



# The Burning Bush - Online article archive

## My response to a reply to my letter run the Irish News

The recent letter I sent to the 'Belfast Telegraph' about same-sex marriage billboards erected in Belfast, and also to the 'Irish News' in Belfast, a Nationalist newspaper, has had a response printed in the 'Irish News'.

Here is that response along with my answer to the folly and ignorance of the writer, Nick Canning.

**We should be repelled by those who would consign homosexuals to hell fire**

<p><b>R</b>EV IVAN Foster's letter (November 14) got me thinking. Does God really hate homosexuals or is it just those of his servants, stuck in a literal reading of the Old Testament rather than embracing the spirit of the New Testament, who hate them? The Bible texts that condemn homosexuality usually also condemn adultery, temple prostitution and all other forms of sexual licence because all of these behaviours were particularly associated with Pagan</p>	<p>temple worship and hated practices of idolatry of the surrounding communities of Old and New Testament Judea. Ezra and Nehemiah launched a purge against foreign wives and children of Jews in Judea – fearful that they would introduce foreign religious practices they campaigned to drive them out by force. This continued a policy of genocidal ethnic cleansing documented and approved of, in many places in the Old Testament. Homosexuality in this xenophobic</p>	<p>society was considered to be a foreign, Greek custom and the Jews were at war with the process of Hellenisation of their culture so were bound to reject anything Greek as against their God. Nowadays, we recognise that God creates homosexual people, just as he creates homosexual animals in nature. They are not to be punished nor prosecuted in a civilised society. We should be repelled by those who would consign them to hell fire, just as we are repelled by ethnic cleansing</p>	<p>in the name of God. The widening vistas of the New Testament call for a rethinking of Old Testament attitudes. Ironically those gay people who wish to marry are more likely to be conservative, and possibly religious members, of the gay community with values in accord with those who are trying to throw them out of Christian communion.</p>
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**NICK CANNING**  
Coleraine, Co Derry

Sir,

Your correspondent from Coleraine, Mr Nick Canning, is one of those 'authorities' on Bible Christianity who very obviously has never read the Bible for himself. Rather, he has swallowed a 'canned' version of it set forth by one of its many critics.

Were he at all aware of what lies between the covers of the Bible he would not have written what he has!!

I have but set eyes upon his letter a few minutes ago but would like to reply.

1. It is not merely in the Old Testament that we see condemnation of sodomy. The Lord Jesus indicates that the wrath of God visited upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah will be visited again upon those who, in the last days, ignore the warning displayed in the destruction of those cities, but embrace the same wickedness.

"But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed," Luke 17:29-30.

So much for me failing to embrace the 'spirit of the New Testament'! It is Mr Canning who fails to submit to the words of Christ. Your readers may like to consider what Paul has to say on the matter of sodomy (Romans 1:18-32, especially verses 25-28). Also Peter, (2 Peter 2:4-9). Again, Jude, the brother of the Lord Jesus (Jude verses 5-7).

2. Mr Canning rails against the actions of Ezra and Nehemiah, charging them with 'ethnic cleansing'! These men acted in obedience to God and were not guilty of the crimes Mr Canning charges them with. He goes on to claim that 'homosexuality', I prefer the word sodomy, was viewed by the Jews as a 'Greek custom'. A strange view for a Jew to hold since the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah belong to the territory given them of God, the land of Israel! He is wrong on this matter also.

3. We are told in 1 Kings 14:24: "And there were also sodomites in the land: and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel." The events of this chapter date back to about 950 BC, well before any Greek influence was known in the Middle East! The verse also states that this perversity was a reverting back to the evil practices of the nations judged by God under Joshua, which refers to events prior to 1450 BC! This surely undermines Mr Canning's notions of history.



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4. He says that the New Testament's teaching requires a 'rethinking of Old Testament attitudes.'

Really! It would appear that no one told the Lord this!

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled," Matthew 5:17-18.

Mr Canning and his ilk may like to think that the Ten Commandments have been abolished but that is not so. They are all reiterated in the New Testament and in force still today!

Regards,

Rev Ivan Foster (Rtr)

Kilskeery, Co. Tyrone.