

“AN ACT OF GOD” CHARMS THE AUDIENCE



Bill Donohue comments on reviews of “An Act of God,” a play that opened on Broadway last night:

What’s not to like about another religion-bashing Broadway play? Studio 54, home of drug addicts, tramps, and celebrities in the 1970s, is the perfect venue for this gay-happy play starring Jim Parsons. Dressed in a white robe and red sneakers, he plays God. The script is a contemporary rewrite of the Ten Commandments. Does it work? For those perpetually frozen in their adolescence, it sure does. Here’s an example of what makes these people howl: “The reason masturbation is a sin is not that it’s intrinsically evil. It’s that every time you do it, I have to watch.”

Parsons’ God doesn’t want anyone to think that he speaks to the faithful: there is no such thing as a personal relationship with God. The Lord is a fan of separation of church and state, but what he really likes is gay sex. “Thou Shalt Not Tell Others Whom to Fornicate” was a crowd pleaser. They also roared when God described himself as “a jealous, petty, sexist, racist, mass-murdering narcissist.” And yes, God really did create Adam and Steve. He even created a gay serpent.

It is for these reasons that the *Hollywood Reporter* dubbed the play a “wickedly irreverent and surprisingly thoughtful anarchic comedy.” But this account is not completely accurate. NY1 also got it wrong when it said that “for the liberal-minded, it is hysterically funny.” Jokes about the Holocaust—unlike jokes about Jesus—weren’t seen as

“hysterically funny” by the “liberal-minded” crowd. Moreover, the script was anything but anarchic when it balked at offending Muslims. After God says that the angel Gabriel also gave us the Koran, he comments, “That of course was the beginning of Islam, and at the request of the producers, that is the last you’ll be hearing about Islam tonight.”

To show how original the script is, there are jokes about Sarah Palin, the Kardashians, and Bruce Jenner. About the Jenner joke, the *New York Times* said that it “alone [was] worth the price of admission.” It doesn’t take much to make these people laugh—as long as it doesn’t touch any of their hot buttons.