

The Book of Genesis: A Promulgator of Misogyny?

by Rev. Joe Dirt - Saturday, November 26, 2022

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This is really just one of my random thoughts... something I have been ruminating on as I listen to the audio book of [*The Dawn of Everything*](#) by [David Graeber](#) and [David Wengrow](#). This book is a reexamination of the current narrative of how our civilization, culture, social institutions, etc evolved in the light of new evidence and new interpretations. In it I came across the following passage:

“Rejecting a Garden of Eden-type narrative for the origins of farming also means rejecting, or at least questioning, the gendered assumptions lurking behind that narrative. Apart from being a story about the loss of primordial innocence, the Book of Genesis is also one of history’s most enduring charters for the hatred of women, rivaled only (in the Western tradition) by the prejudices of Greek authors like Hesiod, or for that matter Plato. It is Eve, after all, who proves too weak to resist the exhortations of the crafty serpent and is first to bite the forbidden fruit, because she is the one who desires knowledge and wisdom. Her punishment (and that of all women following her) is to bear children in severe pain and live under the rule of her husband, whose own destiny is to subsist by the sweat of his brow.”

I have no excuse why my calculator took so long to put two plus two together to make misogyny. Although, I am not sure I would have used the phrase “hatred of women”, but then at its core what else is misogyny? In Genesis a woman is the reason we lost paradise. Throughout Genesis and the rest of the Bible women are relegated to the role of second class citizens – at best. Men are supreme and women must be subservient to them. Given that the Old Testament was the product of a patriarchal, nomadic people who commonly had multiple wives, concubines and slaves, could it have taken any other form?

Of course this is not just women’s role in the Abrahamic religions, but in many other traditions as well. “Might makes right” has been the narrative of gender relations for much of human history. The Bible institutionalized misogyny by giving it the blessing of being biblically sanctioned. Oy vey!

A thought experiment if you choose... how much better this world would have been (or could be) if men had recognized and treated the one-half of the population, not male, as equals.

And while I am on biblical topics, I have been saying for decades, albeit in a cruder form, that if the Apostle Paul had had a satisfying sex life, Christianity would be a much more agreeable, a saner, a less draconian religion. Instead, Paul demonized one of the most basic and joyful of human behaviors. Of course, this was not entirely new, much of the Bible sees sex as a human vice to be controlled. Although much of this control is of female sexuality rather than male. Oy vey again.

Another thought experiment... I wonder how much saner as a species we would be if we did not have so much baggage associated with sex.

I find it a constant amazement that the Bible has been, perhaps, one of the most foundational documents of western (European) civilization. When I went back and reread this book in its entirety as an adult, I found it so troubling and outrageous that it had much to do with the evaporation of what little faith I had left. Although, it was been parsed, analyzed, diced and chopped ad nauseam, IMHO, it does not hold up to critical examination. Why would a Supreme Being give such a cryptic, contradictory “instruction manual” to humanity? Oy vey once again.

And so it goes sometimes when I start thinking about what I am reading...

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I find the following page on da' net. I will have to admit that with more than a few of the verses I had a hard time find the inferiority alluded to... [100 Bible Verses about Women Inferior To Man](#)