

The Rabbis must ban homosexuals from Judaism

This is an appeal to Jewish religious authorities (orthodox or traditional, at least) for more decisive action against the spread of homosexuality in this day and age.

The rabbis ought to impose a *cherem* (ban, excommunication, anathema) on homosexuals¹, and even on 'homophiles' (supporters of homosexuality), so as to stop the growing social plague of homosexuality from spreading further. If necessary, the rabbis should institute a *takana* (a corrective decree) to that effect.

Modern homosexual activists have a societal project, call it 'the homosexual society'. In this society, homosexuals will kiss in public and get married; they will adopt and raise children, and maybe someday have genetically engineered children of their own; the state will force employers and employees to accept them and even honor them; homosexuality will be explained and even praised in schools from an early age; homosexuals will be openly displayed and made attractive in the media; and so forth.²

This shocking state of affairs already exists to various degrees in many Western countries today, including Israel.

If we refer only to the Torah, homosexuality would seem (though labeled an abomination and in principle punishable by death [Lev. 20:13]) like only a private sin that each *individual* will have to account for before God. Currently, most rabbis treat the matter as such, without really reflecting on the implications of such a limited position.

But the current growing extent of this perversion in the population, and the danger of its infecting more and more people due to the aggressiveness of propaganda and activism in its favor make it a *collective* problem of previously (in past generations) unimagined proportions, a social disease. Each homosexual taken singly may be of little moment to anyone but himself or herself; but when their numbers increase sufficiently, they become a serious social danger.

Not only are the homosexuals themselves guilty of this greater social sin, but all the spiritual leaders, educators, journalists, politicians, judges, policemen, entertainers, etc., who either support or defend homosexuality in some way, or merely refrain from denouncing and opposing it, are also guilty of this mega-sin. Tolerance or advocacy of evil is immorality disguised as morality.

It is absurd and timid in this context to argue (as some do) that 'the sin' (homosexuality) is to be hated, but not 'the sinners' (homosexuals and homophiles). In the *Amida* prayer, the blessing *lamalchinim* ends with a clear condemnation of the sinners, and not merely of the sin in abstraction. Life is a test, and there are prices to pay for misdeeds. Modern "political correctness" is not a virtue according to normative Judaism, but an unforgivable breach of duty to truth and justice.

Reform and conservative "rabbis" who practice, support or merely allow homosexuality should be the first to be exposed and condemned, as extreme and dangerous heretics. Normative Judaism will lose its moral authority if it remains silent and passive in the face of this latest assault on Jewish and human morality. Better to exclude than include such evil people; better to be few and pure than many and defiled.

Other religions should do the same, by the way, and energetically exclude and damn all voluntary homosexuals and homophiles. Such people should not be allowed to think they will get away with their crimes against humanity. Only in this way will this developing madness be stopped in its tracks.

Orthodox rabbis must wake up to the spiritually and socially criminal intentions of homosexuals and homophiles and fight them seriously. Till now they have responded far too mildly, uncertain how to react to the current onslaught on traditional values. Due to political naivety, they have failed in their obligation of leadership in defense of public morality.

The apologists of homosexuality have apparently managed to convince some naïve rabbis that homosexual behavior may be a mental sickness or a genetic compulsion, so that homosexuals ought to be pitied and helped rather than disapproved of and rejected. Yet the claims of mental sickness or physical difference have no scientific basis. And anyway, nowadays homosexuals prefer to be considered "normal" than to be excused (and thus humiliated) as abnormal or subnormal.

¹ This term refers to all people who engage in sexual intercourse with partners of the same sex. With the possible exception of hermaphrodites and people whose genotype and phenotype do not match (estimated as 50-100 individuals per million population), who have to be considered on a case by case basis in all fairness; in such cases, the status of their sexual partners is also to be examined specifically.

² This societal project is perhaps part of a larger one, call that 'the sexual society'. In that society, there would as it were be a permanent mass orgy. Sexual relations would be the main form of interaction between men and women, men and men, women and women, adults and children, and even humans and animals. The model for that social 'ideal' is the porno movie, where people are constantly either masturbating or having sex with someone or something.

Moreover, the Torah makes clear that homosexuality is voluntary transgression; otherwise, it would not decree the severest punishment for it, universally and unconditionally. It is immoral behavior for which the perpetrators are personally responsible. They have no one and nothing to blame for it but themselves.

The Torah death sentence for homosexuality concerned males only, according to Jewish law (*halakhah*). I am not sure whether this is taken as a sentence to be executed by G-d or by the rabbinical courts. In any case, the present appeal is not intended to advocate a restoration of such executions, if they ever occurred in history. The rabbis have no such powers today, in Israel or elsewhere, and I am not concerned with that issue.

The point made here is that we can learn a lesson from the severity of the Torah sentence. Death is permanent expulsion from this world; instead of that, we can at least expel Jews who so transgress from Jewish society. The latter is a lesser sentence, but the next best thing. Moreover, ostracism can consistently be applied to female as well as male homosexuals, and to the non-homosexual advocates of homosexuality.

In the modern world, equality between men and women is very important; people would not consider uneven treatment of them as just. Note that the rabbis consider female homosexuality as also indecent, though to a lesser degree³. However, the ban proposed here is not intended as a punishment for like sins; it is intended as a political act to prevent further infection in the population, an act of social hygiene⁴.

The Torah does not justify a relatively mild response to this sin; it does not, for instance, provide for any cleansing ritual or temple sacrifice relative to it. No regrets will erase such past misdeeds; all repentance can do here is resolve not to repeat them in the present or future.

Therefore, the rabbis should harbor no doubt as to the appropriateness and justness of a strong, uncompromising anti-homosexual stance. A weak response, on 'humanitarian' pretext, will simply not do the job. It will only sully Judaism and the credibility of the rabbis, by seeming to condone such behavior.

Note that such a ban is not inhumane by modern standards. It does not imply the people concerned to be non-human – it merely denies them the right to call themselves Jews anymore, and to enjoy the privileges this designation implies. It is not discriminative in general terms – it merely expresses the right of any religious group to choose its spiritual companions.

If you try to show tolerance to actual homosexuals in the hope of reforming them, you will merely encourage potential ones. A kindly, 'liberal' attitude in this matter will not save many souls; it will rather cause many more souls to be lost, for people will not take the interdiction seriously. Many Jews have already been irreparably soiled, and are spiritually as good as dead. Forget them, they are lost forever: rather, think of those who have not yet been soiled. And the matter is urgent.

For years, Jewish spiritual leaders have allowed the problem of homosexuality to develop in society at large, without ever preaching against it in synagogues or visibly making any other effort to combat it. They have of course been hoping the problem would somehow go away by itself, but it is evidently getting bigger. It is admittedly not clear just what they could do about it, since the large majority of Jews who transgress in this manner never go to the synagogue or come under rabbinical influence anyway.

The rabbis willingly talk about keeping the Sabbath or not eating pork, but understandably hesitate in the name of modesty (*tsniut*) to lecture publicly on decent sexual behavior. The problem is that such virtuous silence has given the public an impression that homosexuality is not a really big issue in their eyes – or that the forces of evil at work are too strong for them to challenge. In any case, 'preaching to the converted' cannot solve the problem at hand.

What is needed is a strong statement that will reach the general public. The proposed ban is just such a statement. It will and should *scandalize* all conventionally minded people, who have been trained by the media to consider homosexuality as normal and its defense as good. They will accuse the rabbis of extremism and similar epithets, to intimidate them into submission. Many Jews, too, will object and fear, demanding the rabbis keep a low profile in this matter. But some young people out there will surely get the message and be saved from following this decadent fashion.

³ In my essay *No to Sodom*, I also admit (on more naturalistic grounds) female homosexual acts to be somewhat less immoral than sodomy between males.

⁴ According to one estimate (see Jpost.com, 3 Jan. 2008), there are some 18'000 same-sex couples in Israel; that is 36,000 people! Suppose as many again are homosexuals not in couples, and a proportionate number of people of Jewish origin to be homosexual outside Israel (especially in the U.S., I imagine). Then we may *guess offhand* at a world total of some 100,000 individuals. This is an epidemic, a veritable disaster for the Jewish people. The purpose of a ban would be to remove the bad apples from the Jewish barrel, or cull the sick sheep from the flock, before they infect more individuals. This is the prophylactic way, used in gardening, husbandry and medicine.

Dear rabbis, people who are truly spiritually pure ought have no fear of evil. Consider that nowadays homosexuals are organizing lewd street marches in Israel, even in Jerusalem. This serves to legitimize homosexuality and make it fashionable, and thus spreads it. Some rabbis have verbally objected, or even recommended counter demonstrations, but such tepid measures are clearly far from sufficient to stop the trend; much more punch is required to down this monster. Take a firm stand and act decisively.

Homosexuals are cunningly using all the tools provided them by a simplistic and fallacious interpretation of democracy to further their subversive cause. They are an educated and wealthy lobby group, numerous and influential enough to affect national legislatures and international bodies. Judging by their successes in North America and Europe, they will very soon manage to obtain in Israel all the legal freedom they desire to corrupt many, many young Jews. Do not be surprised if, moreover, they in time demand that the Torah's anti-homosexual verses be censored.

But there is one, just one, way to stop these loathsome people from progressing further, in the Jewish world at least. It is that all rabbinical authorities in Israel (and indeed, in the world) convene and together declare all evident homosexuals and homophiles to be *no longer Jewish*. Only such a powerful ban can put the fear of G-d in some of these people's hearts, and only the leading rabbis (the orthodox and traditional ones, at least) have the institutional and moral power to do it.

The terms 'Jewish' and 'homosexual' must be understood by everyone to be antitheses, contradictory terms. There can be no such thing as a "Jewish homosexual": such a concept is shameful to all decent Jews. Normal Jews do not want to be associated with homosexuals, even in thought. Such behavior is the depth of depravity, something incompatible with Judaism. Let it be known far and wide: if you are a Jew, you cannot be a homosexual; and if you are a homosexual, you cannot be a Jew.

If someone publicly acknowledges being a homosexual in the media, or admits to being a homosexual in front of two or more witnesses, then that person should be formally banned from the Jewish religion (for examples: Dana Olmert, the current PM's daughter, and various reform and conservative so-called "rabbis").

If, moreover, someone by word or deed publicly takes a stand in favor of homosexuality or homosexual "rights", then that person should likewise be declared excluded from the Jewish religion (for examples: certain judges of the Supreme Court of Israel, certain Members of the Knesset, certain academics and journalists).

What does excommunication mean? If it is a man, he will no longer be counted as part of a *minyan* or be called up to the Torah, or granted any of the duties and privileges normally granted to Jews. If it is a woman, any children she bears thenceforth will not be recognized as Jews. Moreover, such people should not be allowed in Yom Kippur services or be buried in Jewish cemeteries.

Such exclusions may be difficult to administrate and enforce in practice, but the theoretical message they convey is important and effective anyway. A rabbinical court would have to decide each case, and a centralized blacklist would have to be maintained.

Some people inevitably object: what of *teshuvah* (repentance)? If the rabbis consider ex-homosexuals redeemable (though I do not see on what basis they would), then if after being expelled from Judaism such people sincerely want to return, they would have to go through *halakhic* conversion like any other non-Jew. Most of the people concerned don't care about their Jewish identity anyway; but some may think twice and change their ways.

Note that secular governments can legally do nothing whatsoever to prevent religious authorities from excluding whomsoever they choose to exclude from their religion. A religion is like a private club, in principle free to choose its own members. Of course, a government can withhold much needed funding, and use similar means of pressure, or even persecute and imprison people on whatever pretext; but then the rabbis must decide what counts most for them.

The rabbis cannot remain passive; they must do something; that is their job. Excommunication is the one power tool the rabbis have at their immediate disposal, if they are really serious in their opposition to homosexuality. Only by such radical and forceful measures can the tide be stemmed. If our spiritual leaders do not show the necessary courage and determination, they will truly have failed in their ministry; and the world will get still more confused, dark and ugly.

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Avi Sion, Ph.D.
Geneva, Switzerland.

Author of: *Judaic Logic: A Formal Analysis of Biblical, Talmudic and Rabbinic Logic*. (1995)

Author of: *No to Sodom: An essay against homosexuality*. (2006)

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