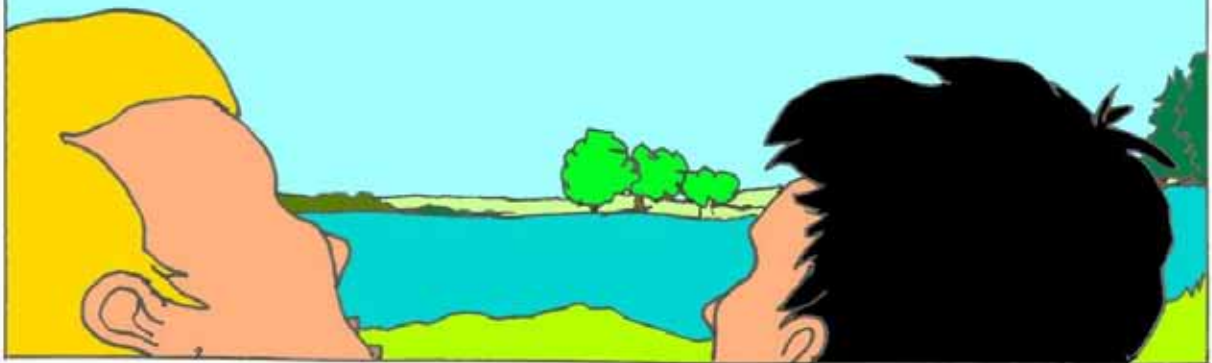


JAN HAEN

HEAVENLY HOMOS ETC.



John – Will you look at that?

Tony – You see it as well?



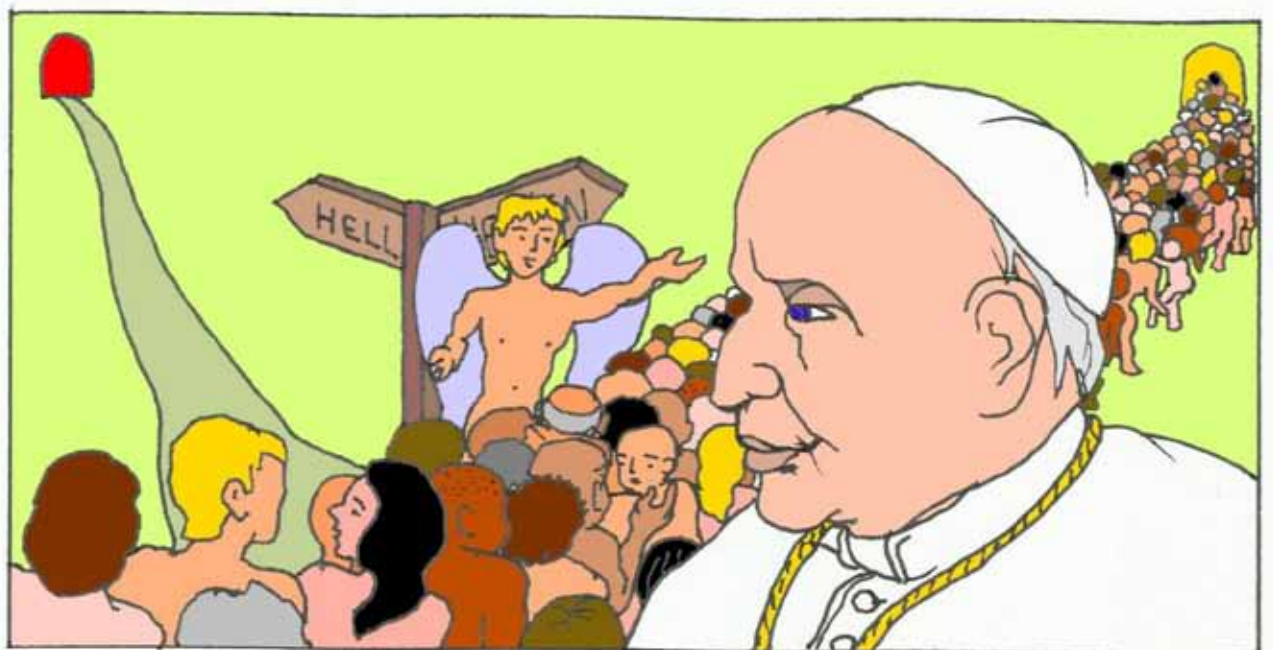
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Tony – “Heavenly homos”, where did that come from?

John – Well today (2nd November) catholics celebrate ‘All Souls’ day and yesterday they celebrated ‘All Saints’.

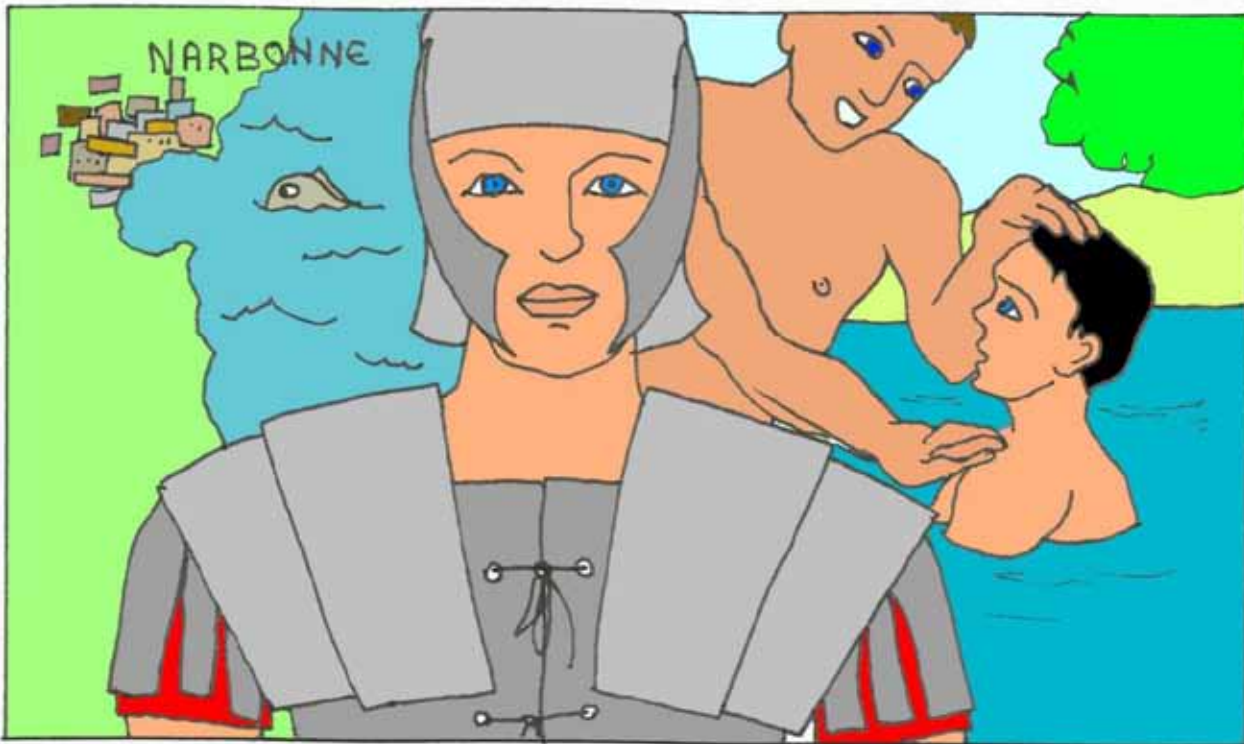


Tony – Yes, I remember a story about Pope John XXIII. He was asked whether he believed ‘Hell’ existed. He answered, “Yes, but I don't think there is anybody to be found in it”.

John – Right! So let us look at some gay icons no longer living.

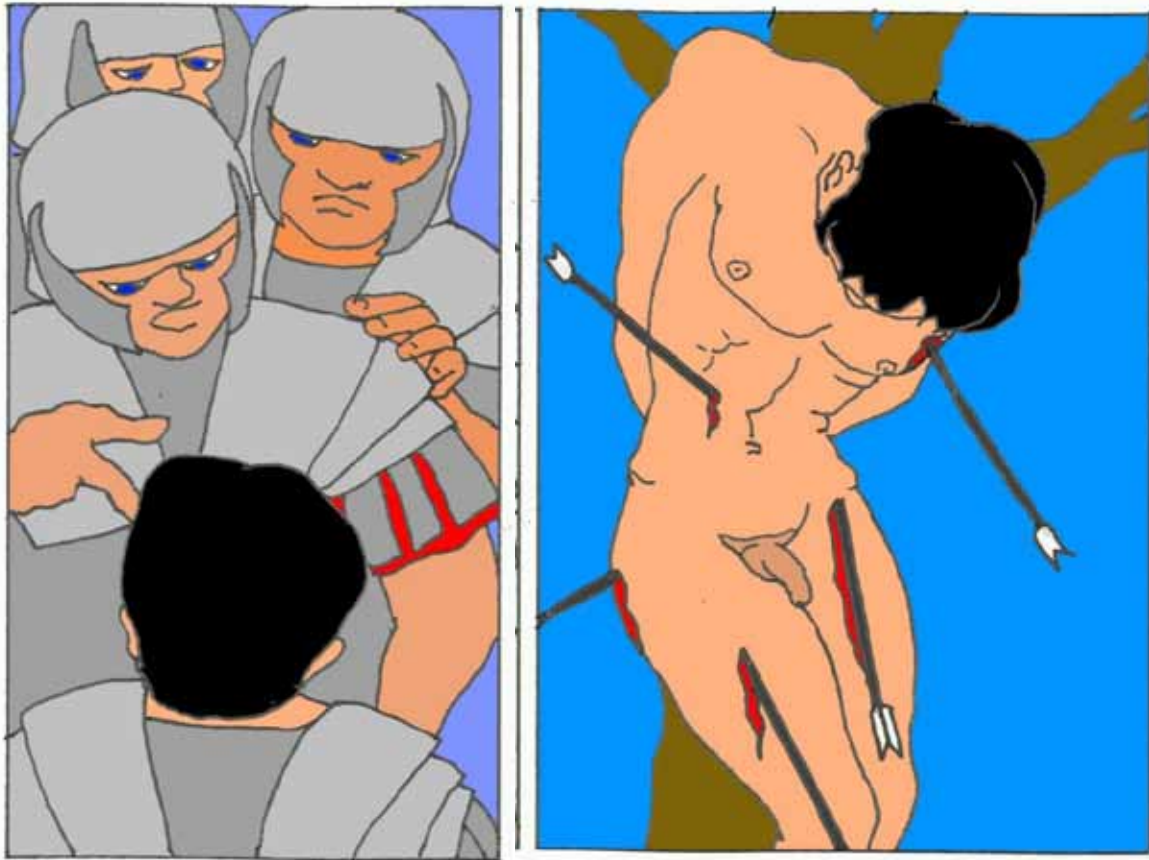


Tony – The Big favourite is without a doubt **SAINT SEBASTIAN**.



He was born in Narbonne, France in 256 AD. And died in 288.

He converted to Christianity and was baptised secretly because Christians were persecuted at that time, and he was a Roman soldier.



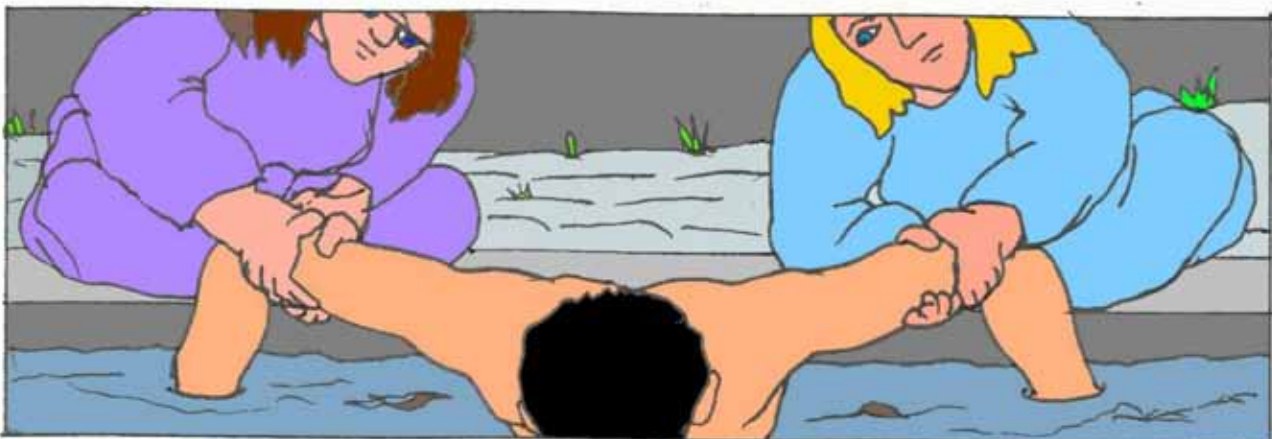
While Diocletian was emperor, fellow soldiers discovered that Sebastian was a secret Christian. He was arrested, tied naked to a tree, shot with arrows and left for dead.



Irene, the widow of Castulus wanted to bury him, but discovered that he was still alive. She took him home and nursed him back to health.

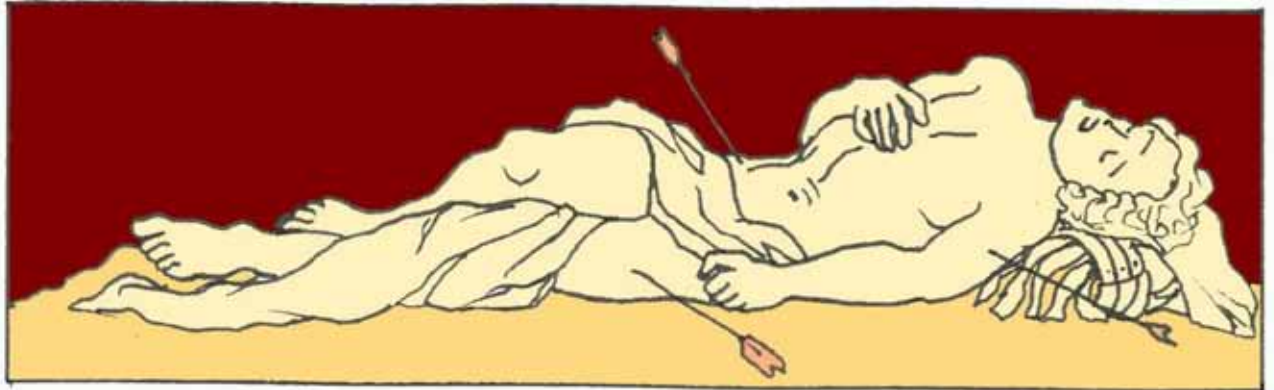


A few days later Sebastian stood on the stairs of Sol Invictus temple (the unconquered sun god, patron of soldiers). He accused the emperors of injustice done to christians. Again, he was arrested, stripped and beaten to death in the Circus of Rome.



His body was dumped in the Cloaca Maxima, (the sewer). Irene and/or Lucinda recovered his body, cleaned it and buried him in the catacomb along the Via Appia.

The Basilica of St. Sebastian-outside-the -walls was originally built in the first half of the 4th century and his remains were placed there around 350 AD. The present edifice is a largely 17th century construction. St. Sebastian is remembered with a sculpture under an altar as shown here.



Sebastian was proclaimed patron saint of archers, soldiers, gardeners, tailors , plague victims and fire-brigades. Many churches throughout the world have depictions of St. Sebastian in some form or other.



traditional

modern

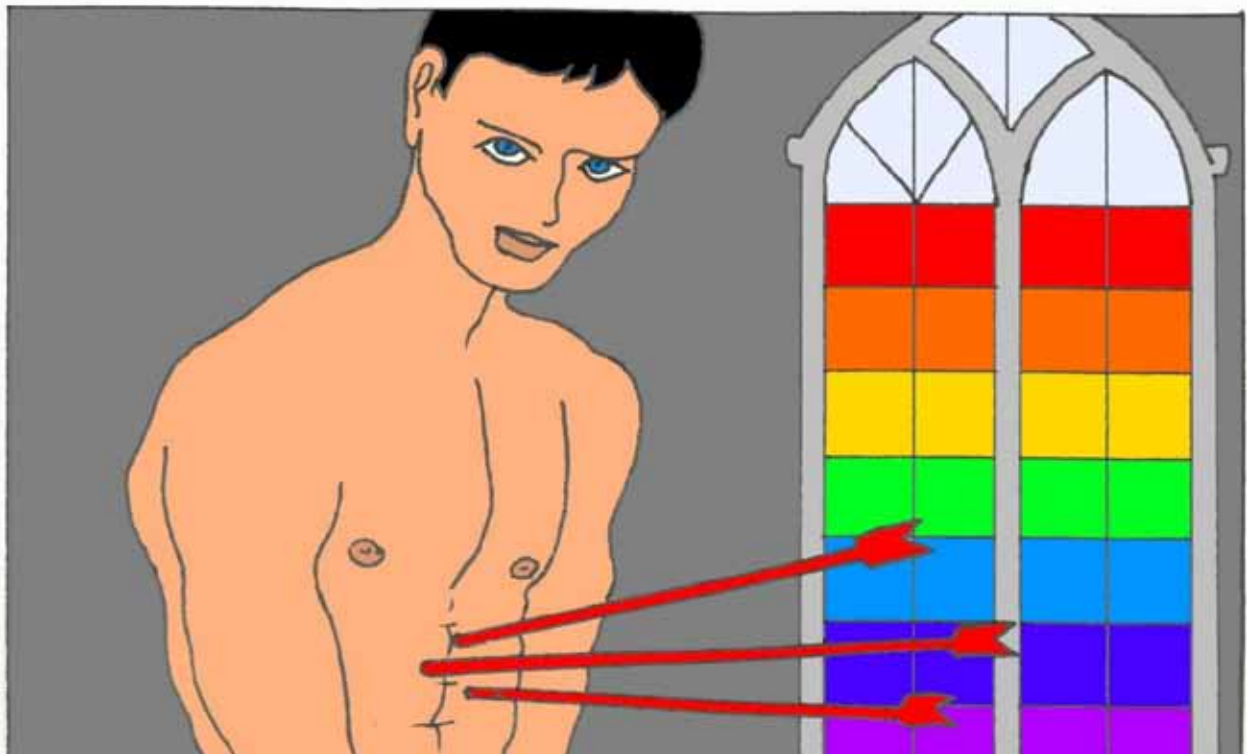
provocative

Tony – But was he gay?

John – We don't know. But it seems to have everything to do with the sheer sensuality of his portrayals. See here the way Peter Paul Rubens depicted him early in the 17th century.....



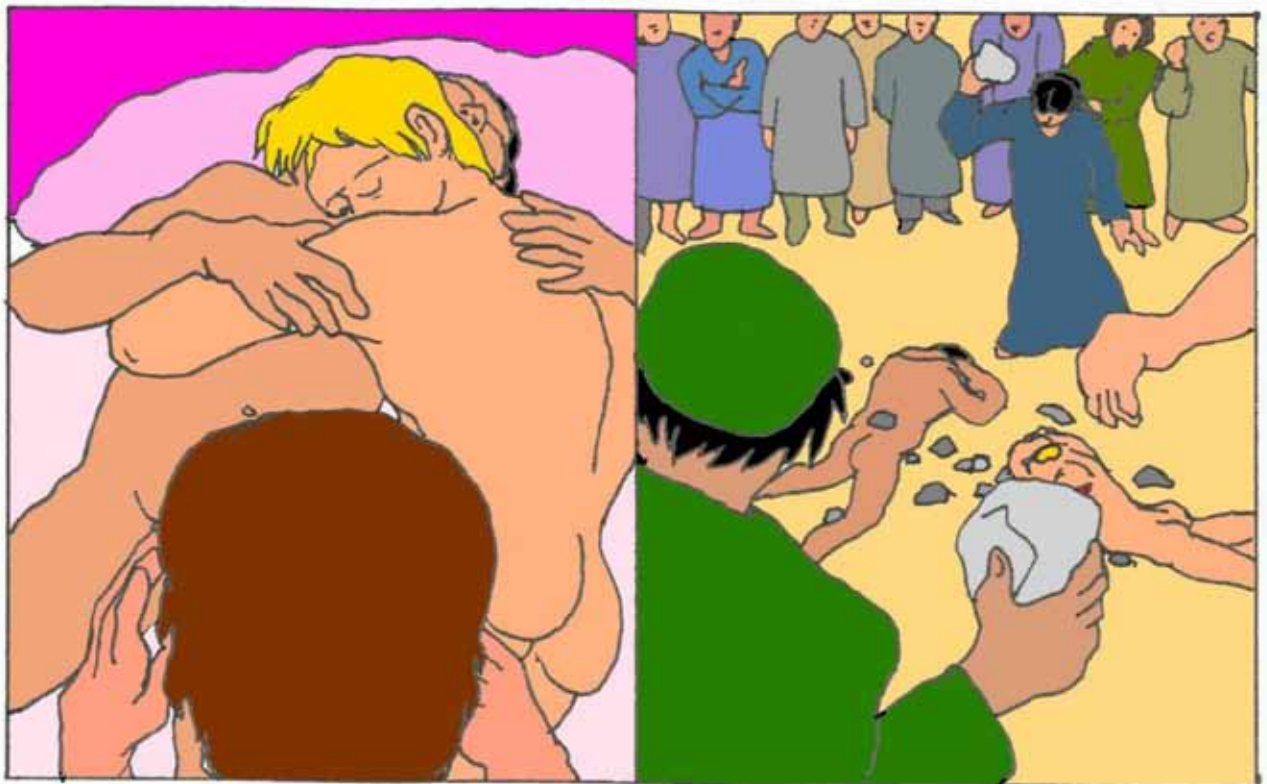
And then there is also the fact that gays can identify with the suffering of Sebastian and his sense of betrayal.



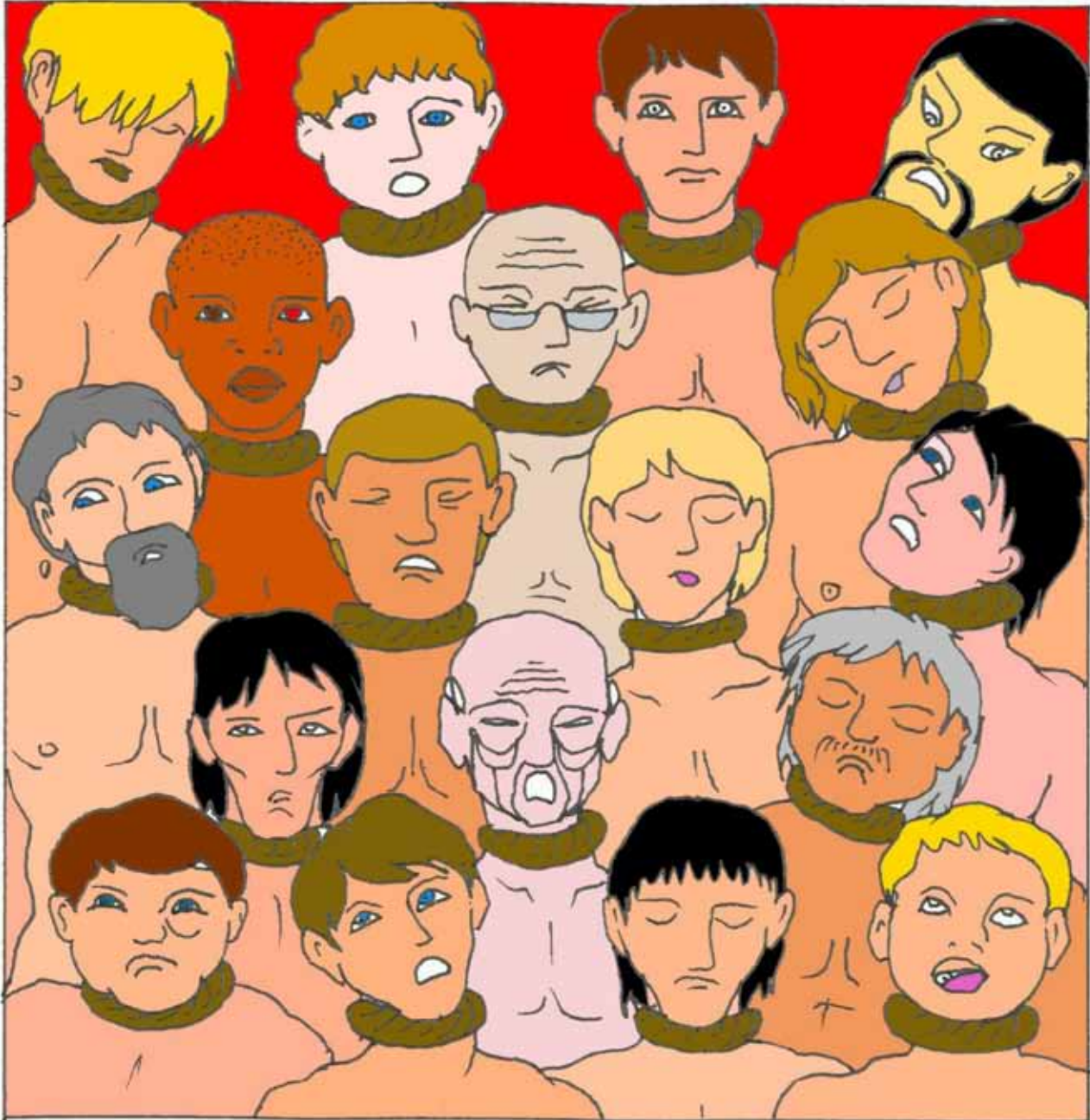
Tony - Where did all this negativity come from?



John – In the Bible book, Leviticus (old Testament) is written: *You must not lie with a man as with a woman. This is a hateful thing. (ch. 18 verse 22). The man who lies with a man in the same way as with a woman: they have done a hateful thing together : they must die; their blood be on their heads. (ch.20.v.13)*

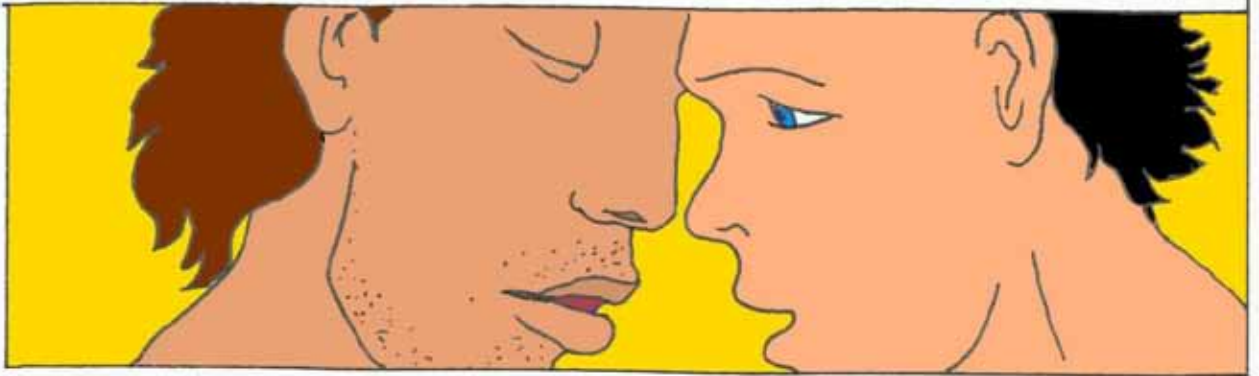


John – This biblical condemnation of homosexual activity determined the persecution of homos throughout the centuries. Even today, anti-gays base their bias, prejudices and anti-homo activities on this condemnation.

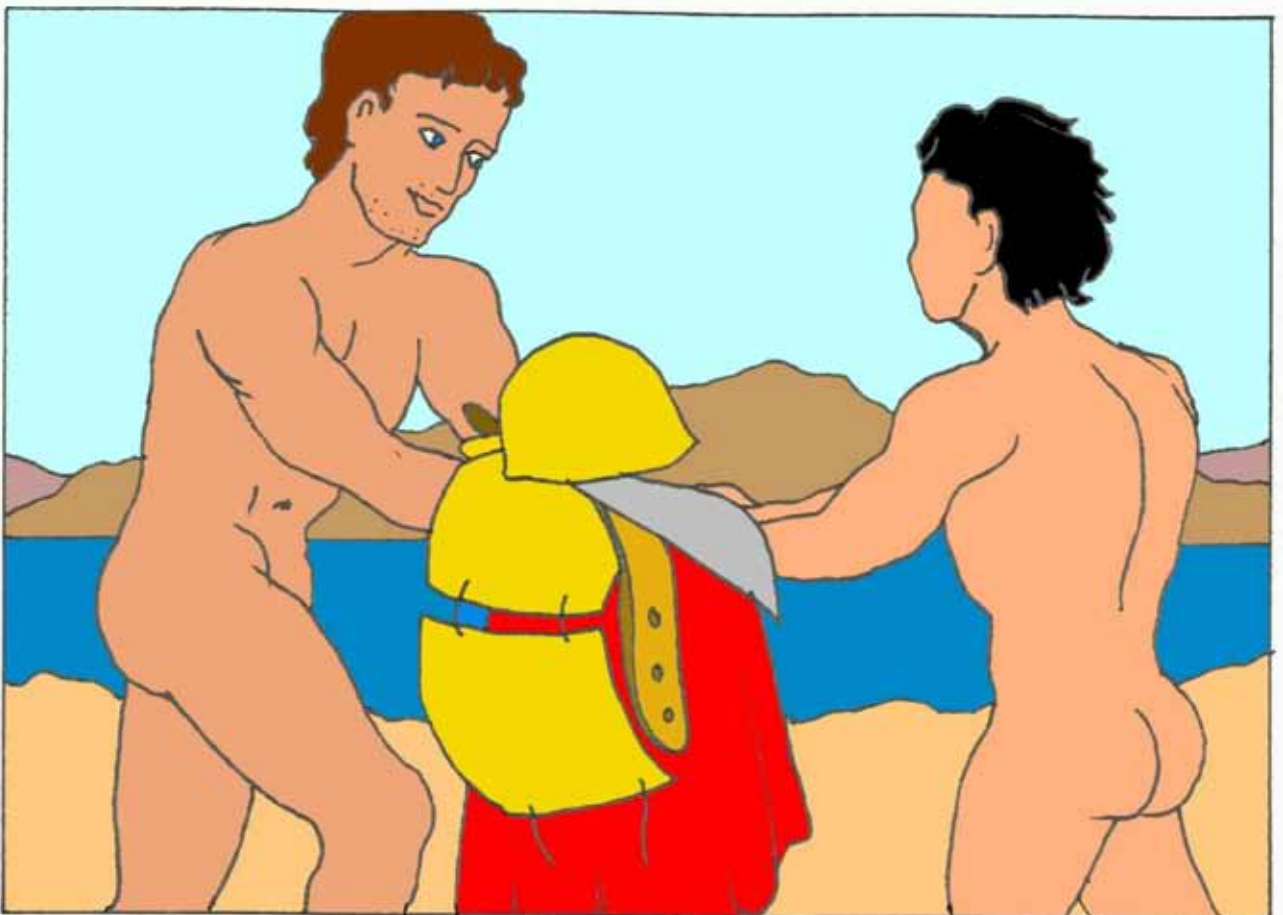


In 1731, in Utrecht, the Netherlands, following complaints, eighteen 'sodomites' (men having sex with men) were arrested, and condemned to death by strangling.

John – Yet for all that, it is claimed that **JONATHAN** the son of King Saul, fell in love with **DAVID**, who succeeded King Saul as king.



1 Samuel ch.18. v. 1: *Jonathan's soul became closely bound to David's and Jonathan came to love him as his own soul.*



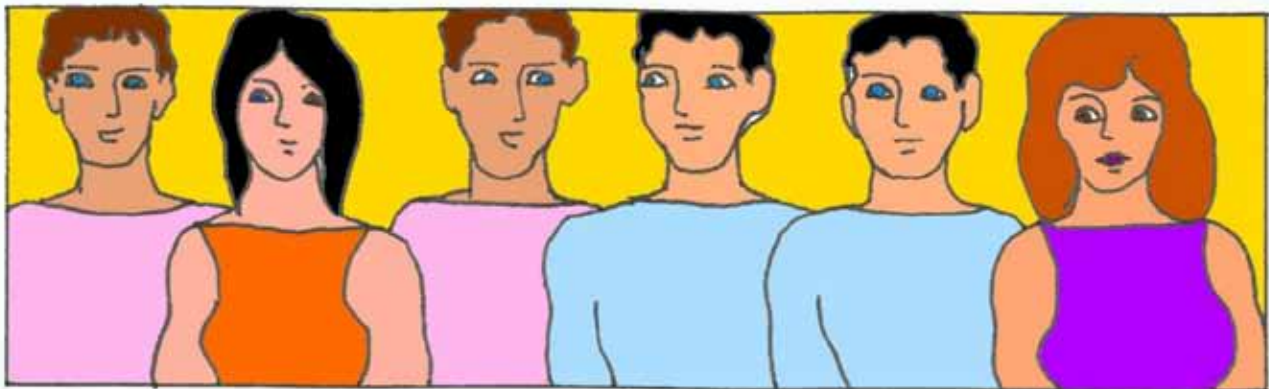
1 Samuel ch.18 vv.3-4: *Jonathan made a pact with David to love him as his own soul: he took off the cloak he was wearing and gave it to David and his armour too, even his sword, his bow and his belt.*

John – And then there was David’s lament over the death of Jonathan....

O Jonathan, in your death I am stricken...very dear to me you were; your love to me, more wonderful then the love of a woman. (2 Samuel ch.1 v 26).



John - The thing is, both Jonathan and David were married. We also know that David’s escapades were not exclusively male oriented.



Tony – So was Jonathan gay? Or were they both bi-sexual?

John – We just don’t know.

Tony – We musn't forget the women.

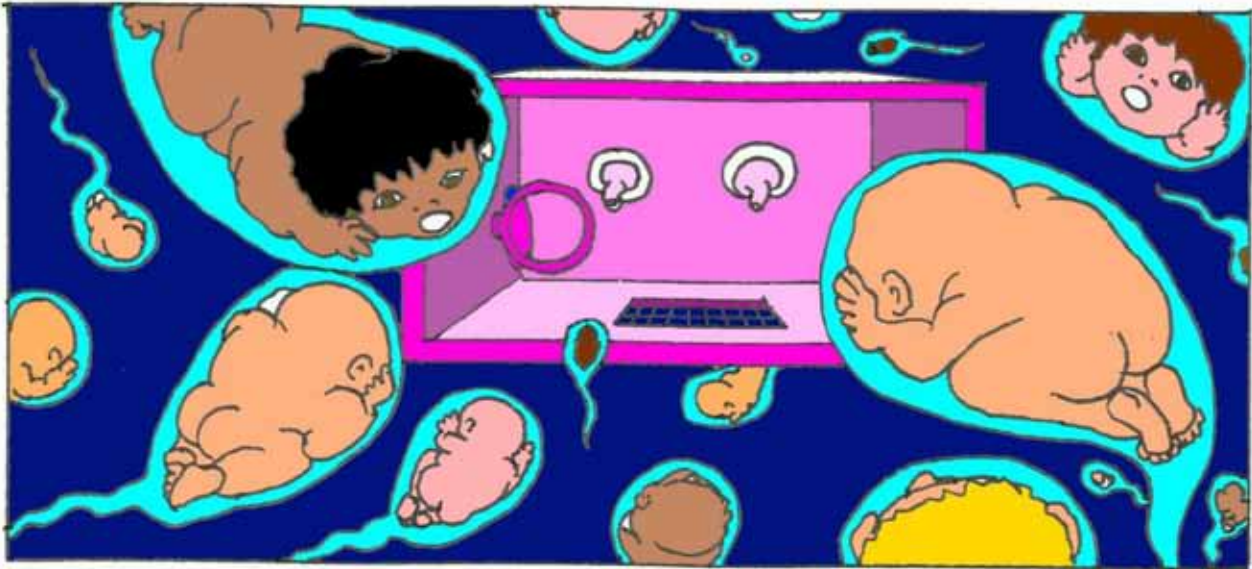
John – Yes, well there is no specific condemnation for 'a woman who lies with a woman, as she does with a man' in the Bible.



Tony – Why?

John – According to the creation story '*Man and woman were created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. ch1. v.27) God blessed them saying, "Be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth and conquer it."*



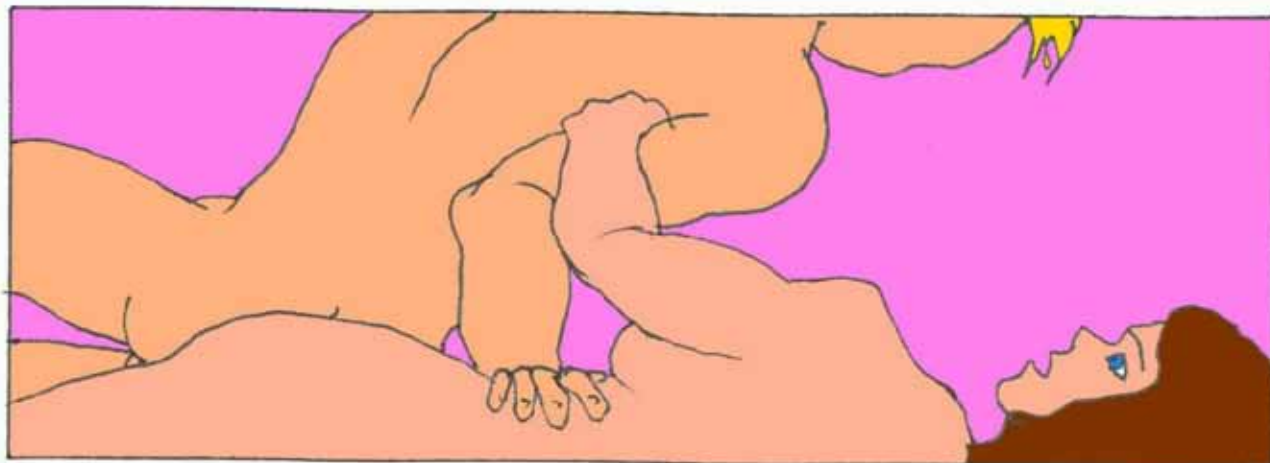


...But it was believed that semen contained in complete form a boy/girl. When a man sexually impregnated a woman, it meant that the woman served as a sort of 'incubator'. Only in the 'incubator' could the seed-boy/girl survive and grow, until the boy/girl was ready to be launched into the world at birth.

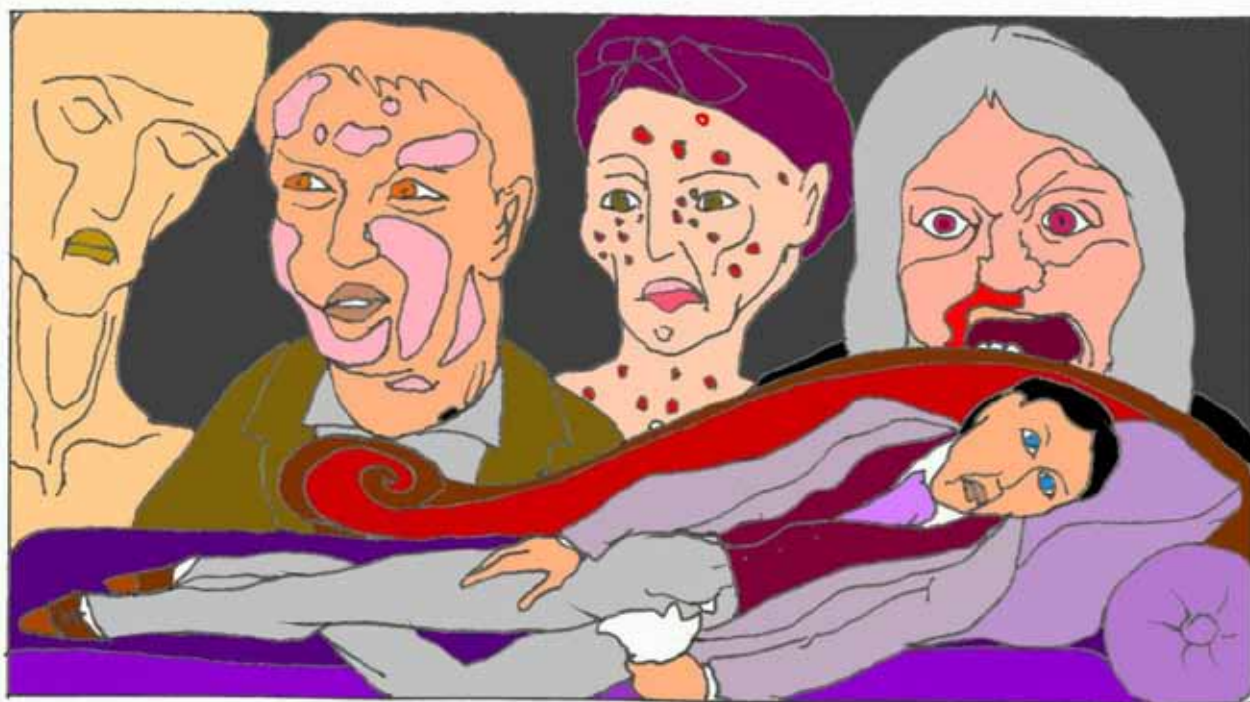


... New life, whether male or female had its origin in man ; not woman. The woman merely facilitated the process, but had nothing to do with the origin of new life.

...Which is why the 'spilling' of seed, sperma, outside of a woman is totally taboo. Take the story of Onan, the second son of Judah. He was told to take Tamar to produce a child for his brother, who had died. *But Onan, knowing that the child would not be his, spilt his seed on the ground everytime he slept with his brother's wife, to avoid producing a child...What he did was offensive to Yahweh (God). Genesis ch.38,vv 8-10)*



...Which, by the way, is also the reason that masturbation for males, is strictly forbidden in Christian cultures. Masturbation has been associated with all sorts of illnesses right past the era of Freud. Philosophers such as Emmanuel Kant saw masturbation as a violation of moral law, and Jean Jacques Rousseau called masturbation 'mental rape'. Only since the Kinsey report (1953) is masturbation regarded to be something perfectly normal and healthy.



John – Then there is the (in)famous story of **Sodom and Gomorrah** in the Bible (Genesis ch.18). Lot refused to surrender his two angelic male guests to the citizens of Sodom, so that they could sexually abuse and humiliate them.



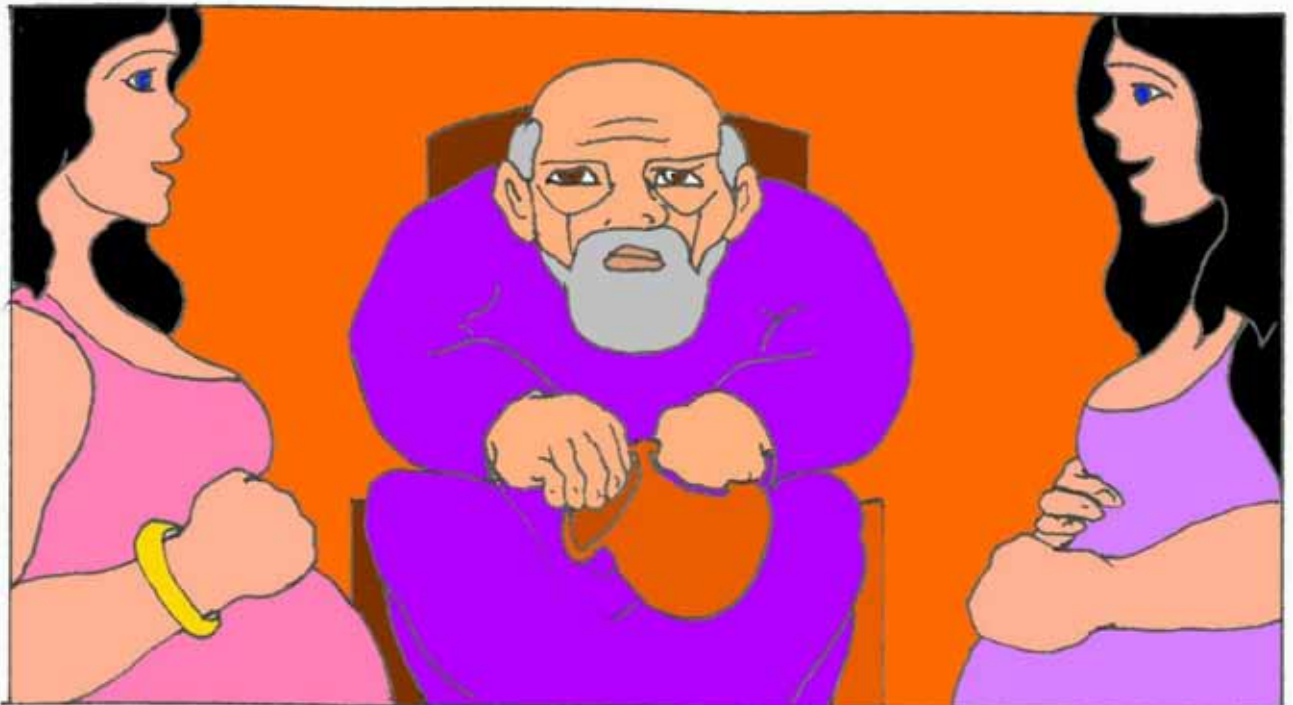
...Lot offered his two daughters to them instead. But the citizens were not interested. No greater humiliation could the citizens exercise then to spill their semen and so destroy any possibility for new life for Lot and his family. Hostility, not hospitality, was the issue of this story.



...Which is why the story of incest in the Bible book Genesis ch.19 vv.30-38, was not considered as something beyond the pale.

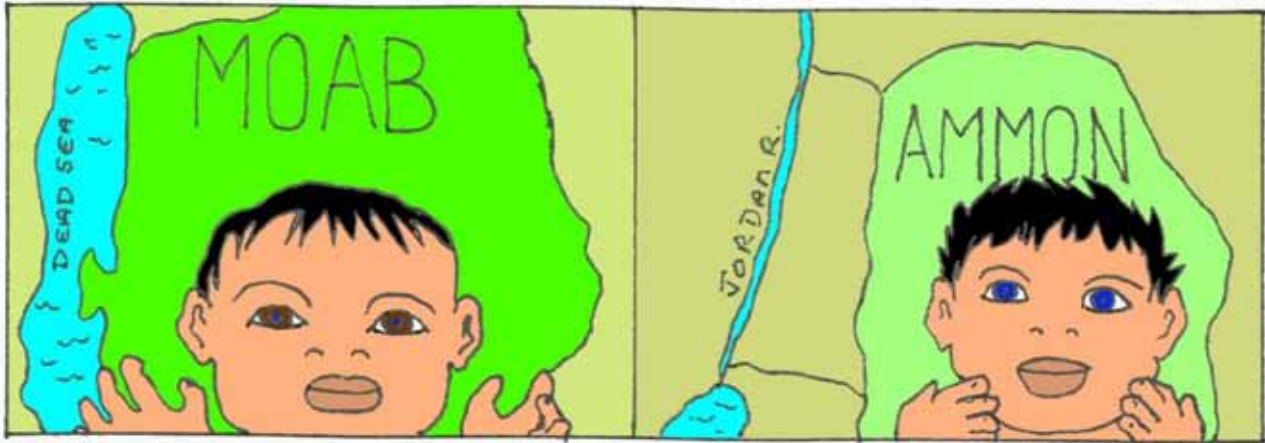


Lot settled in the hill country with his two daughters...The elder said to the younger, 'Our father is an old man, and there is not a man in the land to marry us in the way they do the world over. Come let us ply our father with drink and sleep with him, in that way we shall have children by our father.'



...That night they made their father drunk and the elder...and the younger slept with him...Both daughters became pregnant by their father.

...The elder gave birth to a son...the ancestor of the Moabites...the younger gave birth to a son... the ancestor of the Bene-ammon of our times.



John – The Moabites and the Bene-ammon were looked down upon by the Isrealites who had reached the ‘Promised Land’ after forty years wandering in the desert. But that did not take away the legitimacy of the Moabites and Bene-ammon as such.

The fact that women were mere ‘incubators’ for new life that had its exclusive origin with man, was still believed. So, lesbian relationships were of no real import. At worst, lesbians were seen and treated as witches , and that right into the 19th century AD.



Tony – The question still remains, 'Are cases of lesbian relationships to be found in the Bible?'

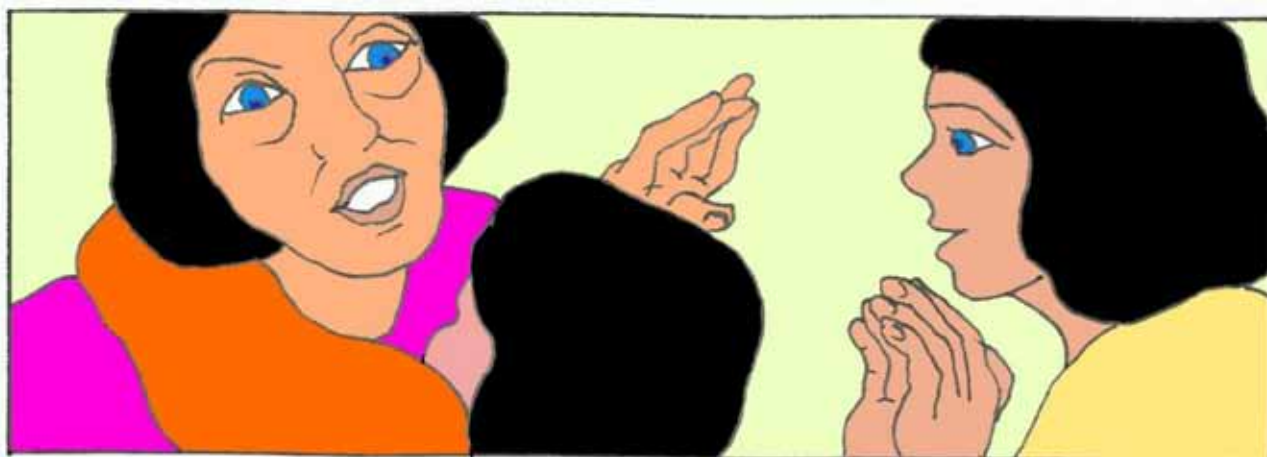
John – The answer is 'no' as far as we know. But there are some who suggest that **RUTH AND NAOMI** had a lesbian relationship. The story of Ruth and Naomi....



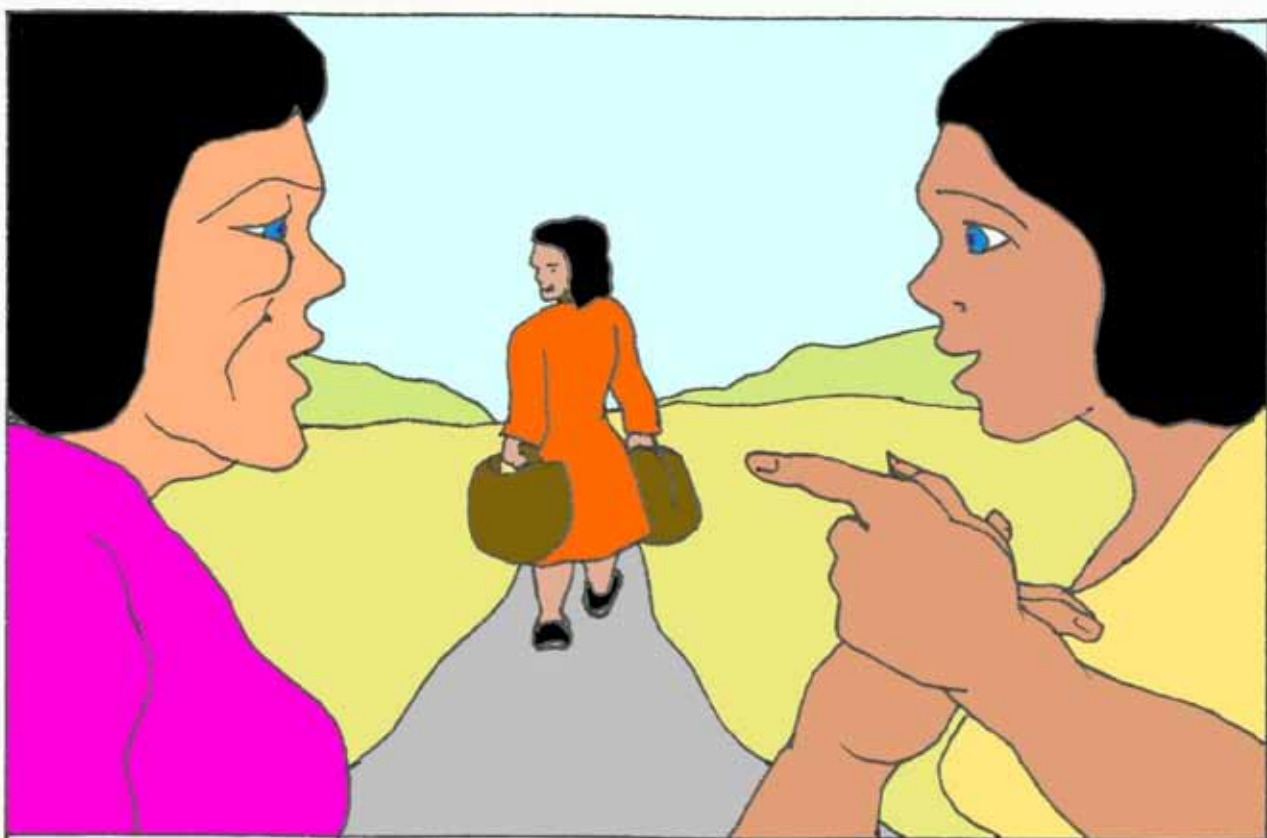
A certain man...Elimelech, with his wife Naomi, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chillon...from Bethlehem in Judah, went to the country of Moab and settled there.....Elimelech died.



*...The two sons ...married Moabite women...Orpha and Ruth
About ten years later both Mahlon and Chillon died.*



Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, 'Go back, each of you to your mothers house' ...'Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and went back to her people.'



But Ruth said, 'Do not press me to leave you and to turn back from your company. Wherever you go, I will go. Wherever you live, I will live. Your people shall be my people and your God, my God. Wherever you die, I will die and there I shall be buried. May Yahweh do this thing to me and more also, even if death should come between us.'