

## A MESSIANIC YESHIVA AND YOUR MINISTRY

Omanim Lema'an Yisroel Yeshiva (Artist for Israel

Yeshiva/Institute) is a virtual Messianic Yeshiva on the

Internet. It is a post-high school or advanced Messianic

Yeshiva, a messianic yeshiva gedola (advanced yeshiva). Our beis

medrash (house of study) is located in cyberspace.

Structurally and administratively, messianic yeshivas are only

superficially like universities. True, both have libraries,

classrooms, professors, administrative offices, curriculums, and

students. And our messianic yeshiva has all of these, as well.

However, there is a fundamental difference. One does not spend a

fixed number of years in a yeshiva. Some students spend one year, some two, some ten or more. Universities require their students to take a specific number of courses leading to a degree, whereas the primary aim of an Orthodox yeshiva is not that, not even is it to ordain Jewish clergy; rather, the yeshiva exists in order that G-d-fearing individuals might learn, quite for its own sake (the concept of Torah lishmo), how to apprehend and communicate the pure Jewish faith of the Kitvei HaKodesh and the Orthodox Jewish Brit Chadasha.

Therefore, it is not the purpose of AFI Yeshiva to turn out yeshiva bochorim (students) who are mere intellectuals

(maskilim), mere gnostic dandies puffed up by the status symbols

of the academic titles and degrees we've given them. Our purpose

at AFI Yeshiva is, furthermore, not the mere mastery of the

Talmud. Our purpose, rather, is to use rabbinic literature and

the arts as a bridge over which to lead rabbis and others into

the Tanakh and into the Hebraic milieu of the entire Bible. Our

purpose is to fight heresy (apikorsus), to develop ethical

behavior (middos), and to produce not mere scholars (talmidei

chachomim), but cross-cultural communicators, able to go in the

power of the Ruach Hakodesh into Jewish neighborhoods and win

uncommitted Jews to their Moshiach and to the planting of the

Ruach HaKodesh-filled Synagogues of Biblical Judaism. We are

trusting that HaShem will be our learning partner (chavrusa) to

help us in this task for His Glory.

Truly He is our only real accreditation and seal of approval

(hechsher). Like many yeshivas, our messianic yeshiva takes

nothing from governments, no money, no aid, no endorsement. Our

students don't need government money to learn, thank you. We

will not tolerate accrediting agencies or the State Department of

Education telling us to change our curriculum or admission

policies or faculty hiring policies. We can provide a quality

education without consulting with mockers and unbelievers. We

take nothing from organized religion. We are an independent

institution; we offer our students and faculty only the great

honor of suffering with us as we proclaim the pure Jewish

Scriptures for the sake of the redemption of Israel (a task

accrediting agencies and government employees are not interested

in evaluating). Truly it was HaShem who resolved to establish

our AFI Messianic Yeshiva in cyberspace where the self-appointed

religious monitors and censors cannot violate our constitutional

rights of freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of

assembly, and where the hypocrits cannot bring Kristallnacht upon

Messianic Jews or upon any person of any creed or ethnicity by

terrorizing our building or our students as if it were 1938 and

they were the "tough guys" this time around. The Internet was

made to withstand a nuclear attack; surely it can withstand a

Fascist of any description or ethnicity. We are American

citizens, and we have the freedom to believe in anything we want,

and you, sir, had better believe that we will take a Fascist such

as yourself to court if you try with any Kristallnacht tactics

to take away our constitutional rights of freedom of speech and

freedom of religion. Too many people shed their blood fighting

for our freedom of religion for us to give it up because you

don't happen to like what we believe. Maybe we don't like what

you believe, but we are Americans, so we are duty-bound to

respect your right to believe that Mickey Mouse is g-d if that's

your religion. If you don't agree with this principle, you don't

agree with the Constitution. Some Jewish people say,

threateningly, "Do not mention your faith to us." Some Muslims

say even more threateningly, "Do not mention your faith to us."

My Messiah says, "Tell them, lest they perish." Should we obey

them because of their threats or should we obey the Messiah?

Could the fact that we have been hypocritically attacked by

people who would never tolerate such treatment against their

synagogues or mosques have anything to do with Hashem's resolve

to establish this Messianic beis medrash on the Internet? We

believe so, and we believe that many others will soon say, Amen.

And we will not charge anyone whom we accept as a student to

study with us. And, unlike many, we will not profiteer off of the Word of G-d or off of a student's sincere desire to study the Kitvei Hakodesh, and no one will be able to accuse us of this, or of being paid to "destroy souls." It's all as free as the Internet. Messiah says, "Freely you received, freely give." The prototype of our messianic yeshiva is the one that a certain rabbi established nearly two thousand years ago in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. Shliach Sha'ul may have been influenced in some ways by the yeshiva he himself attended under Gamliel. In starting yeshivas, we should remember that this rabbi encouraged our imitating him; he said, "Follow me as I follow the Moshiach."

This would include also the way he received messianic s'michah.

Also we note that there are at least five things about this rabbi

that we must imitate in the hall of study or beis medrash that we

have been given. First, we must note that this rabbi was a rabbi

upon whom the Shekhinah had bestowed the power of the Ruach

Hakodesh. He could cast out demons, he knew how to follow Hashem

in praying for the sick, in prophesying and in preaching with

prophetic power because he was filled with the Ruach Hakodesh and

spoke in leshonot. Secondly, he knew and taught the correct

doctrines of the other Shluchim--he had something far beyond what

we would call today a superior scribal or "seminary" education.

Thirdly, he had artistic skills and was a literary artist as well

as a rhetorician and hymnist. Fourthly, he used his parnoseh (livelihood) and his tent-making business skills to give him the financial ability he needed to travel and to cross cultural barriers and to do ministry on the street in Athens and from house to house in Ephesus in order to help finance the planting of new congregations. And, finally, he used his own specialized yeshiva training, his Jewish education (chinuch), to help him give vision to the blind synagogue community, which had trouble seeing the Gentile Shlichut of Moshiach, and to the blind Brit Chadasha kehillah community, which had trouble seeing the observance of the Torah and its mitzvot as part of the Jewish

G-d-given trust at Sinai. This rabbi went around the world

turning everything upside down for Hashem, and our vision is that

we might send many students to follow him in the same holy

vocation. If this is threatening to you, talk to your therapist.

Past students of Artists For Israel Institute are now in media

ministries, planting congregations in foreign countries or here

in America, doing short-term overseas ministry in various foreign

lands, touring as artist-ministers, writing, using foreign

languages to minister bi-lingually, creating works of art to

glorify the L-rd and reach the unreached within their own

cultural context, leading congregations, involved in

cross-cultural ministry with Muslims and other unreached

peoples, and being used in many innovative ways to fulfill the

Great Commission of the Mashiach of Israel. We do want to

certify each student as having completed the course of study.

This requires taking the exam, and mailing it in to us

along with recommendations, three letters of recommendation on

official stationery from people with known ministry who can vouch

for the sincerity and competence of the candidate in pursuing

ministerial training. Since we do not charge tuition and donate

our time, we are very selective about who in the world is

admitted to our school. This means only students who are serious and have

letters of recommendation and have truly worked on the material and

stand in a true profession of faith with a proven ministry.

Once the student is admitted to this messianic yeshiva, a

thesis and/or project will also be required. After they have

completed the entrance exam, had letters of recommendation sent

in to us, and are officially accepted into the messianic yeshiva,

interested students should write a proposal letter with a

statement of their faith and the thesis and/or project they would

like to do and they should ask those who are the three

recommending them to write Artists For Israel Institute P.O. Box

2056, New York NY 10163 stating 1) how long they have known the

candidate, 2) in what capacity, 3) what are the candidate's

strengths in presenting himself/herself for ministry, 4) what are

the candidate's weaknesses, 5) what ministry is the candidate

engaged in presently and in what capacity in that ministry. All

this will have to be accomplished and checked out before the

student's proposal letter can be processed. A letter of

acceptance will be sent, if the student is accepted.