

CREATED GAY

Thou Shalt Not Diss the Lord

Gary Simpson

Today, I will read a few words from the *Black Bible Chronicles*. This book is in a very similar spirit to the *Cotton Patch Bible*. The *Black Bible Chronicles* is highly recommended by people such a former Chaplain to the United States Senate and a former Executive Director of the Congressional Black Conference.

This short book is wonderful for people who have problems getting into the Old Testament. The *Black Bible Chronicles* makes the books of Moses fun, helps people feel the Bible is totally cool and encourages people to read the Word. Any book that does that gets my support, even if it makes the stories of books of Moses sound a bit wild.

In Numbers Chapters 13 to 15, we read the story about the spies from Israel going to check out the promised land. Some of the spies came back with a very discouraging report. They saw wonderful things in the promised land, but could not get over the obstacles.

The spies did not think God would honor His promises. Their negative reports discouraged the people and caused them to lose faith in the Lord.

Reports from the spies indicated the promised land “devours its inhabitants.”(1) Rabbi Gunther Plaut says some people suggest this was a reference to cannibalism among the Canaanites.(2) The spies said the Israelites were like grasshoppers to the people in Canaan. Grasshoppers were a form of clean food.(3)

This is my personal speculation. I wonder if the spies were trying to say something that is similar to the modern expression “they will eat you alive,” which is not really a reference to cannibalism. The spies might have been saying the children of Israel would be food to the Canaanites. Today the spies might say, “Americans are like a burger to the Canaanites.” In other words, the Canaanites will literally eat us like an appetizer.

God was not happy. The Lord was angry. The Biblical authors felt God wanted to kill the children of Israel and create a new nation. Lord had reasons to be angry. The Eternal created the nation, rescued them from slavery, delivered them from Egyptian armies, fed His people, and lead and walked with them through the desert. The Lord worked

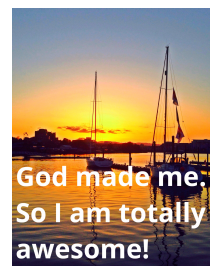
miracles for His people and they did not believe He would give them the promised land. God may have felt He was being calling a liar.

Fortunately, for the children of Israel, Moses talked him out destroying the entire nation. That might not have been an easy task when the reports from the spies dissed the Lord! An interpretation to God's response from the Black Bible Chronicles starts at about Numbers 14:20. Okay, Moses. I can see it your way, but those that believe in Me will come into the land of milk and honey, and those that are plotting and scheming will have the same things done to them. And true to His word, those men who caused folks to start dissing the Lord became seriously ill and died. Those who still did not believe pretended to believe now, so when these brothers went out against the Amalekites and the Canaanites they got themselves blown away.(4)

Gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans people have experienced persecution and hatred for centuries. The abuses have come at the hands of well-intentioned church people, the police, the courts, the government, and political leaders. There is a temptation for queer Christians to think the giants of hatred and ignorance will devour them, will eat them like orderives.

Even worse than that, many queer people doubt God's promises. They have allowed the giants of organized religion let them think they are not able to inhabit the promised land, are not able to get to heaven. The abuses by people acting in God's name are real; the stories are often deeply unsettling. At times, the stories of abuse handed out by churches are frightening. Reports of abuse from those hurt by organized religion make queer people afraid they will never be welcomed by God in heaven. But that is not true. The Eternal is a God who keeps His promises.

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer and trans-identified people can walk tall, walk proud to the throne of God, where they will receive grace. We have plenty of reasons to believe the Lord's promises include queer people. The Lord planned to save us before the world was created,(5) formed us in the womb, delivered us from the womb,(6) blesses us with food, shelter, jobs and family and saved us at Calvary.(7) Fortunately, the Lord has always had faithful people. And many of those people are queer Christians. You are one of them!



Notes

(1) Numbers 13:32 New American Standard Version.

(2) Gunther Plaut. *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*. (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1981), 1110.

(3) Plaut, 1110.

(4) P.K. McCay. *Black Bible Chronicles*. (New York, New York: African American Family Press, 1993), 164.

(5) Ephesians 1:4.

(6) Psalms 22:9.

(7) Romans 6:9-23.