

# **Biblical Horror Story Vol 2 Ep 3**

## **– Baldy and the 2 Mama Bears**

**BIBLICAL HORROR STORY**

**BUMPER**

Hello one and all! Hello to everyone online and everyone in person. We are thankful for you all! This is Redemption Church in Plano Tx and I am Chris Fluitt, and I am happy but a bit nervous to share the Word of God with you today.

**Biblical Horror Story vol 2**

I am nervous because we are in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of our Biblical Horror Story Vol 2 sermon series.

You may have tuned in or come to Church expecting one thing, but here I have

shown up with something entirely unexpected. There are unexpected stories in your Bible. There are stories that are shocking, violent, and gross. In this Biblical Horror Story series, we are investigating these stories. So, let's lay aside our collective nervousness and seek God's Word together.

This story is likely to bring up some questions!

## **Anonymous text line**

You can send your questions into our Anonymous Text Line! 214 856 0550. This line is completely anonymous.

Today I invite you to turn to the book of 2 Kings chapter 2 for a short story I am calling "Baldy and the 2 Mama Bears."

# Baldy and the 2 Mama Bears

As you are turning in your Bibles and firing up your Bible App, I want to tell you that not all stories are what they first appear to be. Some stories upon the first reading will land with a certain emotion, but upon further study and consideration, the stories may bring you to a different emotion all together.

As we read this story in 2 Kings 2: 23-25 I want you to pay close attention to the way this story makes you feel.

2 Kings 2:23-25(NIV\*) 23 From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some *little children*[KJV EDIT] came out of the town and jeered at him. “Get out of

here, baldy!” they said. “Get out of  
here, baldy!” 24 He turned around,  
looked at them and called down a  
curse on them in the name of the  
Lord. Then two bears came out of the  
woods and mauled forty-two of the  
boys. 25 And he went on to Mount  
Carmel and from there returned to  
Samaria.

How does this story make you feel?  
Embrace that feeling. Do not just gloss  
over that emotion. Do just try to sweep it  
under the rug. Let this emotion confront  
you.

Is anyone horrified by this story?  
Is anyone confused about this story?  
Does this story give you pause?

Does this story cause you to question the very nature of God?

I have been asked many times about this story. I find it convicting that a Christian has never asked me about this story... but it was only atheists or agnostics who have asked me about this story.

I can always tell when someone is reading their Bible, because I start getting questions or testimonies. I either get questions like “why did God do that?” or “What was happening there?” Or I get testimonies like “I was reading my Bible and I learned this revelation and the more I looked it, the more I realized this about God.”

Conviction time. Could it be that atheists are reading the Bible more than us, we Christians?

Now to be fair I felt like the atheist was asking me about this particular story because it disproved the nature of a loving God. They would often ask, “Why aren’t you horrified and confused at this story...?”

Does this story stand opposed, against the understanding of a loving God? Let’s really think about this.

1 John 4:8-10(NIV) 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not

that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

God is love. Scripture does not say “at times God is loving,” instead it says that God IS love. His very nature and makeup is love. If you were to put God into a test tube, spin him in centrifuge, and inspect the ingredient against the chart of elements, you would find that God is Spirit, God is Holy, and God is LOVE.

So, we as Christians have this truth - that God is love... but then what about this story in 2 Kings? Is this a loving act?

On the surface of this story, it appears that this is not a loving act. Let us review... Little children make fun of a prophet's baldness and they are cursed to

be torn apart by 2 bears. 42 small children were mauled by 2 bears.

What a dark, horrifying, unsettling story? A story that has caused so many to question their own faith in a loving God.

I want to remind you that not all stories are what they appear to be.

## **Little Children**

If I were to ask you what in this story bothers you the most, what would it be? I am certain that it would be “Little Children” being mauled by a bear... The picture of little children being brought into this situation is untenable.

What comes to your mind when I say “little children?” Do you think toddler? I



think 6, 8, and 11 years old... the age of my 3 children.

Maybe you also think of this?

Matthew 19:13-14(NIV) 13 Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them.

14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

What if I told you the story of God causing bears to maul little children **should** horrify and confuse you... because it didn't happen.

## Little (qāṭān) Children (na‘ar)

### Younger Men

Let me take a lot of the stress you are feeling about this story away right now.

The words little children have been terribly translated over the years.

KJV – little children

NIV – boys

ESV – small boys

NKJV – youths

NASB – young lads

The word little is qāṭān, and it is used throughout scripture to describe something as small or young. However, the vast majority of the time it is used as a comparative word. It is used to mean smaller or younger when compared to another.

The first time it appears in scripture is Genesis 1:16 where the moon is called the “lesser” light... The moon is lesser and smaller in comparison to the sun.

The word little/qāṭān means that these men were younger than the prophet. If the prophet were 70 you could call someone 50 years old qāṭān.

This group of people were qāṭān – younger than the Prophet Elisha.

But what about the word “children?” The word for children is na‘ar and it is used broadly for young males.

Exodus 2:6 uses na‘ar for a new born baby boy.

Genesis 34:19 uses the Hebrew word

na'ar for a man approximately 20 years old.

1 Kings 3:7 uses the exact phrase qāṭān na'ar to describe Solomon around the age 20.

So, let's pull up the scripture again and try to think about what is likely going on.

2 Kings 2:23-24(NIV) 23 From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some boys came out of the town and jeered at him. "Get out of here, baldy!" they said. "Get out of here, baldy!" 24 He turned around, looked at them and called down a curse on them in the name of the Lord. Then two bears

came out of the woods and mauled  
forty-two of the boys.

There is a group of at least 42 people who came out of the town. Likely there were more than 42, but we know there were at least 42 people. Now as you imagine this scene what do you imagine?

42 new born babies?

42 toddlers?

42 10-year-olds?

Based on the language and my colorful imagination, I think it more likely that this was a group of young men and not little children.

2 Kings 2:23(NIV) 23 From there Elisha  
went up to Bethel. As he was walking  
along the road, some boys came out

of the town and jeered at him. “Get out of here, baldy!” they said. “Get out of here, baldy!”

Elisha the prophet was on his way to the town of Bethel, and a group of at least 42 people came out of the town and jeered at him. I want to suggest that this group of people were not just hanging out and having a picnic, but were gathered there for the purpose of stopping the prophet from entering the town.

The NIV says this mass of people repeated the phrase “Get out of here, Baldy!” They did not want to allow the Prophet to come to their town.

The original Hebrew reads “Go up, bald head!”

# Go up, bald head!

Not just go away... but go up? Why would they be telling this particular man to “go up?” Why up? Can we think of any reason?

In this very chapter we are told about Elisha’s mentor, Elijah the prophet. What happens to Elijah? Elijah WENT UP in a fiery chariot and the only one to see it happen was Elisha. In this same chapter people don’t believe Elisha’s story of seeing Elijah translated - going up. In fact, they send out a large group to search for Elijah.

No, a group of young men are jeering at Elisha. It suggests to me that that they do not believe the word of Elisha concerning Elijah. It suggests that they are attacking

Elisha with a threat to also leave earth and join Elijah in the great beyond.

What about the bald head comment?

Were they just making fun of male pattern baldness? Possibly, but in scripture the shaving of the head was a sign of mourning. (Isaiah 22:12; Jeremiah 7:29; 16:6) It is likely that having lost someone as important as Elijah, the prophet Elisha shaved his head and entered a time of mourning.

It is fairly lowdown to make fun of someone in the midst of their mourning.

This group of young men were not welcoming the prophet, but may have actually been a danger to his safety. This group was more like a mob or a gang,



certainly not a group of little children on a play date.

## **That curse though...**

Is it the will of a loving God that we should curse people? What exactly does curse mean?

In this situation Elisha looked at them and called down a curse in the name of the Lord. A curse sounds like an evil thing a witch would do.

The Hebrew language here suggests a personal accusation and an oath. That could be something as simple as – “I know that you mean me evil (personal accusation) and as sure as the Lord Jehovah lives, I will be protected.” (oath)

And what happened next?

## 2 Mama bears

2 Bears came out of the woods and mauled 42 young men.

The actual language here suggests she bears. The King James Version even calls them she bears.

I have always found this part of the story interesting and perhaps funny that scripture points out they were she bears. Bears are dangerous as it is, but a she-bear with a cub is more territorial than a normal bear.

There is a very good reason when a human mom sees one of her children being mistreated, she is described as going into “mama bear mode.”

We don't know if anyone died from this encounter, but we know that 42 young men were mauled by these 2 mama bears.

## **Baldy and the 2 Mama Bears**

So, we cleared up a lot about this story. Hopefully it will clear up your questions.

Hopefully it will help you, should anyone attack the nature of God and point to this scripture as a reason to not believe.

Hopefully you are armed against the argument that God has slaughtered little children.

Hopefully you see that God was protecting Elisha and punishing the malicious intent of this small army of men.

But why is this story in the Bible?

## Why is this story in the Bible?

Is there a reason this story is in the Bible?

What might God want us to learn from this story?

Let's remember the story...

2 Kings 2:23-24(NIV) 23 From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some boys came out of the town and jeered at him. "Get out of here, baldy!" they said. "Get out of here, baldy!" 24 He turned around, looked at them and called down a curse on them in the name of the Lord. Then two bears

came out of the woods and mauled  
forty-two of the boys.

## **Messengers, Messages, & Mercy**

Who is the messenger in this story? The prophet Elisha is a messenger of God. Messengers carry a message...

What is the message? We are not ever able to learn the prophet's message, because of the young men who threaten Elisha and make him so unwelcome in their town.

A message from God is of utmost importance. Nothing is more important than hearing the message of the Lord.

When you heard the gospel for the first time and realized that God loved you – that was not just a nice sermon, it was the message from God.

When you opened up your Bible and read something that convicted your heart and drew you to pray and repent – that was not emotionalism, it was the anointed message of the Lord.

We must hear and receive the message of the Lord. It is not likely you will receive the message if you reject the messenger whom God has sent.

**BEWARE** - God often chooses as His messenger a person whom we least expect.

- If you have a problem with race or gender, God might just send you a messenger whom in order to receive the message, you will need to repent of your prejudices.
- What if God selects someone to bring you a message whom you have not forgiven?
- What if God handpicks the person you look down on to deliver to you His message of life?
- What if God does not select a handsome king, but a poor Jewish carpenter to carry His message?

If you reject the messenger, you also reject the message.

Elisha was going to Bethel. He may have had a message from God for that town. He may have had a message of hope & purpose for the very young men who met him outside the city and turned him away.

Perhaps Elisha never delivered a message to Bethel, because this mob of youths rejected the messenger.

2 Kings 2:25(NIV) 25 And he went on to Mount Carmel and from there returned to Samaria.

## **Messengers, Messages, & Mercy**

We know the messenger – Elisha. We know Elisha likely had a message. Do we know about the mercy?



God's messenger and God's message are an extension of His mercy. If you reject the messenger, you reject the message, and if you reject the message, you reject God's mercy.

I am sharing knowledge with you right now that many people do not know. The young men outside of Bethel did not know the Truth I am sharing with you right now.

God's messenger and God's message are extensions of His Great Mercy. Mercy is an attribute of God's care & love. Elisha was coming to Bethel with a message he had received because of God's love & care.

**Do you understand that God loves you enough to send a messenger with a message for you?**

Do you realize that when we receive the Word of God together, it is God sending you a message through a messenger?

When you open your Bible to read you are receiving a message through a messenger.

When someone says I was praying for you and I believe God told me something for you to hear... pay attention, that may be God's message coming through a messenger.

When someone is talking at Connect Group, it could very well be God's messenger speaking out a message to you.

His messenger and His message are extensions of His mercy.

Pay close attention to this message, right now!

The young men did not realize they were rejecting God's mercy when they rejected Elisha.

In Job, chapter 1, Satan accuses God of putting a "hedge" around Job. A hedge is a fence of protection that keeps the blessings inside safe from the enemy outside the barrier.

We forget that God is protecting us, fencing us against enemies, and standing between us and destruction. We have it so good in God, we even forget there is a fence. We have it so good in God that we forget what is on the other side of the hedge.

When those young men rejected God's messenger & message, they also rejected God's mercy. God raised that merciful hedge of protection and as it happens there were 2 wild mama bears on the other side of the hedge.

**This story stands as a reminder that it is only God's mercy that stands between us and destruction.**

The bears were already there. The destruction was already in position. The bears were aware of the young men, the young men were not aware of the bears until it was too late.

There is already a devil positioned to destroy you. There is already an enemy

positioned to take you down. THEY ARE IN POSITION.

But God is also in position! His mercy was standing in the way of those bears.

God's mercy is hedging you. God's kindness and love are surrounding you. Jesus is a fence – for you!

Yet that hedge of protection can be lifted. You can reject the mercy and come face to face with an enemy.

## **Musician**

**Receive the messenger, the message, and the mercy**

God has sent us messengers. Do you recognize them? Do you receive them?

God has sent us messages. Do we recognize those messages? Do we receive them and obey them?

God has sent us mercy. Do we recognize His mercy? Do we receive or reject His mercy?

Destruction is closer than you realize. You don't know what is on the other side of the hedge.

There are far too many stories of people hearing the message of mercy in a Church service like this one, only to reject it by saying "maybe next time preacher... I don't need anything, my life is just fine,"

only to hop in their car and run straight into a wreck and be gone from this world.

We need mercy. It is always appropriate to cry out for the mercy of God.

I am about to pray and I want this place to become a place of prayer. I want us to receive the message we heard today and thereby receive again the Mercy of God.

I know I am preaching to blessed people. I know I am preaching to people who are very rarely worried. I know that I am preaching to people that sometimes I ask them the question, “How I can pray for you?” and they reply with hesitation “I am ok, everything is fine with me, I can’t think of anything to pray for...”

I want to remind you that there are destructive things in position to attack you. The mercy of God hedges us so well that we are sometimes unaware of the bears... but they are there.

Those who want someone to pray with you, please come forward near this stage and we will pray with you.

I want us all to think about what was on the other side of the hedge that God's mercy protected us from this past week. Let us all spend time praying and crying out for God's mercy to cover us this week and to deliver those we know who need our prayer.

Lamentations 3:22(NIV) Because of the LORD's great love we are not



consumed, for his compassions never fail.

It is only because of His mercy and love that we are not consumed. Oh how we need to God's mercy.