

Democrats need to show the Bible a little respect

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Democrats have had some truly strange and telling moments when it comes to their handling of God and the Bible in recent years — and these past few weeks were no exception.

Case in point: Texas Democrats, who rallied at their state convention from June 25 to June 27, decided to show support for U.S. Senate candidate and state Rep. James Talarico in a deeply strange way, glossing over some of his bizarre biblical and cultural views.

At one point, the crowd bizarrely cheered with exuberance when one of their own proclaimed, “We’re all going to hell” — a comment made in solidarity with Mr. Talarico’s controversial flavor of Christianity.

The moment in question, which has been making the rounds on social media, took shape when Democratic Land Commissioner nominee Benjamin Flores urged attendees to rally behind Mr. Talarico and push back against conservative criticism.

“Next time they say that James is trans, we’re all trans,” Mr. Flores said during an impassioned speech. “When they say James is a gay, tofu-eating vegan, we’re all gay, tofu-eating vegans.”

And then he delivered the line that raised more than a few eyebrows: “And when they say James is going to hell, we’ll say we’re all going to hell.”

Before we get into the theological and political sentiment, let’s explore the context. Mr. Flores’ comments came after White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller jokingly referred to Mr. Talarico as the Democrats’ “first transgender Senate candidate” last month while appearing on Fox News.

While that explains the trans comment, the mention of hell is presumably tied to another recent event. During the Texas Republican convention last month, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick ignited a flurry of headlines when he said Mr. Talarico is “going to hell” over his views about the Bible.

“And let me tell you, that’s not a Bible I’ve ever read,” Mr. Patrick said of Mr. Talarico’s views. “I’ve never seen so much blasphemy from anyone running for office. Let me tell you what, I’m going to pray for that guy, because when he loses the Senate race, if he campaigns against God as he’s been doing, he’s going to hell for sure.”

These are certainly strong words, and it's understandable why Mr. Flores hit back, though cheering over a proclamation that "we're all going to hell" encompasses a flippancy and strangeness that is beyond the pale.

I'm sure Mr. Flores and the Democrats were being hyperbolic and quipping, but leftists have had a long line of issues when it comes to faith, and their collective theological understanding is often lacking at best — or diabolical at worst.

Though we shouldn't be walking around definitively condemning people to hell, Mr. Flores and others would be smart to comprehend the strong, swift and negative reactions to Mr. Talarico's theological claims.

The latest strangeness emerged in an unearthed clip from a 2021 interview during which Mr. Talarico said, "I always think of myself as a Christian who hates Christianity, right?" He continued, "I always get drawn back into it because nowhere else, in no other political philosophy and no other economic theory do I find anything nearly as truly radical or revolutionary as the teachings of that barefoot rabbi."

And these are hardly the only controversial views he's espoused when it comes to Jesus. Among other claims, Mr. Talarico has said Christ was a feminist, and the politician used Mary, Jesus' mother, as an example to argue that her decision to consent after Gabriel said she would be with child is evidence that the Bible is somehow pro-choice.

"The Angel comes down and asks Mary if this is something she wants to do," he told Joe Rogan, referring to abortion. "To me, that is an affirmation in one of our central stories that creation has to be done with consent."

Mr. Talarico also has said "God is nonbinary" and reportedly expressed universalist ideologies, noting that "other religions of love point to the same truth" as Christianity.

The list goes on and on. While Mr. Flores and others are free to confront the political mudslinging, there's clearly a theological problem at the core of many of these proclamations. At times, Mr. Talarico seems to reinvent Jesus and the Bible in his own image.

And this is a problem the Democratic Party continues to struggle with. As I've written, one of the most flummoxing and embarrassing moments in modern politics unfolded at the 2012 Democratic National Convention after God was axed from the party platform before liberals scrambled to change course.

But what we're watching now is an attempt to rede-fine what it means to be a Christian and what it entails to believe the Bible — and believers ought to be smart and flee this bad theology.

At the very least, the Democratic Party should have a greater respect for and understanding of God and these subjects than to openly cheer over the prospect of eternal damnation. The slippery slope just keeps slipping.

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