

CREATED GAY

Quilt and Comforter

by Gary Simpson

Numbers 11:1 (Moffatt Bible) Now the people were like folk bewailing misfortune, in the hearing of the Eternal; and when the Eternal heard it, his anger blazed up, his fire burned among them, raging on the outskirts of the camp.

Rashi feels the people did not have a legit reason for complaining about God. They were wanting to distance themselves from God.(1)

Those who continually complain against God may not see the good things the Lord has done for them. I think this is a real danger for gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans-identified people. The queer community has complaints. In fact, the queer community has many very legit complaints to voice to God. Voicing those complaints is not the problem. Complaining becomes a problem when our frustrations with life make complaining to God the main theme of our relationship with God. Constant complainers might not understand their obligations to the Lord for all of the good things the Creator has done.(2) When we do not understand our responsibilities to the Lord and to others, we are not able to do a good job of living for the Lord.

Rabbi Pliskin applies Rashi's comments to relationships with people too. He explains, "When a person wants to keep an emotional distance from someone with whom he should be close, a ploy used is to have complaints against that person."(3) As we complain about people, we find it harder to appreciate the person. And the complaints can cause pain for the person complaining and the person against which the complaints are made.(4)

As I reflected on Rabbi Pliskin's comments, it struck me how easy it is to hurt people by complaining. But for me complaining is a gigantic part of being human. Reading what Rabbi Pliskin says about complaining was a bit discouraging for me. But there is wonderful news in **Zechariah 3:1 - 2** (Moffatt Bible) Then he showed me the high priest Joshua confronted by the angel of the Eternal. The Adversary was standing by, to accuse him, but the angel of the Eternal said to the Adversary, "The Eternal rebuke you, O Adversary! Yes, the Eternal who delights in Jerusalem rebuke you!

Your Bible might use the word Satan in this passage. The Hebrew is translated as Satan in some Bibles. Ha-satan can mean opposer or accuser.(5) The commentators in the *Jewish Study Bible* feel the correct translation is Accuser.(6)

When we stumble and fall, the Adversary, the Accuser steps in to get us down, to make us believe God cannot love us, that there is no point. Within this text, we see a pattern. The Adversary makes an accusation and God defends.

This pattern is common in our lives. By nature, we tend to have a belief system based on doubts that are planted in our minds by our Adversary and those doubts are defeated over and over again God, through the assurance we get in the Word, through prayer and through our daily walk with Messiah.

Years ago, I held a tough job. The job was thankless and there was criticism over the direction I took. People finally started to understand my approach worked. After over six years of work, my employer gave me an award.

The job was in an industry where an employee turnover rate could run as high as 300% per year. An employee turnover rate of 100% per year was common. I was doing a little reading and noticed the turnover rate in some regions for teachers runs around 16% per year. The six and a half years I held the job would be like between 40 and 121 teacher years. That is a long time to wait to for the complaints end, to feel your approach and beliefs were vindicated.

Waiting to have your beliefs vindicated is not easy. The wait can be very long. For queer Christians, the wait may last until God stands in the heavenly in front of all of the homophobic brothers and sisters and Christ and says, "This is my child! And I am proud of my child!" Eventually you will stand before the Ruler of the Universe. He will silence the Accuser once and for all, when He affirms His love for you and your salvation. Once and for all the doubts the Accuser kept planting in your mind will be erased, never to return. And you will know, beyond a shadow of a doubt that God really did love you so much Jesus died to save you.

A Bible college student was composing his term paper on a computer. He made a typographical mistake. He hit the Q key instead of the G key. He meant to write, "Jesus came to take away our guilt." Instead he wrote, "*Jesus came to take away our **quilt.***"

The Bible college professor had a good sense of humor. In the margin of the term paper, he wrote. "*Don't worry. Jesus does not leave us out in the cold. He sent the comforter.*"

There is a reason for telling this joke. The joke is to help you remember grace. Every time doubts arise, the Accuser tempts you to doubt, to wonder God loves you, if you are out in the cold, think of the joke. God does not leave us out in the cold. We have the Heavenly Comforter to assure of us God's love. And the Comforter, the Holy Spirit goes with us everywhere we go. Because the Holy Spirit resides in our hearts.

Notes

(1) Zelig Pliskin. Growth Through Torah. (Brooklyn, New York: Benei Yakov Pub., 1988), 321.

- (2) Pliskin makes this application toward people, but it can also apply to our relationship with God. Refer to page 321.
- (3) Pliskin, 322.
- (4) Pliskin, 322.
- (5) Peter C. Craigie. *The Daily Study Bible: Twelve Prophets. Vol. 2.* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 173.
- (6) Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds. *The Jewish Study Bible.* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2004), 1253.