

The Greatest Story Never Told

by John Halas, ScreenwritersForHire.Com

based on the book, *The Greatest Story Never Told*

by Vincent Krivda

Logline

The meaning and purpose of the stories in the Torah are lost through translation.

Character Description

Abraham is the father of faith and the founding father of the Jewish nation. He leaves for an unknown land with his father and has some questionable characters, unbecoming a hero.

Enkidu is the man created to strive with Gilgamesh. He is created by the gods to prevent the demigod from attaining immortality.

Gilgamesh is the demigod that is in pursuit of immortality. He faces adversity in Enkidu and ends up having immortality stolen from him by a snake.

Three-Act Summary

Act One

- The oral tradition among the Israelites is how the biblical stories are passed down through generations. Usually, stories recited by mouth and around for some time are susceptible to changes in elements and context. However, these stories maintain their purpose - teaching morals and purpose as a human on earth. The stories remain intact (in

their goal) because they are believed to be the words of God; therefore, they are sacred. The oral tradition allows the Israelites to get the true meaning of the different stories. However, Jesus calls their attention to the things they have heard and what was said. The Torah text he refers to does not suggest the Israelites should love their neighbor and hate their enemy. It says nothing about their enemy.

- Oral tradition exposes the fallibility of the characters of the Bible by focusing on its function in assuming a storyline that leads to a discussion among the family, pointing out values that are in line with morals as the debate progresses. The possibility that one may think of Judaism as a fully developed religion that differentiates the Hebrews from the rest of the world is challenged by the controversies of Bible characters such as Abraham.
- The Bible encourages us to seek the truth, and it will set us free. However, does the Torah contain the truth or facts? Does the truth or points in the Torah influence how we perceive the rest of the Bible? It is common among Christians to call the Torah the old testament, making it appear as an aspect of the Bible that is old and not suitable for consultation in modern times. While it is normal for a new generation to find answers to the ever-present question: What is man's purpose on earth? There is an account for this in the Torah. It is also expected that our modernity drives us to accept facts (even if they are not true).
- The Torah is spread among the Israelites orally, and it provides a history of the world's most burning questions. The notion that what the Bible says has to be accepted makes it univocal and appears as though it contains fact but, if it contained truth, will it also be univocal or equivocal? The biblical language makes man think and question its content. Although the Bible has accounts of the world's creation and guides to navigating through life's challenges, they do not pass as facts or truth but as a collection of stories that teach morals, values, and principles.
- Daily life struggles as we experience today have been in existence since the old days. Men return from their work to

their families. The Israelites are called the *bet-ab* or *mishpacha*, the modern-day nuclear and extended family, respectively. Families sit around and listen to the teachings of the Torah, leading to discussions that concern values and morals.

- Religions arise from traditions and customs. As Thanksgiving is a memorable time to Americans and specific dishes, parades, and football are attached to this tradition, certain aspects of it will not change, even though traditions come and go with time. Does that mean current practices will change in the nearest future and those of the past have changed now? To what extent have traditional and custom changes been?

Act Two

- If certain customs in religion have changed, does that mean the way we worship God has changed? Since God is unchanging, do we have to stick with the old form of worship? The oral tradition of teaching from the Torah is evident in the three generations of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Isaac is a man like his father, Abraham, who passes his wife as his sister to King Abimelech. When strife begins, and he is to leave the vicinity of Abimelech's men because he has grown in power and wealth, he settles in a place God provides, establishing the importance of the past to the present.
- The Bible contains the record of men who lived at the beginning of time, stating who they were, their lineage, how long they lived, and when they died. With our western mind, we take these as facts. However, there are also accounts in the Bible that seem contradictory, as we can see in the story of the animals contained in Noah's ark. The reports in Genesis 6 and 7 differ because they are accounts from two different sources - probably from Northern Israel and Judah. Also, oral tradition is responsible for the double accounts as different storytellers tell the same story differently, with the same objective in mind.
- The meaning of the sequential creation of earth and lives on earth, as we know it according to the Bible, is lost in

translation. The purpose is apparent in oral tradition as it shows that the heavens aren't in the sky as we think. It is in the air, the vast space between the sky and the earth. Also, The Scofield Study Bible editors have their mindset on faith matters during the translation of the first words in the Bible. "In the beginning" talks about God's existence, but they argue that the Bible begins with God and not an argument of his existence. This shows that their work is colored even before it begins.

- The orderliness in the creation story is gripping, and it begins with creating space between heaven and earth to facilitate the existence and making of other elements. The planet can't sustain life in its original state, hence creating an area that does that. Separating us from outer space with the presence of the firmament is not lost in oral tradition. The fascination is not lost on the listeners of the story. It differs from other creation stories that existed before it, such as the Enuma Elish, as it is intended to generate a conversation after the story is told.
- In the written record, the logic behind the creation sequence is questionable, especially as seen from the third day when God commands that the ground produces herbs, vegetables, and fruit-producing trees. Although this is a creative feat in creation, as evident in oral tradition, it seems impossible. It will only have taken billions of years for such to happen, according to our knowledge today. The sun, moon, and stars are yet to exist, and we know the sun, in particular, is essential in the production of these creative parts of creation. The oral tradition brings the story to a climax that leads to asking a question of reason: Why?
- The translations of the Bible miss the use of the Hebrew words that roughly translate to generations. It may be attributed to familial lineage concerning time or a present family. The use of generations in the creation story in the second chapter of Genesis may point to the fact that the creation of earth happened over a long time. Also, the translation makes one lose focus of the point of the story. It isn't about the cattle that God created on the sixth day but about the creation of man in God's likeness and image. It shows God's exceptional attention to creating man. It

bears similarity to other creation story customs in other Near Eastern parts of the Israelites, as associated with Ninhursag, goddess of the earth. They both state that man is created from clay and earth; however, the Bible further says that God breathed life into man. To fully understand this story and concept, one need not accept these happenings are sequential.

- In translation, the expression of man's true nature is lost but preserved in the oral tradition as the Hebrew words translated to mean nakedness and craftiness are closely related. The man and woman are said to be naked and not ashamed, while the serpent is the most cunning of all beasts of the field. In an oral tradition, the proper translation will say that the man and woman are crafty, and the serpent is the craftiest of all the beasts of the field.
- Men and women are cunning, and they are not ashamed of their craftiness because they do not know better. In essence, their nature is evil. However, when they eat from the tree forbidden from eating, they know their true nature, and their reaction to God's confrontation is blame-shifting.
- Man's craftiness is no match for the snake's; however, man's craftiness is also too much for himself. Paul agrees to this when he speaks of the holiness of the law. Had man not eaten the fruit, he wouldn't consider his act evil, and sin would not exist.
- Man's enlightenment leads him to create laws that condemn him when he acts in his true nature. Although these stories are a myth, they are instructive and a guide. To fully embrace the meaning behind this story, one has one of two options to choose from: that the story of the tree of life and of good and evil are literal truths as contained in the Bible, or they are allegory and can be applied in different spheres of life.
- Similarities exist between the creation story in Genesis and the Epic of Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh is a demigod in search of eternal life. His search has been futile, but a man of equal strength, Enkidu, is created to counter him. Enkidu roams the field, disrupting the trapper's activities on earth. The trapper encourages the temple prostitute to

seduce Enkidu, and she does, telling him of his wisdom and how he is like a god now. Enkidu requests to meet Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh cannot find eternal life (the serpent steals the plant he has found for eternal life), and despite Enkidu's strength, he ends up dead. The serpent's words to Eve in the garden of Eden are similar to what the temple prostitute said to Enkidu, hence the introduction of death to mankind. Also, it is essential to note that more than words happened at the tree.

- The Bible used the word translated to mean knowledge numerous times in Genesis. It is safe to say that knowledge is not only applied in only the perception of a concrete idea or notion, but also sexual and the discovery of man's purpose. Enkidu finds his purpose: challenge Gilgamesh with his strength. The man also finds his purpose: multiply and dominate the earth. The serpent and the temple prostitute help man and Enkidu, respectively, to find their purpose. For man, his purpose will not be fulfilled until he knows (that is, have sex with) his woman. The knowledge of the opposite sex continues in Genesis.

Act Two

- Another similarity in the Epic of Gilgamesh's story and the Genesis stories is the flood, boat, and a family being saved from the flood. Although some people attempt to use this similarity as proof for the last event, they also quickly pass the Epic of Gilgamesh as a myth. Oral tradition comes into play when readers of the Bible take the Nephilim mentioned in the introduction to Noah to be men that existed at that time. However, they are men of old, as said in the Bible. Reference is also made to them in older written texts, as in the Epic of Gilgamesh. The translators of the Bible intentionally shift the attention from the fallen angels that had knowledge of the daughters of men as it will change the narrative. Also, the Bible expects that the reader has heard of these men that were of old. The story of the flood predates the beginning of writing among the Habiru (Hebrews), as does the myth - Epic of Gilgamesh.
- The Nephilim were familiar men, and they are introduced to a hero, before Abraham, in the Bible. Men have settled for

fame instead of eternal life, as it is unachievable for men. They excel in evil, and all imaginations of their mind are evil. Noah, a contrast to these men, finds favor in the sight of God. The Torah points out the second covenant of the Bible, after God's covenant with Adam, with Noah, and it ends with the introduction of Abraham. The Torah emphasizes the fallibility of man in the story of the flood. Man dies; even with the superhuman strength of the Nephilim, death is inevitable. Also, the circumstances surrounding death, from Cain - who is considered evil and banished - to Lamech - who does so in self-defense. The Torah helps to tell these stories for discussion when the family meets at the end of the day.

- Abraham migrates to Canaan on instruction by God. His journey to Ur and the mention of the Chaldean city as Ur points to the fact that the story comes at least a thousand years after Abraham has died. It is important to note that the accounts presented in the Bible are not sequential. Abraham receives a promise from God to make him a nation. According to Hebrew words, the nation could be a unified Jewish nation or a nation of non-Jewish people. The question about what type of nation God promised Abraham arose.
- The timeline of the Abrahamic stories is disconnected because they are not intended to be an integral story part that forms a whole. Abraham, formerly called Abram, gets the name after God makes his promise to him. The addition of "hey," a Hebrew letter to his name, didn't happen until later, after his death. This gives rise to the possibility of adding some religious belief to the founding father of the Jewish nation, as the letter was not part of the Hebrew alphabet until after Abraham's death.
- As is typical with the teachings of the Torah, the story of Abraham presents stories that lead the family to discussions. Vincent attends a Sunday school class where the topic of a debate, from Abraham and Sarah's story, is "Is it proper to lie to protect yourself?" Vincent, in his later life, finds that that is not what the story is about. That Abraham lies about his relationship with Sarah by calling her his sister is dishonest. The story isn't about attractiveness either. It is about trusting God's judgment.

Will God slay the righteous with the wicked? This paints Abraham as not a hero in these stories.

- Abraham has a son from Sarah, another from Hagar, and others from his concubines, but he sends them away from Isaac, the favored son. In the same manner, many stories in the Torah favor one person over the others; Jacob over Esau, Abraham over Lot, and so on. Does God choose to favor certain people over others too?