



Ask The Rabbi...



January 15, 1994 Issue #6

This edition contains:

1. Judaism's view on Homosexuality
2. How to submit questions
3. Announcing "The Search for Truth" by Rabbi Dr. Dovid Gottlieb

A Curious, Wondering Jew writes:

Dear Rabbi,

Now that science has determined that homosexuality is genetically transmitted how does that affect the Jewish view of Homosexuals?

Thank you,

Dear Curious, Wondering, Jew,

Two points. First: Although there has been some research into the role genetics has on homosexuality, no conclusive evidence to support this claim has emerged. That some people have a predisposition to this kind of behavior is not in question, but the argument about its origins continues. Even if it was proven that homosexuality is genetically transmitted, that would not mean that we must condone the behavior. There are many conditions that are genetically transmitted (for example, color blindness) yet we continue to search for a way to overcome them.

Second: The Torah's view of Jewish homosexuals is that they are just as much a part of the community as everyone else. We have an obligation to treat them with the same respect and compassion that we must treat every other human being. What is objectionable in the eyes of the Torah is the particular sexual act, NOT the person. "Thou shalt not lie with a man after the manner of a woman: it is an abomination." The Torah is not judging the person; only the behavior.

The difficulty arises when people insist on identifying homosexuals exclusively by their sexual orientation. Then when the sexual behavior is condemned, this condemnation is transferred to their entire modus vivendi. Human beings are much more than their sexual behavior and must be treated that way.

Source:

- Leviticus ch.18, v.22

Questions are welcomed from ALL readers at ALL levels for inclusion in the Ask the Rabbi column. Questions of interest to our general readership may be answered in this column; for those of a more personal nature, we will try to answer personally via e-mail.

To submit a question, address it to: ohr@jer1.co.il to insure correct handling, set the subject to "ASK THE RABBI"

To subscribe to ASK THE RABBI, send the message:
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Ohr Somayach Institutions is proud to present:

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH
by Rabbi Dr. Dovid Gottlieb
Transcribed by Joshua Hermelin

Transcripts of 7 lectures by Rabbi Gottlieb

- The Relevance of Religion
- Religion: Pragmatism or Truth?
- The Historical Verification of the Torah - Parts 1-5

Rabbi Dr. Gottlieb is a former professor of philosophy at Johns Hopkins University, is an internationally acclaimed lecturer and author of several books. He is presently a senior lecturer at Ohr Somayach Institutions in Jerusalem.

These files are available on the Jerusalem Gopher under the heading "Religion Institutions" and the sub-heading "Ohr Somayach"

CompuServe users can also download these lectures from the CIS Religion Forum, Judaism Library (3), under the file name TRUTH.ZIP

If you have E-Mail and a question, you can submit it to Ask The Rabbi for possible inclusion in a future edition. Just write your question using your E-Mail program, set the subject to "Ask The Rabbi" and send it to ohr@jer1.co.il. We can't include all questions submitted, but we do try to respond to everyone.

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