

Israeli Supreme Court Declares Messianic Bakery Kosher

Following a lengthy legal battle, Israel's Supreme Court on June 29 ordered the Chief Orthodox Rabbinate to grant kashrut certification to an Ashdod bakery owned by a Messianic Jew, a decision likely to spark further confrontation between the nation's highest legal arbiter and the ultra-Orthodox community.

In its verdict, the court ruled that the 51-year-old Yemenite baker's belief that Jesus was the Messiah did not make her baked goods unkosher.

Furthermore, the court found that the Chief Rabbinate Council had exceeded the authority granted them by the Kashrut Law when they demanded that the bakery meet special conditions such as promising not to engage in missionary activity and turning the keys to the bakery over to a kashrut supervisor, conditions demanded solely because the owner is a Messianic Jew.

The owner, Pnina Conforty, who became a believer while working in Ohio for an evangelical Christian family, enjoyed impressive business success after returning to Israel and opening the bakery in 2002. Conforty, however, quickly saw a sharp decline in sales after her faith was publicized in an article in a Messianic Jewish magazine.

She suffered from demonstrations outside her bakery and posters with her picture distributed throughout the city warning that she was a missionary.

"Finally I won. This is my baby," said Conforty after giving credit to the Ohio family that led her to Christ. "God

arranged it that I arrived at a place where there were Christians who love Israel more than most Jews do. Their love and faith were so different from the religion I learned at home that was based on fear. I was never taught to serve God out of love until then."

Source: International Christian Embassy Jerusalem,