

## **Breaking News from the Israeli Supreme Court**

The Jerusalem Institute of Justice

In a landmark decision today, the Supreme Court of Israel ratified a settlement between twelve Messianic Jewish believers and the State of Israel, which states that being a Messianic Jew does not prevent one from receiving citizenship in Israel under the Law of Return or the Law of Citizenship, if one is a descendent of Jews on one's father's side (and thus not Jewish according to halacha).

This Supreme Court decision brought an end to a legal battle that has carried on for two and a half years. The applicants were represented by Yuval Grayevsky and Calev Myers from the offices of Yehuda Raveh & Co., and their legal costs were subsidized by the Jerusalem Institute of Justice.

All twelve of the applicants were denied citizenship solely based on grounds that they belong to the Messianic Jewish community. Most of them received letters stating that they would not receive citizenship because they "commit missionary activity". One of the applicants was told by a clerk at the Ministry of Interior that because she "committed missionary activity", she is "acting against the interests of the State of Israel and against the Jewish people". These allegations are not only untrue, but they also do not constitute legal grounds to deny one's right to immigrate to Israel.

This important victory paves the way for persons who have Jewish ancestry on their father's side to immigrate to Israel freely, whether or not they belong to the Messianic Jewish community. This is yet another battle won in the war to establish equality in Israel for the Messianic Jewish community just like every other legitimate stream of faith within the Jewish world.