Annual Report of Rabbi Hayyim Angel, National Scholar of the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals

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National Scholar Second Year Report June 1, 2014—May 31, 2015

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To our members and friends, I now have completed my second year of working as the National Scholar of the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals. It has been an honor and privilege working to promote our vision nationwide primarily through teaching, and also through writing and creating internet classes. This report summarizes my various projects and activities over the past year. In addition to the wide variety of classes and programs, this past year has witnessed remarkable progress in terms of focusing our classes and programs toward articulating the vision of the Institute, finding a new home and partner at Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun in Manhattan, and addressing the pressing religious issues of the day through partnerships with other rabbis and scholars.

This past fall, I gave an eight-part series entitled “Creating Jewish Unity.” In this course, I outlined some of the most important elements of a traditionally faithful vision of Judaism that simultaneously is as inclusive as possible. You can hear the series on our website, http://www.jewishideas.org//online-learning. Our partnership with Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun has grown beautifully over the past year with my serving as the KJ Rabbinic Scholar, and we held our first two symposia at KJ this past year:

(1) From the Academy to the Religious Community: How We Can Gain Religious Insight from Academic Jewish Studies, and (

2) Extremely Religious Without Religious Extremism. Each symposium featured three speakers from different disciplines, attracted a wonderful crowd, and most of the talks are posted on our website, http://www.jewishideas.org//online-learning. We will also publish most of the talks in article form in upcoming issues of Conversations.

My major areas of focus have been:

• Community Education:

o There is a serious thirst for the kind of learning represented by our Institute, and a sizable number of communities have invited us. Through a combination of scholar-in-residence programs and lectures in different communities, we reached thousands of interested adults directly in the past year.

o In addition to the concentration of programs in the New York tri-state area, it was gratifying to visit the communities in Memphis, TN; Overland Park, KS; and Los Angeles, CA.

• Teacher Training: o One of our central goals is to train other rabbis, community leaders, and educators to spread Torah to schools and communities. In this manner we create bridges with many people in the field to work together. o I taught a course in “How to Teach Bible in Synagogues” to honors rabbinical students at Yeshiva University.

o I participate annually as faculty in Yeshiva University’s graduate program in Experiential Education. o I taught students at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School, and Yeshivat Maharat. o I gave teacher-training seminars to the Bible faculties at CHAT school in Toronto, Ontario. Given the complexities of Bible and Jewish Studies our graduates are likely to encounter on secular university campuses, our training focuses on how to equip Jewish Studies high school faculties to prepare their students for the University setting.

• Publications:

o I published a new collection of essays on Tanakh, entitled Peshat Isn’t So Simple, Kodesh Press.

o The Institute published my Jewish Holiday Companion this past November. It was distributed to Institute members and interested synagogues, educators, and

laypeople across the country. This volume makes accessible comments on the holidays and their ritual readings. Additional copies are available at amazon.com.

o I am in the editing stages of a commentary on the prophetic books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi in the context of the Second Temple Period. It will be published by Maggid Press in Jerusalem.

• Internet Learning:

o We have expanded our Online Learning section on our website, jewishideas.org. You can find links to a growing number of classes of mine there. Below is an itemized listing of the various classes and programs over the past year.

• Most frequently, I served in my capacity of Rabbinic Scholar at Kehilath Jeshurun on a monthly basis from September-June. Going forward, I will be there on most Shabbatot when not away in a different community as a scholar-in-residence.

• June 3-5: Shavuot scholar-in-residence, Young Israel of West Hartford, CT.

• June 16: Book Launch for my book, Peshat Isn't So Simple. • June 20-21: Scholar-in-residence, Young Israel of Oceanside, NY.

• June 24: Lecture in the Experiential Education program by Yeshiva University.

• May 7-June 25: Seven-part series on the Book of Samuel, Lincoln Square Synagogue, NY.

• June 29-30: Three lectures on Tanakh at the yemei iyyun of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah.

• July 2-30: Five-part series on the Haftarot Lamdeinu Teaneck, NJ.

• October 21:-December 16: Eight-part series on Creating Jewish Unity, Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals, NY.

• October 22-December 17: Eight-part series on the Book of Samuel, Lincoln Square Synagogue, NY.

• October 24-25: Scholar-in-residence, Anshei Sfard, Memphis, TN.

• November 14-15: Scholar-in-residence, Young Israel of Hillcrest, NY.

• November 18-December 20: Four-part series on the Haftarot Lamdeinu Teaneck, NJ.

• November 30: Scholarly panel on the movie, Noah. Yeshiva University Museum.

• December 5-6: Scholar-in-residence, BIAV, Overland Park, KS.

• December 9: Class for Yeshiva University's women's group, NY.

• December 15: Seminar on Hanukkah to students and parents of the Frisch School, Paramus, NJ.

• January 2-3: Scholar-in-residence, Young Israel of Woodmere-Cedarhurst, NY.

• January 5: Class at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah-Maharat winter intensive, NY.

• January 23-March 27: Nine-part series on how to teach Bible in synagogues, Yeshiva University Honors Rabbinical Students, NY.

• January 28-March 25: Eight-part series on the Book of Samuel, Lincoln Square Synagogue, NY.

• February 7: Scholar-in-residence, Congregation Ohab Shalom, NY.

• February 12: Book Launch for my book, Jewish Holiday Companion.

• February 27-28: Scholar-in-residence, Congregation Ahavath Torah, Englewood, NJ.

• March 10: Teacher training at CHAT school, Toronto, Ontario.

• April 15-June 3: Eight-part series on the Book of Samuel, Lincoln Square Synagogue, NY.

• April 19-May 3: Three-part series on the Book of Ruth, Young Israel of Jamaica Estates, NY. • May 23-25: Shavuot scholar-in-residence, Young Israel of Century City, CA.

Thank you all for your support and enthusiasm, and I look forward to promoting our Torah vision for many years to come.

Rabbi Hayyim Angel

National Scholar Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals