



MASORTI MATTERS: HOW MERCAZ-CANADA & THE MASORTI FOUNDATION MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ISRAEL

Incitement by Israel's Sephardic Chief Rabbi Amar



Masorti Rabbi Elisha teaching Torah at Zichron Yaakov

Canadian Foundation for Masorti Judaism & MERCAZ-Canada are very concerned about a letter issued on official Israeli government stationery by Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel Shlomo Amar calling for a rally at his office this coming Tuesday. The language used in the statement is inflammatory and confrontational, referring to our members as "terrorists" whose "sole intention is to do harm to the holiness of Torah."

The Rabbinical Assembly issued the following statement:

The State of Israel and the Jewish people have learned the most bitter lesson in the murder of our beloved Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin (z"l) that incendiary language can result in devastating consequences. We speak as a worldwide Conservative community in demanding that this threat to Masorti rabbis' physical safety, not only their personal integrity, be defended. The Talmud (Arakhin 15b) teaches that hateful speech has the potential to kill. Rabbi Amar's language places all Jewish people at risk of violence, all because Israeli Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein directed that non-

-Orthodox rabbis in agricultural communities could be paid salaries from non-religious budgets.

The vast majority of the world's Jews do not conform to the unfathomably hateful language of one of the two chief religious leaders funded by the Government of Israel. We ask that the resources of the Jewish state be devoted to teaching and propagating a love of Judaism and the Jewish people. As the Talmud concludes (Arakhin 15b), "What is the remedy for slanderers? If he be a scholar, let him engage in the Torah, as it is said: The healing for the tongue is the tree of life."

Read the letter below.

Marom (Masorti students & young adults organization) members daven Shacharit with Masorti Rabbi (and Camp Ramah Canada staff member) Chaya



Masorti rabbis are increasingly being called upon to provide a religious presence in schools that are part of the secular system. They are offering Bar and Bat Mitzvah training and are reaching out to the next generation and through them, often to the parents as well. Even without the government funding, our congregations throughout Israel are making their mark, and together, we are making a real difference in the lives of Israelis, providing additional outlets for Jewish expression and learning, and connecting with individuals who, without Masorti, would otherwise have little or no connection to Judaism, halakha and Jewish life.

Please support the work of Masorti in Israel by making a donation at www.masorti.ca/donate.html or by mail to Canadian Foundation for Masorti Judaism, 1000 Finch Avenue West, Suite 508, Toronto, ON M3J 2V5. Come see the results on the December 3-6 (plus travel). Contact Rabbi Jennifer Gorman at the Masorti office for more information.

Your membership in MERCAZ-Canada, combined with others around the world, also helps keep our voice strong, ensuring funding for Masorti/Conservative synagogues and programs throughout Israel and the world from the World Jewish Organization (WZO) and the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI). Join MERCAZ-Canada now: <http://www.mercaz.ca/signup.html>.

Read the Letter (translation by Rabbi Gordon Tucker)

A Letter Addressed to all Rabbis in Every Part of the Country, May God be With Them

We hereby make known our distress and deep pain about the desecration of Heaven's honor, about the trampling of the Torah, and about the aid and comfort given to those who uproot and destroy Judaism, people who have already brought horrendous destruction on the Jewish people in the Diaspora, by causing terrible assimilation and an uprooting of all of the fundamental principles of the Torah.

These people now seek recognition in the Land of Israel as well, so that uprooters of the faith will be recognized as religious leaders. Woe to us that this is happening in our time - that heads are held high by enemies of God, wicked people who are like the turbulent sea that cannot be quieted, their entire aim being to do harm to the sanctity and purity of Torah in our holy land. So we declare before one and all: "This will not stand!"

We are therefore calling on one and all to assemble for a deliberative rally, to cry out bitterly on behalf of the Torah, and to entreat the Almighty to void this evil decree, to preserve our holy Torah as it was given, to keep it untouched by alien hands, and to stop those who would sabotage [modern Hebrew "commit terrorism"] and destroy the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts.

WE WILL ALL GATHER ON TUESDAY, 6 TAMMUZ AT 2:00 P.M. AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE CHIEF RABBINATE OF ISRAEL

No one should be absent at such a time, when the participation of all Rabbis is essential, so that each can lend support to his brother and give one another strength. Let us be strong and supportive on behalf of our holy Torah, and on behalf of the Jewish people, so that the wall of its vineyard not be breached. May the One who repairs all breaches repair this one as well in mercy, and put repentance into the hearts of those of errant ideas, so that they come to believe that this Torah will never be replaced or changed, God forbid.

Shlomo Moshe Amar, Rishon Le-Tziyon, Chief Rabbi of Israel

**Help us assure the future for a democratic and pluralistic Jewish State
by joining MERCAZ-Canada and supporting the Masorti Foundation.**

To donate online, visit <http://www.masorti.ca/donate.html> today.

Keep our voice strong in the WZO & Jewish Agency, join MERCAZ-Canada <http://www.mercaz.ca/>



MERCAZ-Canada ~ Your Voice in Israel
Canadian Foundation for Masorti Judaism ~ Supporting Conservative Judaism in Israel
For more information about Masorti/Conservative Judaism in Israel
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