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8 years in prison for a "Kabbalist" rabbi who raped a girl in a synagogue

Yeshayahu Rizkhan, a community rabbi in Bnei Brak, raped a 17-year-old girl three times and sexually abused her four times. He said to her: "The will of Heaven to live together." Today he was sentenced to eight years in prison: "His conduct was characterized by sophistication"

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The Tel Aviv District Court on Thursday sentenced Rabbi [Yeshayahu Rizkhan](#), 64, of Bnei Brak, who was convicted of three counts of fraudulent rape and four cases of indecent assault on a 17-year-old girl. "The conduct of the defendant was characterized by sophistication," the verdict stated. However, the court delayed the execution of the sentence in two months.

Rizkan, the rabbi of the "Ahavat Hatorah" synagogue in Bnei Brak, was known as a guide and mentor, as well as a spiritual and halakhic advisor. He is also known in his community as a "Kabbalist" who is familiar with Kabbalah. The victim's family has belonged to the ultra-Orthodox community for many years and is part of the court headed by the defendant.

According to the verdict, at a certain stage, the rabbi gave the girl a letter from Heaven, in which he described a dream to which she was destined and accordingly instructed her to immerse herself in the sea to purify herself and come to him when she was pure. The rabbi even explained to the girl that the connection between them saves her from the "gazelle".

It was also noted in the verdict given last September that the rabbi attacked the girl in the synagogue and raped her in the storeroom. According to the verdict, she performed his demands "for spiritual and religious reasons, and in the absence of any knowledge of the nature of women's physical contacts and contacts, their meaning and their sexual connection." The justices unanimously ruled that the rabbi exploited his high status and his acquaintance with the family in order to fraudulently obtain her consent to rape and indecent acts.

"Document of sexual intercourse of her own free will"

In another case in his home, the rabbi gave the girl a book entitled "The Torat HaTahara" and then performed a kind of ritual of "fate". At the end, he informed her that it was God's will to live together. At the same time, the rabbi ordered her to sign a document according to which she agreed to have sexual relations of her own free will, and in view of her dependence on him and her belief that his actions were of spiritual significance and religious and spiritual implications, she accepted and signed the document. Then he committed another indecent act and rape.

During his trial, Rizkane categorically denied all allegations against him, claiming that the complaint was the result of a plot plotted by her young parents. But the judges ruled that the testimony of the young woman was reliable and accompanied by the testimony of the parents and another rabbinic authority. In addition to the actual prison sentence, the judges sentenced Rizgan to two years suspended sentence and ordered him to compensate the girl for NIS 100,000.

The judges noted that "the conduct of the defendant was characterized by sophistication and included elements of secrecy, mystery, ambiguity and fear, in each of which one can see a circumstance of severity, especially considering the balance of power between himself and his victim and being innocent and weak in every way."

Attorneys Eyal Besserglik and Itai Cohen, the defendant's defense attorneys, said in response: "There is no doubt that the verdict and the verdict were extremely serious, inter alia, ignoring significant contradictions in the complainant's testimony, which contradicted itself on a large number of issues, inter alia, 'And contradicted herself during her testimony when she claimed that she pleaded guilty to the defendant, claiming that she did not recognize the term "not to commit adultery" when studying at the beginning of her studies in the ultra-Orthodox sector.

"We will also recall that the court proposed to the parties to amend the indictment after the complainant's investigation into significantly less serious offenses, and the defendant was right to make his innocence