

# **Judith**

Judith

by Don Falkos

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A small Jewish city in a mountain pass was besieged by Holofernes, one of the king's most trusted military commanders. Holofernes diverted the spring that supplied the city with water. A few weeks later, the people were suffering – weak from thirst.

But there was Judith. Judith was a wealthy widow. After the death of her husband, she had taken over his properties. Judith was a quiet, gentle woman. She was known for her modesty, her honesty, her wisdom, and her reverence for God. She was appalled that the leaders of the city weren't considering surrender. She announced, "I, a woman, will go alone, trusting God, and defeat our enemy."

Judith took a bath, put on perfume, coiffed her hair, and dressed in her most elegant clothing and her best jewelry. She was strikingly beautiful. She left the city and walked down into the valley; she lied her way into the enemy camp; she seduced Holofernes; and he invited her to a banquet.

Holofernes drank himself into a stupor, all the while expressing his desire for Judith. In the wee hours of the morning Holofernes sent everyone away except for Judith. He led her into his bedroom and then proceeded to pass out. Judith picked up Holofernes' sword and hacked off his head.

She smuggled the head back to the city and insisted it be displayed at the highest point on the city wall. At dawn, the enemy soldiers discovered the death of their leader and fled for their lives. The people praised God for defeating their attackers at the hand of a woman.