

NOACH (GENESIS 6:9-11:32)

How to be an Orthodox Jewish Gentile

2006 · Rabbi Yerachmiel Seplowitz

Is it possible for a Gentile to practice Torah Judaism? Isn't that an oxymoron? Not at all. Actually, it is very much possible for a Gentile to practice Torah Judaism. In fact, every member of the human race is obligated to do so.

We do not believe that every person is obligated to follow the 613 Commandments of the Torah. There is nothing wrong with Gentiles eating pork chops or driving on the Sabbath. They are, however, required by Torah Law to obey 7 key Commandments, known as the Seven Noahide Laws. ("Noahide" = Children of Noah.)

What are they required to do? Well, they could start off by disbanding the New Jersey Supreme Court!

*G-d saw that the earth was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth. G-d said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me ...I am ab**out to destroy the earth."* Genesis, 6:12-13)

G-d created the world and filled it with humans to serve Him. He told them to "... *be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and sub**due it.*" (Ibid. 1:28) G-d wanted Mankind to build the world by acting in a holy and constructive manner. Instead, "*all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.*" The human experiment was a failure. They had to go. G-d would start over with Noah & Family.

The Talmud (Mishnah Rosh Hashanah, 1:8) gives a list of people who are disqualified to testify in court. Included on this list are dice players and pigeon racers. Among the reasons given for this disqualification is that they "do not contribute to the settling of the earth."

G-d put us here to build; to make the world a better place. He put us here to cut hair, fill cavities, help people compute their income taxes, and sell them their groceries. There are many ways we can serve our fellow man and make a living at the same time. A gambler doesn't provide a product or service to mankind. He merely exists, and takes. A person who doesn't improve the world is not fulfilling his mission. In fact, he makes the world a WORSE place. As a result, he is not considered a reliable person when it comes to giving testimony.

G-d wanted the children of Adam and Eve to “*be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth.*” Instead, “*all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.*”

The Talmud says that “*ALL flesh had corrupted its way.*” Sexual immorality of all kinds was rampant. The reason G-d destroyed the entire planet is that even the animals were corrupt. They interbred with other animals. G-d’s creations were expected to “contribute to the settling of the earth.” They failed miserably. G-d expected better. So He destroyed them all and started over.

All of the Children of Noah are expected to act in a moral, constructive fashion.

We are required to abstain from:

- 1) Idol worship,
- 2) Blasphemy,
- 3) Spilling blood (including abortion),
- 4) Sexual transgressions (including adultery, homosexuality, bestiality),
- 5) Theft, and other violations of civil law, and
- 6) Eating limbs torn from a living animal.
- 7) We are required to establish a court system to enforce the other six.

(More information on these laws and their sources can be found [here](#).)

There are, all over the world, groups of Gentiles who believe in the Torah. (That’s the TORAH, not to be confused with the so-called “Old Testament”, which Christians view as the old rules which have been updated by a new, improved testament.) Noahides view the Torah, interpreted by the Talmud and traditional Jewish commentaries, as G-d’s guidebook for us and for them.

My description above of a Gentile practicing Torah Judaism is not exactly accurate. I read an article written by a Noahide who struggles to define himself to the uninitiated. “No, I’m not a Christian,” he writes, “because I don’t believe in Christianity. Nor am I a Jew. I wasn’t born Jewish, and I have no interest in becoming Jewish. I am a Gentile who lives his life based upon the Torah, as explained and interpreted by orthodox Judaism.”

Many of the Noahides have orthodox rabbis to whom they turn to when they have religious questions. Maimonides writes extensively on the laws of what G-d expects from His non-Jewish children, and Jewish authorities are available to teach the Noahides what they need to know.

G-d expects all of Noah's descendants – Jew and Gentile – to be honest in our business dealings. He expects us to be moral and decent. He expects us to refrain from murdering other humans - before or after they've been born. He expects us to engage in relationships that will fulfill His desire of propagating the human race, and to speak out against immoral and unnatural activities that undermine that goal.

He also expects us to establish laws and enforce them. One of the Seven Noahide Laws is to have a court system that ensures that people follow all of the laws. Isn't it ironic that a large segment of our society perverts that concept by wanting the courts and legislative bodies to encourage the acceptance of an aberrant lifestyle?

All people, regardless of their "orientation," are entitled to freedom from persecution and harassment, as long as they are not endangering other people. They are entitled to be employed and unmolested. If they are privately engaging in activities that the Torah defines as an abomination, G-d will deal with that. American society doesn't execute adulterers or idol worshippers; I don't see punishment for "gays" as a goal.

However, what is going on in our society is a pro-"gay" agenda. ("Gay" -- what a strange term! That, too, is part of the agenda of acceptance. It sounds much more antiseptic and acceptable than the real word. In our new, revisionist language, the opposite of "straight" is "gay." In my dictionary, the opposite of "straight" is "crooked"! That is why they want to allow men to "marry" each other. They want society to give its stamp of approval to an activity that subverts G-d's desire to propagate the world. They don't want to be tolerated; they want to be CELEBRATED. That's why you have parades promoting "Gay Pride", with politicians falling over themselves to demonstrate that votes are more important to them than G-d's will.

Gambling doesn't "contribute to the settling of the earth." Neither does same-gender "marriage."

What's that you say? "Gayness" is a condition that one is born with and they can't help it? That seems to be the predominant position of mental health professionals these days. ("We can't treat it, so we better justify it by saying that it's normal!") While that may very well be part of the agenda of acceptance, and there are many experts who feel that it is abnormal and treatable, I won't debate the issue. Let me grant you, for the sake of argument, that male-to-male and female-to-female attraction are "normal."

No one will argue that adultery is not a “normal” drive. No one will tell you that it is unnatural to want to steal something that someone else has. No one will say that the desire to kill another person is not a sometimes-expected aspect of the human condition.

Yet, society rejects these activities. The Torah commands us to be holy and to overcome our desire for evil. Sure, she’s beautiful. Yes, your natural desire may be to sin. But she’s someone else’s wife; she’s off-limits. **YOU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ACT ON YOUR NATURAL DESIRES** if they don’t “contribute to the settling of the earth.”

No doubt, with an election around the corner, the New Jersey “Supreme” Court’s pro-“gay” decision will be a rallying point for both sides of the issue. We will see in the coming days groups who will correctly criticize the court for telling the New Jersey legislature to write new laws establishing “marriage” for people who have no business marrying.

Rest assured that there will be no shortage of “Jewish” groups that will gush forth with effusive praise for the court’s decision. (I put the word “Jewish” in quotes, not because I question the Jewish identity of people who think this way. Rather, I question the Jewishness of their way of thinking. They are not Jewish groups; they are groups of Jews!)

Typically, the Catholic and born-again Christian groups are the ones who speak out against the immoralities of the pro-abortion and pro-“gay” agendas. Typically, groups of Jews take the liberal position of considering these to be matters of personal choice that we must all accept. (There are, of course, exceptions.)

Shame on us if we are unwilling to advocate the Torah’s position of sanctity and let our Christian brothers do the work for us! (I don’t normally believe in ecumenical groups; they often do more harm than good. But it is interesting to note that Jerusalem’s Jewish, Muslim, and Christian leaders found common ground in condemning celebrations of immorality in G-d’s Holy City.)

Some will defend the desire to garner acceptability for this lifestyle because it is not their fault. Some people allegedly became this way as a result of being abused as children. Some people will claim that they were born with this particular inclination.

It is important for us to be compassionate and respectful of all people. But all the compassion and political correctness in the world don’t allow us to endorse behavior that G-d tell us, in so many words, is “... *an ab**omination*.” (Leviticus, 18:22) He felt so strongly about this “opinion” that it was one of his reasons for bringing the Flood, and for destroying the city of Sodom. (See Genesis, 18:5-8) Who are you

going to listen to, the New Jersey “supreme court”, or our Supreme Creator? This lifestyle does not “contribute to the settling of the earth.” Parades in honor of this lifestyle are wrong. Considering it be an “alternative lifestyle” is wrong. The New Jersey Supreme Court is wrong.

Let me reiterate; every human being is created in G-d’s Image and deserves to be treated with respect and empathy. I bear no ill will toward these people. But we need to speak out against the desire to cover over their actions with a cloak of respectability. I can respect a person without respecting his values.

Here is an interesting coincidence. This Shabbos we will read of G-d’s condemnation of the fact that “*all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.*” This week, a New Jersey court moved to endorse that corruption. Here’s another coincidence for you. The weatherman tells us that this Shabbos, New Jersey will be drenched by a rainstorm!!

Have a great Shabbos.

Rabbi Yerachmiel Sepowitz

© 2006 Rabbi Yerachmiel Sepowitz. Reprint permitted for non-commercial use with attribution to torahtalk.org.