

# WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

July 31, 2014 | Section 2

*News, Events, and More*

## NEWS

### YCT Alumni Support Israel

Rabbi Eytan Yammer (YCT '11), Rabbi of Kneseth Israel Congregation in Birmingham, Alabama, delivered over 150 letters of gratitude for *chayalim* written by the Birmingham community.

Rabbi Adam Scheier (YCT '04), Rabbi of Shaar Hashomayim in Montreal, Quebec, visited wounded soldiers in Barzilai Hospital in Ashkelon.

Rabbi Aryeh Leifert (YCT '06), tour guide at WalkingIsrael.com, collected money for, purchased, and distributed supplies (energy bars, socks, underwear, portable phone chargers) to our soldiers. You can easily contribute money to this effort by sending it through [PayPal](https://www.paypal.com) to [AryehLeifert@gmail.com](mailto:AryehLeifert@gmail.com).

### 2014 Meorot Fellowship Now Accepting Applications

The Meorot Fellowship is now accepting [applications for 2014](#). The Fellowship is open to college juniors, seniors, and recent graduates interested in exploring the opportunities and grappling with the challenges of Orthodox identity and Jewish communal leadership.

The Fellowship consists of eight sessions, each built around a topical presentation by a leading academic, community leader, or rabbi. Presentations are followed by the core of the program – open and honest discussion. Past speakers have included Rabbi Saul Berman, Blu Greenberg, Rabbi Dov Linzer, and Dr. Bat Sheva Marcus; and past topics have included Science and Halakha, Biblical Criticism, and Homosexuality.

The eight sessions start Thursday, October 23 and run through Thursday, December 18, and take place from 6:30 to 9:30 PM on the Upper West Side.

## COMING EVENTS

### Tisha B'Av Learning at Drisha

Where: 37 West 65<sup>th</sup> Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
When: Tuesday, August 5

Join YCT and the Drisha Institute for Jewish Education on Tisha B'Av, Tuesday, August 5, for *kinnot* and explanatory *shiurim*. The program will start at 10:15 AM at the Drisha Institute on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

For more information, including the complete schedule, please visit [www.yctorah.org](http://www.yctorah.org).

## IN THE PRESS

### *The Jerusalem Post*, July 24, [“This is the Time to Unite Behind Israel”](#)

Rabbi Avi Weiss writes about his trip to Israel, his thoughts on his grandsons' service in the army and his reactions to the war.

### *The Muqata Facebook Group*, July 24

A facebook group [posted a message](#) from a soldier on the border of Gaza. He relays his heardwarming experience on the border.

### *The Tablet*, July 25, [“A Maine Rabbi Makes Aliyah to Israel”](#)

Rabbi Akiva Herzfeld (YCT '07) writes about the personal conflicts inherent in his decision to leave his pulpit in Maine and move with his family to war-ravaged Israel.

### *The Times of Israel*, July 28, [“My Diary: Being in Israel During Operation Protective Edge – Part Two”](#)

Rabbi Avi Weiss continues his diary from Israel, sharing

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what it is like to experience life through his daughter's eyes, a daughter who has two sons serving in the Israeli army, and about his visits to friends who have lost loved ones in battle.

**The Huffington Post, July 28, ["Spiritual Empathy"](#)**

Avram Mlotek (YCT '15) provides an insightful look into his daily life as a father and chaplain while weaving an international commentary on youth, experience, ignorance, anger, and conflict.

**The Times of Israel, July 29, ["The Siren"](#)**

Jon Leener (YCT '16) wrote a blog entry sharing a short vignette about what it's like to wake up at 2:30 in the morning and hear a siren, knowing that you have only seconds to get to safety.

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**Name:**

Jonathan Duker



**Home Town:**

Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania

**Graduating Class:** 2004

**Position:**

Faculty Member, Midreshet AMIT, Matan Beit Shemesh

**About Rabbi Duker:**

Rabbi Duker holds a B.A. and an M.A. in Medieval Jewish History from Yeshiva University. He made *aliyah* immediately after receiving *semikha* from YCT in 2004 to serve as an educator in Israel. He has taught at a number of institutions, including Yeshivat Reishit, Midreshet Lindenbaum, and World Bnei Akiva Tochnit Lehava. Teaching at Midreshet AMIT and giving classes in Daf Yomi and Jewish Thought for Matan Beit Shemesh, Rabbi Duker is currently focused on women's education. In addition, Rabbi Duker has taken to writing, publishing *The Spirits Behind the Law: The Talmudic Scholars* (Urim Publications). He is currently working on a high school textbook on *Tefilla* for the Mercaz Halacha v'Hora'ah, headed by Rav Yosef Tzvi Rimon. He lives in Beit Shemesh with his wife Susan and their four sons.

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