

Top rabbi blows lid off rabbinic scandal, rocking national religious public

Shmuel Eliyahu accuses spiritual leader Shmuel Tal of having affairs with female followers, justifying them by claiming 'holy spirit' was revealed to him

By **JACOB MAGID** 30 May 2019, 10:15 pm 8

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Yeshivat Torah HaChaim head Rabbi Shmuel Tal gives a sermon on December 27, 2018. (Screen capture/Youtube)

In an open letter Wednesday that blew the lid off of a hushed misconduct accusation involving a prominent spiritual leader in the national religious camp, the chief rabbi of Safed called on the public to stay away from a respected counterpart, accusing him of carrying out several inappropriate relationships with female followers, among them an adherent whom he convinced to divorce her husband.

Three weeks after the national religious Srugim news site broke a story about an unnamed yeshiva head who had been asked to resign due to “personal entanglements,” Safed’s Chief Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu publicly identified the embroiled individual as Rabbi Shmuel Tal, the head of of the Torat HaChaim yeshiva as well as several other religious institutions in the central town of Yad Binyamin.

In his open letter referring to Tal, Eliyahu wrote: “I do not recommend that anyone learn any *halacha* (Jewish law) from him, nor seek any guidance from him. I do not recommend studying at his yeshiva or at his seminary for women or at his counseling academy.”

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Eliyahu opened the letter saying that roughly four years ago, he learned about an improper relationship that Tal, 56, was having with a married woman, who had approached the Torat HaChaim leader seeking marriage counseling.

