

## Comedy and Horror

### In the Bible

It is what it is: Judges 3-4 (The tale of two assassins)

Sometimes two is better than one

The story Part one:

The story tells everything, yet it's usually the back story that gives motive. A person could steal a car, but it's the debt and drugs that fuel the crime. Maybe someone runs for president. You find out later that their brother died by murder. That person might have been fueled to change the laws. Fuel for actions is what it's all about. We do anything because of the fuel inside us. In the Bible it's called the heart.

Jesus says in Matthew 15 beginning at verse 17:

**“Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? 18 But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. 20 These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”**

Like I said in the beginning the back story fuels the story. The book of Judges evolved because of the history of the Israelite people. Murder and mayhem don't just happen. People have a mindset on what is right and wrong. They also have the tradition of normalcy. What I mean is that they were trained by their forefathers on what it means to be an Israelite. In the name of God, they would do what they had to do, even if it appears wrong or un-moralistic.

This is the story of two assassins that were quite different, yet their motive was the same. Sometimes one person takes matters into their own hands. They might see the opportunity and act on it. Partly it's about them being the only ones willing. It's chilling to me because in their heart they had the ability to kill all along. Yet, both of these assassins were motivated because of their heritage and by their sense of timing and duty. There is one other small reason: they were able and willing to kill.

These two assassins are Ehud the left handed and Jael (a wife with a tent). If you were to write an account of your history how much good stuff would be written compared to the bad. Would your story look good on you or is it an indictment? These two assassins did a brave thing; an evil thing; and the right thing all at the same time. Their stories show the horror side of the Bible, yet weaved within is a message. There is a motive in the heart that is common to us all.

The back story for these two is the same. Since the time of Abraham in Genesis, the Hebrew people were known for two things. One: is that they were fierce fighters. The second is that they always did a little less than God commanded. They always tried to ignore the obvious. This mentality paves the way for our two assassins. Ehud and Jael grew up as fighters for the Israelite people. It's the way they were. Wars and conquering the land is all they knew. The other side is compromise. These two people had to endure their own clans settling down with the enemy.

This settling down caused a passive nature within their clans. This gave rise to other nations being able to harass and dominate them. I bet that Ehud wanted to fight back but was told to stand down. I bet Jael had to deal with foreign harassment but was told to tolerate it for the sake of peace. Throughout these two stories is war and settling, yet these two decided that

enough was enough. They became the two secret assassins of the Bible. Next week lets go through their actions towards their common enemy.

## The story Part two:

To me it's scary to know that people can and will do what they have to do when pressed. I love the Walking Dead because it's a story about people. Those that don't watch the show always say it's about zombies. The fans know it's about the people and their story. Reading the Bible is all about boring scripture for boring people. That's what non-Christians think. The fans of the Bible know that it's about people and their stories.

Judges 3-4 is a dark brooding period in the history of the Israelites. Right at the beginning of Judges is the death of Joshua. In a way he is the last person who knew God personally. He was there when Moses talked with God. He saw the Red Sea open. He saw the plagues. He saw God's wrath and pillars of fire and smoke. Joshua was a great leader and the Israelites needed that. Sometimes when a good leader dies the heart of a nation dies too. From that point on to the end of Judges we go from great leader to Judges 21:25 **"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."**

Inside Judges is the story of how the Israelites fell from grace. Our two assassins are just examples of where this nation was heading. The mindset became bold and reckless. So let's take a look at these two assassins beginning with the left handed Ehud. God had reminded the Israelites not to take daughters and husbands from the neighboring villages, yet after the death of Joshua that's what they did. So God, in his anger, sold the Israelites into foreign hands. That

caused oppression and hardship for them. Ehud was one of those descendants that grew up in slavery to someone else. It was not his nature as an Israelite to sit still.

For 18 years the Israelites had sent tribute to the oppressing king of Moab. Several times that tribute was taken by Ehud. I can imagine the humiliation that man endured. Finally, he had had enough. I suspect that God heard the cries of the Israelites and inspired Ehud to take action. Sometimes we expect God to be nice all the time. The God of love is not very loving if he inspires someone to kill. I find that God will use fallen people to do fallen things to bring understanding and peace to the world.

Most people are right handed. In my left handed world, they are using the wrong hand. Ehud used his left handed disability to his advantage. The King and his guards always looked to the right side for a weapon. They were ready for the right hand to strike. The left handed Ehud looked right to them so to speak. Ehud was smart and he placed a small sword on his left inner side of his pants.

The cool part is the little stuff. Ehud knew that the King worshiped idols right in his inner chamber. As the tributes poured in, Ehud acted like the gods had told him something special for the King. The King then ordered everyone out because he was going to hear from god by the safe left handed man. I hope you realize that this man Ehud is gutsy and bold. This assassination is nuts. I wonder if Ehud realized the hornets' nest it would produce.

So the King is very fat and is just sitting in his chair. Ehud approaches him in a friendly manner. This is horrifying. Ehud pulled out the small sword with his left hand and thrust it into the fat kings belly so deep it became lost. It says dirt fell from the fat. That is utterly disgusting. Ehud then quickly locked the doors behind him and fled. The servants thought the King was

having sex with himself so they waited some time before forcing open the door. This gave Ehud time to get away.

After this we have Ehud sounding an inspiring trumpet. It makes me think it was the plan of the nation all along to assassinate the King of Moab. We could sit here and applaud the Israelites for their bold actions. We could be disgusted with Gods people and the way they treat their neighbors. Either way that is the story of the first assassination. However, Israel never learns. They fell back into trouble once the leader Ehud dies. For twenty years they lived in oppression again until the second assassinator rose up.

As expected not all the tribes of Israel live in the same place. There always seems to be one that lives a distance away. This is kind of the theme in the Bible. God always separates a few and calls them the remnant. A group of believers that are seemingly waiting for the Lord. This second assassinator might not really be a remnant but the story appears that way. Her name is Jael. I feel she is a lonely wife of a Moses descendant named Heber. I also suspect that they have lived in terror and fear from the oppressing nation of King Jabin.

The best part is twofold. All the time we hear of ruthless leaders in the middle East who at one time or another are killed by a drone or sniper. I have read about these men killing many civilians before they are taken down. Jael and her husband are in the same situation. The leader of the king's army is Sisera. He might be a modern day Isis leader. I bet he had a terrible reputation. I also bet that the nation of Israel would love to get their hands on him alone.

In the Olympics recently I have marveled at the Canadian women. These ruthless creatures have terrorized the world in sport. I have witnessed them cause bruising hits in Rugby and soccer. They tangled up and flattened opponents in wrestling. Even the other women around

the world have raised my eye brows. Because they are beautiful, sweet, and pretty? No, it's the tenacity and aggressive nature. I think they fight harder than the men. Women scare me now.

Jael is Betty Crocker, Oprah Winfrey, and, Martha Stewart to the community. Women have their place, but seemingly not in Israel. Again in the Walking dead we find a woman named Carol who appears just like Jael. By season seven she has killed several, blown up zombies, and sacrificed disturbed children. Like I said women scare me to bits now.

After twenty years the Israel community has had enough of Sisera and his reign of terror. During the battle he was losing. So Sisera ran to the far countryside. The countryside of Heber and his sweet wife Jael. She is tending to the day's duties when luck would have it she sees luck changed before her eyes. There coming over the hill is Sisera the evil commander all alone and looking scared and lost. Jael is an Israelite. She had assassination in her blood.

As sweet as pie she tells him to turn aside into her tent. I wonder if it means more than come in here for rest. Maybe he thought this would be his lucky day with an unsuspecting wife. A little sex while on the lamb. So in he goes and is very tired from the day's events. She offers him milk and cookies and a rug to lay under. He asks her to keep guard and he drifts off into sleep.

Our assassinator Jael (Martha Stewart) takes action. She grabs a tent peg and a hammer. I can imagine she has homestead arms. Those tough chicks with well-worn farm hands. She has turned from Martha Stewart into Xena (princess warrior) within a flash. She sneaks up upon the sleeping general and drives a tent peg through his head. The best part is the peg. Not only through the head but into the ground. It says he died (Duh). What force, what passion, and what

bold anger she had. Jael is the second of two assassins. Next week let's look at the lessons learned.

**W**hat we can learn:

What could we possibly learn from two timely assassins? In the proceeding chapter we get a sweet song. Israelites don't feel guilty about assassination. They sing songs of praise. God raised up a new judge to rule Israel. Her name was Deborah. Geesh, another warrior woman. After Jael killed the bad general Deborah felt compelled to celebrate. In one verse she says that caravans steered clear of Jael. I bet they did. Who wanted her company for the night?

I encourage you to read Judges 5:24-27. Deborah tells it like it is. Jael is so cool and inspiring in her eyes. Are these two assassins cool in your eyes. Why is murder and assassinations celebrated by Gods people? One of the answers might come from a different source. I am currently reading War and Peace. This daunting book is 1397 pages. The writing is incredible. The insight into the hearts of the soldiers is interesting. In one battle they are saying they would love to die before the Czar of Russia. To fight is honor for the family back home.

Imagine that this is a Russian thing. It's probably a Jewish thing too in the Bible. Is it American to desire honor by dying for one's country? It does not seem very Canadian. I feel that Muslims would die for Allah or the cause. Would Christians die for God these days? Would I really give my life for my family? I suppose I would, but I might hesitate. I don't think many in North America put country, family, and community first. This entitled generation is a consumer generation. That is not the way history thought.

The lesson might be several things. One could be that we need to get back to community thinking. A village raises a child. Community events like celebrations and holidays are supported

through parades and concerts. Weekends off meant a time to rest and gather in community. There are community picnics, watches, and meetings. A time to know the neighbors in a better light.

Second is our own bubble. We protect our bubble far too much. Ehud and Jael respected themselves but they loved being a part of the national bubble. Their identity was found within their own traits and the traits of their country. I am Canadian. That seems to be lost these days. When it comes time to fight for Canada: will I or will you. Do we have the passion for the flag? Our two assassins put their lives on the line for the flag.

Maybe one other lesson is being aware. Our local area is run by someone. Do those leaders reflect our national values? Do we have national values? I feel that one of the reasons Israel settled with foreign occupation is a passive nature. They were willing to give up their freedom and rights for peace. Is peace worth the loss of identity. History has shown that compromise over peace always leads to death and war. It always has and always will. Passive people in every generation say that's not true.

Our nature is to control. One group or thing will always be the dominate or stronger. That is how humanity works. You can believe we can change but for thousands of years' humanity has played by those rules. Evil hopes you will try and find a peaceful solution. Evil never negotiates. Ehud and Jael wanted peace. Their fellow Israelites were willing to sacrifice community to get it. We are passive these days wanting peace at all costs. One day we will see the rise of a new breed of assassins. History knows our nature very well. The real lesson here is that passive peace never wins. History will always be writing this story.