

# Gay Jews: who has a phobia?

**T**HOSE Jewish gay activists who insist on engaging in a militant attitude towards gaining legitimacy will make no headway with Torah-observant Jews.

All the banners and blatancy will not change one simple fact — the Torah explicitly states that the God of the universe defines homosexuality as an abomination before Him.

To those Jews who accept the Sinaitic revelation as an actual historical event, there can be no argument. It is not “homophobia” which motivates the Orthodox rabbinate to condemn homosexual practice; rather it is their deep sincere faith in the Torah which compels them to do so.

Homophobia is a mythical disorder. Are those who are against adultery “adulteryphobes” or those not in favour of bestiality “bestialityphobes”?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe urged us to have compassion for the homosexual and to accept him with unconditional love as our fellow Jew. While condemning homosexuality as a lifestyle, the rebbe refrained from condemning the homosexual as a

## VIEWPOINT

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person. Like a child with a bad habit, the homosexual is a person in need of learning self-control.

Torah accepts that in the realm of human behaviour there are no absolutes. Numerous psychological studies have shown that some heterosexuals have had homosexual thoughts and fantasies. From a Torah perspective this makes sense because the mystical teachings tell us that each Jewish soul has within it both an evil and a good inclination.

Tremendous self-discipline may be required to resist the evil inclination but a Jew is not destined to be enslaved by his desires. Is someone who thinks about stealing a “closet thief” or rather someone who must fight and overcome an evil inclination? What then is a “closet gay”?

The Torah was given for us to live by in this material world and not in heaven. We are physical beings with

all the human drives that go along with it. On Yom Kippur, the holiest day on the Jewish calendar, we deny our physicality and we fast. About two hours before the end of that long and arduous day, we read from the Torah, not an esoteric or mystical passage but the list of sexual relationships that are forbidden to us. From this we learn that the Torah was not given to angels but to complicated flawed physical human beings.

The recent demands by certain gay activists of the religious Jewish establishment are completely unreasonable. Can they realistically expect the Torah-observant community to go against Jewish law and legitimise gay marriage, allow gays in the rabbinate, or the establishment of gay synagogues? Aren't these gays displaying religious intolerance by accusing Torah Judaism of being homophobic for refusing to go against its own basic theological principles? Perhaps they are suffering from “Torahphobia”.

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