "And will you be alive in seventy years to eat from its fruit?"

The man answered, "And what if I am not? Just as I found the world full of carob trees planted by my parents and grandparents, so will I plant for my children."

We have recently celebrated Tu B'Shevat, the New Year of the Trees, when we are all reminded of the precious resources that sustain life. All of us are stewards of resources that represent the potentiality of the Jewish future. The replenishment of these resources is our responsibility so that we can leave a legacy of hope and commitment for the generations to come.

Four hundred years ago, the kabbalists in Safed believed that on Tu B'Shevat their seder of wine and fruits could unleash the sparks of holiness hidden since Creation. Over one hundred years ago, the halutzim – European pioneers – came to Eretz-Israel and planted trees to reclaim the deserts and swamps and make them bloom, singing "We have come to the land to build it and be built by it." Mystics and idealists demonstrated that action is required to transform our world.

Your support of Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion is an act of faith in the Jewish future. Your contributions of substance, heart, and spirit ensure the precious resources of Jewish scholarship and professional development that make a difference today, and promise a vital future.

With your generous help, the College-Institute has raised a record \$27 million during the 2001-2002 fiscal year – far exceeding the \$13 million raised the year before. Your contributions represent the seedlings that nurture our students, enrich our programs, sustain our faculty, and preserve our libraries, archives, and museums. These seedlings are transforming the landscape of Jewish life in North America, Israel, and throughout the world.

In these pages celebrating a milestone in the history of the College-Institute, we rededicate ourselves to our sacred obligation to act today to guarantee the Jewish future. We thank you for your partnership in our mission. Together, let us advance our vision for Jewish continuity and a peaceful future for klal yisrael and all humankind.

With warmest wishes for the blessings of peace, health, fulfillment, and joy,

Rabbi David Ellenson, Ph.D.
President

Burton Lehman
Chair, Board of Governors