

Unexpected Saviors

Scripture Reading — Judges 4:1-15

“God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” — Acts 2:36

In those days it was usually mighty men of war who fought in battle. But in this story Barak of Israel—a capable man of war—would not enter the field of battle without Deborah the prophet. The message from God that Deborah had given him wasn't enough. Did Barak not trust the Lord? Did he not trust Deborah, who had been serving faithfully as a judge for God's people?

Because of his decision, Barak is told that God “will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.” And when the Lord routs Sisera's army (v. 15), Sisera escapes from Barak's advance and runs away on foot.

In those days, it was embarrassing for men to be saved by the help of women. In Jesus' day, it was embarrassing for the people's leaders to hear that an under-educated teacher from Nazareth could save them, and that their own sophisticated religious culture had no such power. What embarrasses us about Jesus as Savior today?

Our embarrassment about the Savior sent by God opens our eyes to uncomfortable truths: we cannot rescue ourselves from sin, and all our ideas about rescue from unrighteousness inevitably fail.

Not Barak or even Deborah fit God's overall design for a Savior. Only the Son of God, mysteriously born of Mary, would do. Hallelujah!

Prayer

Lord, may the grace and love of the unexpected Savior, Jesus Christ, lead us to godly sorrow and the joy of deliverance from unrighteousness and its misery. Amen.

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