

Messianic Rabbi: Shelanu TV, Christian Leaders and 30 Pieces of Silver

For those of us who believe in Yeshua (Jesus) as taught about in The Holy Scriptures, we believe in what is known as the Great Commission:

And Yeshua came up to them and spoke to them, saying, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Ruach ha-Kodesh, 20 teaching them to observe all I have commanded you. And remember! I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Matt 28:18-20, TLV).

Then He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you—everything written concerning Me in the Torah of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "So it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance for the removal of sins is to be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:44-49).

The verses above are some of the last words spoken by Yeshua before He left this world and promised to return in the last days. When He spoke these words to His disciples, He was standing in Israel and speaking to Jewish men. He told them to make disciples of all men, beginning in Jerusalem until the end of the age. Messianic Jews like me believe this commission

is still active today.

As a believer in Yeshua as the promised Messiah of Israel, I believe that it is my obligation to share this Good News with everyone everywhere, including Israel. It is also my understanding that this commission was given to all those who would become disciples of Yeshua, both Jewish and non-Jewish, which is why I was shocked to hear some American Christian leaders on television, in newspapers, and on social media speaking against the new Israeli cable television channel, Shelanu TV.

I know that some reading this article may not know about the Shelanu TV controversy in Israel. For those who are unfamiliar, Shelanu TV is a new cable television station airing in Israel run by and airing programming for Messianic Jews in Israel.

To understand the Shelanu TV controversy, we have to begin by understanding what took place. Shelanu began airing Messianic Jewish programming in Hebrew in Israel a few weeks ago. As a result, some of the religious Jews in Israel became angry about the very existence of a television station run by Messianic Jews in Israel.

But was their outrage the result of some deception, as they claim, by the people who operate Shelanu? No, it was not! Contrary to the majority of the coverage by the news media and comments made by some in Israel's religious community, the religious people in Israel's government, and (surprisingly) comments made by some American Christian leaders, there was *no* deception at all. When the HOT Cable system applied for a permit for the channel on behalf of Shelanu TV, they were upfront about who would be operating the channel and what the content would be: programs produced *by* and *for* Israeli Messianic Jews.

There is no way those in the government that are involved in

the licensure process don't understand who Messianic Jews are and what they believe. How do we know this for sure? The government in Israel treats Messianic Jews as an entirely separate category of people. For instance, all other Jews can receive Israeli citizenships based upon the Law of Return no matter what they believe or disbelieve about G-D, but not Messianic Jews, who are disqualified simply because of their belief based upon the Jewish Scriptures that Yeshua is the Jewish Messiah.

We also know they know who Messianic Jews are because Israel's Messianic Jews have become a very active part of Israeli society. There are Messianic Jews that serve with excellence in the IDF (Israel Defense Forces). Messianic Jews have now run for seats in the Knesset. Messianic Jews have even appeared openly on Israeli reality television programs.

So, why would the religious in Israel accuse Shelanu TV of deception? There are two main reasons. First, Israel has freedom of religion and expression.

Please understand that those against Shelanu are legitimately angry about the station, but their anger is based upon their belief that Messianic Judaism is wrong and theologically dangerous.

However, their being against a religious belief is not a legally acceptable reason to remove Shelanu's license. So, they decided to accuse the people running Shelanu of deception and feign outrage at this horrible deception brought upon the people of Israel, especially the children.

Why the children? It provides weight to their accusation because it is illegal in Israel to proselytize children without their parents' permission. (Once again, for clarity's sake, Shelanu was not deceptive in the application, and they are not targeting children with their programming, contrary to the claims in the media against them.)

Second, the religious know they are a very small minority, although a politically powerful one, so they needed to attract allies. They knew that if they accused Shelanu TV of deception and proselytizing children, they could count on some Christian leaders for support, especially those who operate humanitarian agencies joining them in their outrage.

Why? Because humanitarian agencies need the approval and support of the religious parties in Israel to function. These agencies raise millions and millions of dollars from Christians because they are “helping Israelis.” So it was easy for reporters to find Christian leaders who readily accepted the false accusations against Shelanu TV as truth without any investigation of the claims or even asking the actual people involved.

The Christian leaders then publicly attacked Shelanu TV and the Messianic Jews involved, even though they were producing television content consistent with their legally obtained cable television permit. These “Christian leaders” gave interviews on television and in the papers and made videos on social media platforms condemning Israeli Messianic Jews for operating a television station that legally teaches what Messianic Jews believe.

While I disagree with the deceptive tactics of these religious Jews, I can at least understand their actions in coming against the Messianic Jews because they believe (incorrectly, in my opinion) that a Jew who accepts Yeshua becomes idolatrous. What does amaze me, however, are the actions and statements of these “Christian leaders” who have allied themselves with those attacking Shelanu TV and the message of Yeshua taught by *Israelis* in *Hebrew* in *Israel*.

These Christian leaders swallowed the false claims of these religious Jews—who hate *Messianic* Jews—hook, line and sinker. They then publicly aligned themselves with enemies of the Good News of Yeshua, against those who believe the Good News of

Yeshua.

What would motivate Christian leaders to actively fight against Messianic Jews in Israel? My first inclination (from experience) would be to say, "Follow the money" and to tell you to look for the 30 pieces of silver. {eo}

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