

Christians in Israel

True Doctrine and True Conduct

Over the years, the Israeli Hebrew-speaking church has been reticent to challenge various teachings that arose within. Denials of Jesus' deity as equal to that of the God the Father, insistence on continued obligation to the Mosaic Law, denials of Jesus' humanity, extravagant claims to spiritual power and authority were allowed to spread without public or even congregational demur. The only issue church leaders seemed to be willing to take up were challenges to their own authority. Immorality, personal, financial and sexual, was likewise allowed to continue without firm challenge.

This is slowly changing. Readers of MaozNews are aware of a conference that took place some years back, in which a clear stand was taken for the full deity of Messiah, and another in which the purported authority of rabbinic tradition was challenged and a Statement of Faith (however vague) adopted.

On Thursday, November 19, 2009, a further important step was taken in the issuance of a public statement concerning the false teachings of one David Bar-David, who is described as denying the humanity, including his being a descendant of King David; the death of Jesus on the cross: the authority of large portions of the scriptures (with specific reference to the apostolic writings).

It is now to be seen whether such a step will lead to a clear and firm stance on other issues, including those that pertain to morality.

Harassment

In a spate of severe events all around the country, the Levines, a Christian family in Beith She'an, 20 miles south west of Jerusalem, has become the object of repeated harassment by the large Orthodox community in the town. Thrice vehicles they owned were vandalized and twice completely destroyed by fire. Threats, verbal and bodily, are repeatedly made against members of the family, with the local police doing very little in response. Finally, the family has engaged a lawyer, submitted formal complaints and demanded action be taken to bring an end to the violence.

Meanwhile, Jack Teitel, accused of fire-bombing the home of Messianic David Ortiz and severely wounding his then-14 year old son, has been remanded in custody. Word is out that Teitel did not act on his own, requiring further precautions on the part of local Christians and congregations.

In Be'er Sheba, the City Rabbi has been taken to court for allegedly sponsoring and leading a protest two years ago, in which a local Pastor was manhandled, his glasses broken and he thrown into a pool.