



A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

by Jonathan Roth

The New Kid

We all know that being the “new kid” in a school isn’t easy. This was something I was nervous about when I made my decision to transfer to Orayta one month ago. I had made some really good friends at my previous *yeshiva*; I would have to leave those friends behind. I would have to pack up my belongings and move to an unfamiliar environment with a new group of guys. Needless to say, I was definitely anxious.



But the transition went smoother and easier than I could have ever imagined. From the beginning, I was welcomed warmly by the students. Everyone was so friendly, making the move much easier than I expected. I have made many new friends in the process. I am establishing close relationships with the incredible Rabbis. I love the learning here, as well as the warm, friendly environment that a *yeshiva* like Orayta possesses.

Since I have been here, I have learned so much about what it means to be Jewish. Rabbi Aaron teaches that a Jew should strive for perfection. That is what the Jews were put on this world to do. The more we strive for perfection and the more we become perfect, the more like G-d we become. This is how meaningful and inspiring Judaism can be. Rav Binny shows us what it means to be a moral individual. He teaches this by using the *Rambam's Hilchot Deot* (lessons in ethics) as a model.

We also go on awesome trips in Orayta. Recently, we visited *Kochav Hayarden*, a crusader fortress that was used about one thousand years ago. It was interesting to learn about the history of the fortress; to see where the Crusaders dined, slept, and relaxed, yet today is part of the Jewish State of Israel. How inspiring that after the Crusaders tried to create a Christian state, and to destroy the Jews in the process, we are the ones standing today on the ruins of their mighty castle!

We also visited an Israeli monument to soldiers killed in battle in the Jordan valley. It was a very meaningful and sad experience to see the names of those soldiers that had died defending the land of Israel. The memorial made me appreciate what Israeli soldiers have done, and still do, for this land.

I definitely feel that there is no other *yeshiva* out there like Orayta. I am very happy that I made the switch - I find it to be intellectually stimulating, as well as inspiring, and am really looking forward to the rest of the time that I will spend here.