

Sanhedrin Launched In Tiberias

12:19 Jan 20, '05 / 10 Shevat 5765

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/news.php3?id=70349>



A unique ceremony - probably only the 2nd of its kind in the past 1,600 years - took place in Tiberias today: The launching of a Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish-legal tribunal in the Land of Israel.

A unique ceremony - probably only the second of its kind in the past 1,600 years - is taking place in Tiberias today: The launching of a Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish-legal tribunal in the Land of Israel.

The Sanhedrin, a religious assembly that convened in one of the Holy Temple chambers in Jerusalem, comprised 71 sages and existed during the Tannaitic period, from several decades before the Common Era until roughly 425 C.E. Details of today's ceremony are still sketchy, but the organizers' announced their intention to convene 71 rabbis who have received special rabbinic ordination as specified by Maimonides.

An attempt to reconvene the Sanhedrin was made several centuries ago in Tzfat. The body in fact ordained such greats as Rabbi Yosef Karo, the author of the classic Jewish Law code Shulhan Arukh. However, the opposition of other leading rabbis soon forced the end of the endeavor.

One of the leaders of today's attempt to revive the Sanhedrin is Rabbi Yeshai Ba'avad of Beit El. He said that the 71 rabbis "from across the spectrum received the special ordination, in accordance with Maimonides' rulings, over the past several months." Rabbi Ba'avad explained that the membership of the new body is not permanent: "What is much more crucial is the establishment of this body. Those who are members of it today will not necessarily be its members tomorrow. But **the goal is to have one rabbinic body in Jerusalem that will convene monthly** and issue rulings on central issues. **This is the need of the generation and of the hour.**"

Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, who heads the Temple institute in Jerusalem, is one of the participating rabbis. He told Arutz-7 today, "Whether this will be the actual Sanhedrin that we await, is a question of time - just like the establishment of the State; we rejoiced in it, but we are still awaiting something much more ideal. It's a process. Today's ceremony is really the continuation of the renewal of the Ordination process in Israel, which we marked several months ago. Our Talmudic Sages describe the ten stages of exile of the Sanhedrin from Jerusalem to other locations, until it ended in Tiberias - and this is the place where it was foretold that it would be renewed, and from here it will be relocated to Jerusalem."

Rabbi Ariel said that the **rabbis there included many from the entire spectrum: "Hareidi, religious-Zionist, Sephardi, Ashkenazi, hassidi, and many others** - such as Rabbi Yoel Schwartz, Rabbi Adin Shteinzaltz, and many others... **We can't expect a great consensus; that's not how things work here. But sometimes that's how the process goes, from the bottom up.**"