

Background History: Rabbi Shlomo Aviner

Rosh Hayeshiva and Rosh Yeshiva (Dean of Seminary) and Chairman of the Board

November, 2002 -- Allegations were made against Rabbi Shlomo Aviner of clergy sexual abuse.



Rabbi Shlomo Aviner was born in 1943 in German Occupied Lyon, France. There he was active in Bnei Akiva youth movement; and at one time became the leader. Aviner also has been active in the religious Zionist youth movement, eventually assuming the role of national director.

Rabbi Aviner holds a M.A. in Mathematics and is an Electrical Engineer by profession.

After relocating to Israel in 1966, Rabbi Aviner studied at Yeshivat Merkaz Harav which was under the direction of Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Kook, son of Israel's first Chief Rabbi, Avraham Yitzchak Kook.

At one point Rabbi Aviner became the rabbinical leader of Kibbutz Lavi in the Galil and Moshav Keshet on the Golan Heights. Since 1981, he has been the rabbi of Bet El.

He is also a Reserve Lieutenant in the Israel Defense Forces.

Rabbi Aviner's known for providing spiritual counseling to youth and young couples to Prime Ministers and heads of the Security Establishment.

In 2005, two women accused the Aviner of creating emotionally intimate relationships with them. These relationships included his expressions of his love for them during regular late-night phone conversations, extracting details from them of their sexuality and promoting an unhealthy emotional dependence on him.

Today, Rabbi Aviner serves as the head rabbi of Beit El and as Rosh Yeshiva (Dean) of Ateret Cohanim Yeshiva, which is located in the Muslim Quarter of Jerusalem and a leader of the Religious Zionist movement. Rabbi Aviner has hundreds of published works. He has columns that appear weekly in the Israeli daily Ma'ariv, and in the Machon Meir weekly newsletter "BeAhava U'Bemuna"; and currently has a regular radio show with Arutz Sheva.