

# CREATED GAY

## Being a Menorah

by Gary Simpson

Year A Revised Common Lectionary  
Proper 7(12)

A theme in the story of Abraham and Sarah God's promise of life. In the story, it is the promise kept. First, the Genesis account where sterile Sarah receive the promised son. My first thought was to talk about the story of Abraham and Sarah. Discussing the promise, God being faithful to His promises and being a child of promise is easy. Starting the new year with a promise is just awesome.

Generally we think of child born to Abraham and Sarah as a child of promise. I planned on speaking about being a child of promise. After reading about the verse and reflecting on the verse, a different direction came to mind. I decided to talk about being a child who is **NOT** of the promise. I am hoping you can understand how, after we are done reflecting on the texts.

**Genesis 21:15-18** (*Contemporary English Version*) and after they had run out of water, Hagar put her son under a bush. <sup>16</sup>Then she sat down a long way off, because she could not bear to watch him die. And she cried bitterly. <sup>17</sup>When God heard the boy crying, the angel of God called out to Hagar from heaven and said, "Hagar, why are you worried? Don't be afraid. I have heard your son crying. <sup>18</sup>Help him up and hold his hand, because I will make him the father of a great nation."

Pastor Ed gives the background of Hagar. She was an Egyptian and a slave. And she gives Abraham, the important man Abraham, a son. A son was no small gift. Abraham's only son for a while too.<sup>1</sup>

Then what happens. She gets royal boot, the right boot of fellowship. Out into the desert, Hagar and Ishmael are sent, with a little food and water.

Place yourself in Hagar's shoes. How would you feel? From the hero, the one who rescues Abraham and Sarah from their childless plight to persona non grata.

There are many people who are persona non grata, people who do not feel very welcome, like they are not children of promise.

A few groups of people who feel like they are not the privileged few, like they are not children of the promise in school, church and society include:

- The poor and impoverished.
- The young and the elderly.
- People with drug, alcohol or gambling addictions.
- Non-believers. People who have families that do not extend back in the church denomination for generations.
- Black people, aboriginal peoples, Jewish people, visible minorities.
- Learning disabled, handicapped people, beauty challenged individuals.
- Those with stagnated careers.
- The quiet, shy and retiring.
- Artistically and musically challenged.
- Those who are weight challenged (skinny) and weight gifted (obese).
- Second bests.
- Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people.
- Trans people.
- Those who are not sure about their sexuality.

This is something I don't need to mention in a queer church. Gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans people know this better than most of the people in society. Life is not fair. School is not fair. The church is not fair. Work is not fair. Family is not fair. There is good news. God is just.

God is moving to make a queer nation. Many queer people are coming out of the closet. And they are out while serving the Lord. No longer do they labor in the closet of Lord's vineyard. They are out as equal brothers and sisters in Christ. More and more straight churches are moving to formally embrace queer people. There are queer churches. The world is starting to see bright spots in the darkness of hurt and pain. Those bright spots are the shining menorahs of queer Christians, spreading hope and comfort.

In the depth of our despair, God comes, just as God did to Hagar, the Lord comes. God brings a word of encouragement and provisions.<sup>2</sup> There may be times when you do not feel like a child of promise. When that happens, wait. Listen to God's words of comfort, feed on the Lord's provisions and watch as God does wonderful things in your life, as God makes a great nation out of you.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>Ed Vasicek. The Average Ones: God Uses "Seconds." SermonCentral.com, internet site <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=32105&ContributorID=661>

<sup>2</sup> Vasicek, internet.