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NEWS

RABBI EXPELLED FROM SHUL – CLAIMS CONSPIRACY IN SHOCKING SEX SCANDAL

By Jeane MacIntosh

March 1, 2006 | 5:00am

A prominent New York rabbi has been booted from his shul in the wake of a scandalous sex suit, The Post has learned.

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Disgraced Rabbi Mordechai Tendler – scion of one of the world’s most prominent Modern Orthodox families – was suspended late Sunday by the board of Kehillat New Hempstead, the Rockland County synagogue he founded.

Tendler, claiming a conspiracy to wreck his career and embarrass his family, refuses to acknowledge the suspension and has summoned 10 “insurgent” opponents to a special rabbinical court with the Union of Orthodox Rabbis.

The KNH board has reportedly also frozen Tendler out of a shul bank account – a charge that Tendler also denies.

The stunning blow comes after a December lawsuit, first reported in The Post, by a former KNH member who alleges Tendler claimed to be the “Messiah” and gave her “sex therapy” to help her find a husband during counseling.

Last year, Tendler was expelled from the highly respected Rabbinical Council of America amid allegations of sexual harassment and inappropriate conduct by several women in the community.

The rabbi’s suspension comes just weeks after his brother, Rabbi Aron Tendler, announced he would step down from his Los Angeles synagogue amid speculation – reported on Internet sites – that he had been moved from a teaching position at a girls school because of misconduct.

Announcing Mordechai Tendler’s suspension, the KNH board, in a letter yesterday to members, noted it had previously asked Tendler to take a leave of absence and recommended “rehabilitation” – neither of which the rabbi would pursue.

“Since the inception of the controversies, the Rabbi has failed to acknowledge or resolve the breadth of these issues,” the board wrote.

This is officially the wildest EgyptAir conspiracy theory

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The board cited the lawsuit, declining membership, falling finances, Tendler’s “continuing lack of responsibility” and the board’s own inability to determine the “accuracy” of some of his statements.

Tendler, who has publicly denounced the rabbinical council’s ruling and has moved to dismiss the “scurrilous” lawsuit, continues to lead the shul, said his brother, Hillel Tendler.

“This is not a legal board . . . they’re nothing,” Hillel Tendler said, adding that the suspension letter “is void. It has no effect.”

Hillel Tendler also rejected the suggestion that KNH attendance is down, saying that Sabbath services are drawing more congregants and that a majority of the shul has signed a petition backing his brother.

Tendler opponents said at least a dozen people have left KNH.

On Monday morning, Tendler – son of leading Yeshiva University Professor Rabbi Moshe Tendler and grandson of Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, the Modern Orthodox world’s leading religious authority – turned up for morning prayers at the synagogue.

Tendler has declined to speak to reporters. Approached last week for comment about the growing tension in town, the rabbi’s wife, Michelle Tendler, insisted, “Nobody has left!” and added, “You’re not welcome here!”

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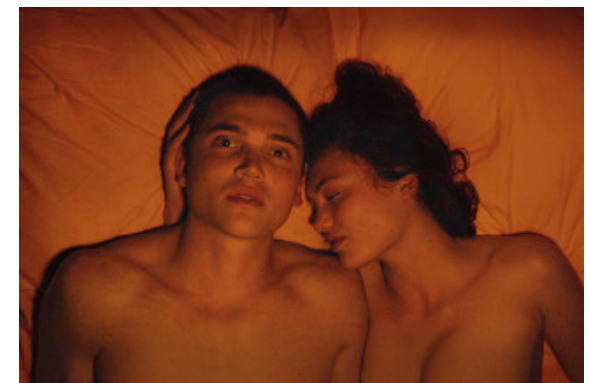
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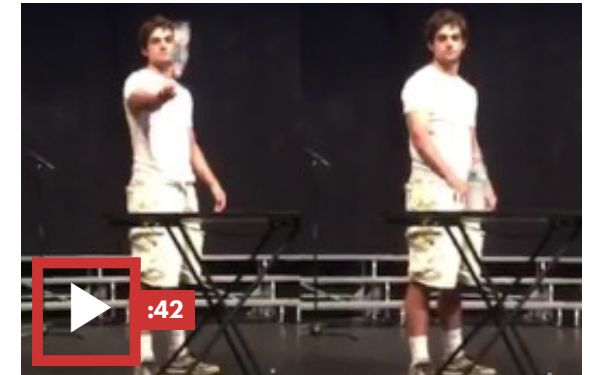


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