

If The Ancient Middle Eastern Conflicts Involving Judah Were a Bar Fight...

Judah and his northern brother Israel are sitting at a table in a bar on the rough side of town. They're drinking, arguing, and occasionally punching each other.

In walks Assyria, the biggest, toughest, most foul-smelling guy in town. Assyria demands that Judah and Israel buy him drinks. They don't want to, but they realize Assyria is much tougher than they are, so they buy the drinks. But before long, and after consuming too much alcohol, Israel decides he isn't going to buy any more drinks for Assyria. Not a good idea. Assyria grabs Israel, beats him severely, takes his possessions, and tosses him out the door, never to be seen again. Judah is spared since he continues to buy the occasional drinks for Assyria. Judah knows he should lament the loss of his northern brother... But he really doesn't.

Egypt, a big guy himself, is sitting in a booth watching the fracas. When Assyria steps out of the bar, Egypt walks over to Judah and demands that Judah buy drinks. Judah doesn't want to, but Egypt is much bigger so Judah buys the drinks. Judah resents both the lingering stench of Assyria and the bullying of Egypt.

Assyria returns to the bar, but before he settles in, a new tough guy comes through the door. His name is Babylon. Babylon quickly starts a fight with Assyria. While they're exchanging haymakers, Egypt decides his best interests are served if Assyria wins the fight, since Assyria seems to be OK with Judah buying drinks for Egypt. So Egypt gets up to take a swing at Babylon. Judah thinks Babylon might be a good protector, so Judah sides with Babylon and kicks Egypt in the shin. Annoyed, Egypt swats Judah aside. But while Egypt is momentarily diverted, Babylon beats Assyria unconscious and kicks him out the door. Babylon then turns his full attention to Egypt and beats him severely. Egypt returns to his booth to sulk and patch his wounds. Judah is pleased that both Assyria and Egypt have been taken down a peg by his new pal Babylon. Judah is pleased, that is, until Babylon orders Judah to buy even more drinks than Egypt had demanded.

Egypt then jumps out of his booth and re-starts his fight with Babylon. Judah decides he was better off buying single drinks for Egypt than double drinks for Babylon, so Judah kicks Babylon's shins whenever he can while Egypt and Babylon are fighting. Finally, Egypt has enough and offers to return to his booth and cease fighting. Babylon agrees. But Babylon doesn't forget that his "pal" Judah was kicking him in the shins when he was fighting Egypt. Babylon is further incensed when Judah soon announces he won't be buying any more drinks. So Babylon beats the stuffing out of Judah, takes his possessions, and tosses him out of the bar.

Babylon rules the bar until a guy named Persia walks in. Persia intends to be the new tough guy in the bar, so he immediately takes on Babylon. Babylon has been weakened by all the fighting, so it doesn't take Persia long to subdue Babylon and kick him out of the bar.

Persia then finds a beat-up Judah lying in the alley outside the bar. Persia picks up Judah, brushes him off, brings him back into the bar, and even buys Judah a couple of drinks. Refreshed, Judah has no problem agreeing to returning the favor and buy an occasional drink for Persia. But, after a while, Judah tires of buying even the occasional drink for Persia.

That's when another tough guy walks into the bar. His name is Macedonia; his nickname is "Greece". Judah stays on the sideline as Greece pummels Persia and tosses him out. Greece then tells Judah to buy him drinks, and Judah does so. Greece also tells Judah that he doesn't like the name "Judah", so from this time forward, Judah will be called "Judea". Judah isn't happy that Greece has changed his name, but Greece seems like a take-no-prisoners type of person so Judah accepts that his name is now "Judea".

After a while, Judah – now Judea! – is having to buy many more drinks for Greece. Judea notices that Greece is getting a bit sloshed, so Judea decides that a couple of well-placed blows might just drive Greece out of the bar. Judea breaks a chair over Greece's head! Greece staggers, then Judea wallops Greece with a haymaker and tosses him out of the bar.

Judea cannot believe it! There are no more bullies in the bar! Judea settles down for a couple of drinks and basks in his victory! But... Judea soon starts feeling internal anxiety. Shouldn't he be buying drinks for... *somebody*?? Is he really supposed to be able to protect himself?

Other tough guys have entered the bar. One particularly tough-looking guy is sitting in the corner watching intently as events unfold. The bartender tells Judea the stranger's name is "Rome". Judea takes note. Judea realizes he is being tormented by internal demons and a lack of security. Tough guys in the bar are starting to notice Judea. He needs protection!

Judea walks over to Rome and asks him if he would be willing to be Judea's protector in exchange for Judea buying drinks for Rome. Rome agrees.

And so it was.

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