

Terrible Praise

Scripture Reading — Judges 5:24-31; Revelation 18:1-8

“Most blessed of women be Jael. . . .” — Judges 5:24

It is not wise to rejoice at the downfall of enemies, “or the Lord will see and disapprove and turn his wrath away from them” (Proverbs 24:17-18). But Deborah and Barak do exactly that with their terrible praise of Jael: “She struck . . . she crushed . . . she shattered. . . .” Likewise, they speak of their enemy: “he sank, he fell . . . he lay . . . dead.” Jael is described as the “most blessed of women.”

But Deborah and Barak also call on the kings of the earth (5:3) to fear the great King of all the earth. Their song boasts not of Israel’s victories but the Lord’s, by his strangely designed saviors: “So may all your enemies perish, Lord!” The enemies of God’s people were never merely flesh and blood. They always were and continue to be powers and authorities and spiritual forces of evil (Ephesians 6:12) that refuse to submit to the Lord and his anointed one, Jesus Christ (Psalm 2:1-3).

Deliverance from the powers that persecute God’s people is messy because the ancient adversary “prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). That’s why Deborah, Barak, and the angel in Revelation 18 rejoice in God’s victories over the adversary.

Killing the works of the flesh (our sinful nature)—impurity, hatred, jealousy—is messy and impossible for us to do, but the Holy Spirit will strike, crush, and shatter them (Galatians 5:16-25). And they will be as powerless as Sisera in Jael’s tent.

Prayer

I praise you, Lord, for salvation; by your Spirit help me die to the works of my sinful nature. Amen.

Devotion topics: [God](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Life](#), [Trials & Challenges](#), [Enemies](#), [Personal Growth](#), [Sanctification](#)

Written by Arie Leder — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/arie-c-leder>

<https://today.reframemedia.com/devotions/terrible-praise>

Printed on July 16, 2019

