

Judges 4:1-5:31 4:1 After Ehud died, the Israelites once again did evil in the eyes of the LORD. v2 So the LORD sold them into the hands of Jabin, a king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth Haggoyim. v3 Because he had nine hundred iron chariots and had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to the LORD for help. v4 Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. v5 She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites came to her to have their disputes decided. v6 She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you: 'Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead the way to Mount Tabor. v7 I will lure Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.' " v8 Barak said to her, "If you go with me, I will go; but if you don't go with me, I won't go." v9 "Very well," Deborah said, "I will go with you. But because of the way you are going about this, the honor will not be yours, for the LORD will hand Sisera over to a woman." So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh, v10 where he summoned Zebulun and Naphtali. Ten thousand men followed him, and Deborah also went with him. v11 Now Heber the Kenite had left the other Kenites, the descendants of Hobab, Moses' brother-in-law, and pitched his tent by the great tree in Zaanannim near Kedesh. v12 When they told Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, v13 Sisera gathered together his nine hundred iron chariots and all the men with him, from Harosheth Haggoyim to the Kishon River. v14 Then Deborah said to Barak, "Go! This is the day the LORD has given Sisera into your hands. Has not the LORD gone ahead of you?" So Barak went down Mount Tabor, followed by ten thousand men. v15 At Barak's advance, the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and army by the sword, and Sisera abandoned his chariot and fled on foot. v16 But Barak pursued the chariots and army as far as Harosheth Haggoyim. All the troops of Sisera fell by the sword; not a man was left. v17 Sisera, however, fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, because there were friendly relations between Jabin king of Hazor and the clan of Heber the Kenite. v18 Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Come, my Lord, come right in. Don't be afraid." So he entered her tent, and she put a covering over him. v19 "I'm thirsty," he said. "Please give me some water." She opened a skin of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him up. v20 "Stand in the doorway of the tent," he told her. "If someone comes by and asks you, 'Is anyone here?' say 'No.' " v21 But Jael, Heber's wife, picked up a tent peg and a hammer and went quietly to him while he lay fast asleep, exhausted. She drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died. v22 Barak came by in pursuit of Sisera, and Jael went out to meet him. "Come," she said, "I will show you the man you're looking for." So he went in with her, and there lay Sisera with the tent peg through his temple-dead. v23 On that day God subdued Jabin, the Canaanite king, before the Israelites. v24 And the hand of the Israelites grew stronger and stronger against Jabin, the Canaanite king, until they destroyed him.

Introduction

Last week we looked at several reasons why Nations fail and what kind of people God uses to speak into or save the nation. Today I want to look at why God's people often fail and how God saves them.

Why Gods PEOPLE fail and HOW God responds to save them.

Notice, FIRSTLY: **THE REASONS WHY GODS PEOPLE FAIL.**

1. God's PEOPLE FAIL when they get too ACCUSTOMED to GOD's GRACE.

*Judges 3:30 That day Moab was made subject to Israel, and **the land had peace for eighty years.***

God's people take the Peace, Salvation, Grace, Mercy and Blessings of God for GRANTED.

Galatians 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Ephesians 4:26-27 "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, v27 and do not give the devil a foothold.

Hebrews 10:25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Friends, God's people failed, when they thought that God would always protect them because of the Covenant he made with them. They forgot the Covenant has promises of blessing as well as CONDITIONS OF service.

2. God's PEOPLE FAIL when they TURN THEIR BACK ON GOD.

5:8 When they chose new gods, war came to the city gates, and not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel.

Friends God has said "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you." BUT!!!!!!

IF WE FORSAKE HIM, WE MAY FACE A DIFFERENT FUTURE.

Revelation 2:1-4 To the church in Ephesus ... write: v4 Yet I hold this against you: **You have forsaken your first love.**

Hebrews 10:26-27 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, v27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.

3. God's PEOPLE FAIL when their ACTIONS IGNORE GOD.

4:1 After Ehud died, the Israelites once again did evil in the eyes of the LORD.

This last week I was listening to a discussion on the Gay "PRIDE" month by Dr Jordan Peterson. He was commenting on the fact that he has been banned on Twitter because he happened to say the "PRIDE" used to be a sin, and now people celebrate their sinful behaviour. The worst part about it is that if you question the sinful behaviour, you become the one who is targeted. SIN IS STILL SIN, even if you give it another name.

4. God's PEOPLE FAIL when GOD gives them over to sin.

4:2 So the LORD sold them into the hands of Jabin, a king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor.

God had promised this in the prayer of Solomon's Temple dedication.

*1 Kings 8:46 "When they sin against you--for there is no one who does not sin--and you become angry with them **and give them over to the enemy**, who takes them captive to his own land, far away or near;*

This is what happened to the Prodigal Son in:

Luke 15:11-13 Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. v12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. v13 "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

God has given us a free will. He will allow us to chose to reject Him.
HOWEVER, He will also allow us to suffer the consequences of our sin.

5. God's PEOPLE FAIL when THEY FAIL TO CALL ON GOD.

*v3 **Because** he had nine hundred iron chariots and **had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years**, they cried to the LORD for help. .*

WHAT TOOK THEM THAT LONG?

Even the Prodigal Son realised it was better to be a servant in his Father's house, than a SLAVE to freedom:

Luke 15:17-20 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! v18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. v19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' v20 So he got up and went to his father.

Why does it take so long for us to realise that SIN is bad for us? GOD SAID:

2 Chronicles 7:13-14 "When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, v14 if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Having seen **THE REASONS WHY GODS PEOPLE FAIL.**

- 1. God's PEOPLE FAIL when they get too ACCUSTOMED to GOD's GRACE.**
- 2. God's PEOPLE FAIL when they TURN THEIR BACK ON GOD.**
- 3. God's PEOPLE FAIL when their ACTIONS IGNORE GOD.**
- 4. God's PEOPLE FAIL when GOD gives them over to sin.**
- 5. God's PEOPLE FAIL when THEY FAIL TO CALL ON GOD.**

Notice, SECONDLY: **HOW GOD SAVES HIS FAILING PEOPLE.**

1. God sends a PROPHET to speak HIS WORDS.

v4 Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. v5 She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites came to her to have their disputes decided.

Deborah = "Bee" – **Matthew Henry says that her very name suggests the work of the bee: industrious, sharp perception (discernment), great usefulness, sweetness to her friends, and sharpness to her enemies.**

Deborah is not the only "prophetess" mentioned in the Bible.

Others include: *Miriam*, Ex. 15:20; *Huldah*, 2 Kings 22:14; *Anna*, Luke 2:36; and *the four daughters of Philip*, Acts 21:9.

She was not only a Prophetess, she was also a JUDGE.

Sometimes the Best MAN for the Job is a "WO-MAN"

2. God EVEN uses COWARDS to do his work.

*v6 She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you: 'Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead the way to Mount Tabor. v7 I will lure Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.' " v8 Barak said to her, "**If you go with me, I will go; but if you don't go with me, I won't go.**"*

When Jesus sent out the 72 in Matt 10, he said this:

Matthew 10:26-31 "So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. v27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. v28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. v29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. v30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. v31 So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

3. God uses THE WEATHER to DEFEAT THE ENEMY.

*v13 Sisera gathered together his nine hundred iron chariots and all the men with him, from Harosheth Haggoyim **to the Kishon River**. v14 Then Deborah said to Barak, "Go! This is the day the LORD has given Sisera into your hands. Has not the LORD gone ahead of you?" So Barak went down Mount Tabor, followed by ten thousand men. v15 At Barak's advance, the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and army by the sword, and **Sisera abandoned his chariot and fled on foot.***

THE RAIN CAUSED THEM TO GET STUCK IN THE MUD, "How *v19 "Kings came, they fought; the kings of Canaan fought at Taanach **by the waters of Megiddo**, but they carried off no silver, no plunder. v20 From the heavens the stars fought, from their courses they fought against Sisera. v21 The **river Kishon swept them away**, the age-old river, the river Kishon. March on, my soul; be strong!*

4. God EVEN uses A HOUSEWIFE (TENTWIFE) to do his work.

v17 Sisera, however, fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, because there were friendly relations between Jabin king of Hazor and the clan of Heber the Kenite. v18 Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Come, my Lord, come right in. Don't be afraid." So he entered her tent, and she put a covering over him. v19 "I'm thirsty," he said. "Please give me some water." She opened a skin of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him up. v20 "Stand in the doorway of the tent," he told her. "If someone comes by and asks you, 'Is anyone here?' say 'No.' " v21 But Jael, Heber's wife, picked up a tent peg and a hammer and went quietly to him while he lay fast asleep, exhausted. She drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died. v22 Barak came by in pursuit of Sisera, and Jael went out to meet him. "Come," she said, "I will show you the man you're looking for." So he went in with her, and there lay Sisera with the tent peg through his temple-dead.

- 1 He went to the tent of a women. – He thought he could bully her.
- 2 He asked for water, she gave him milk. – Perhaps to make him sleep.
- 3 He commanded her to protect him. – She did what she did to protect herself.
- 4 Barak was to receive the glory. – A woman got the glory for the Victory.

CONCLUSION

Having seen **THE REASONS WHY GODS PEOPLE FAIL.**

1. God's PEOPLE FAIL when they get too ACCUSTOMED to GOD's GRACE.
2. God's PEOPLE FAIL when they TURN THEIR BACK ON GOD.
3. God's PEOPLE FAIL when their ACTIONS IGNORE GOD.
4. God's PEOPLE FAIL when GOD gives them over to sin.
5. God's PEOPLE FAIL when THEY FAIL TO CALL ON GOD.

Having seen **HOW GOD SAVES HIS FAILING PEOPLE.**

1. God sends a PROPHET to speak HIS WORDS.
2. God EVEN uses COWARDS to do his work.
3. God uses THE WEATHER to DEFEAT THE ENEMY.
4. God EVEN uses A HOUSEWIFE (TENTWIFE) to do his work.

**GOD IS STILL IN THE BUSINESS OF
SAVING PEOPLE?**

THROUGH HIS SON JESUS CHRIST!!!

v5:1 The Song of Deborah. On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang this song: v2 "When the princes in Israel take the lead, when the people willingly offer themselves-- praise the LORD! v3 "Hear this, you kings! Listen, you rulers! I will sing to the LORD, I will sing; I will make music to the LORD, the God of Israel. v4 "O LORD, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the land of Edom, the earth shook, the heavens poured, the clouds poured down water. v5 The mountains quaked before the LORD, the One of Sinai, before the LORD, the God of Israel. v6 "In the days of Shamgar son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the roads were abandoned; travelers took to winding paths. v7 Village life in Israel ceased, ceased until I, Deborah, arose, arose a mother in Israel. v8 When they chose new gods, war came to the city gates, and not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel. v9 My heart is with Israel's princes, with the willing volunteers among the people. Praise the LORD! v10 "You who ride on white donkeys, sitting on your saddle blankets, and you who walk along the road, consider v11 the voice of the singers at the watering places. They recite the righteous acts of the LORD, the righteous acts of his warriors in Israel. "Then the people of the LORD went down to the city gates. v12 'Wake up, wake up, Deborah! Wake up, wake up, break out in song! Arise, O Barak! Take captive your captives, O son of Abinoam.' v13 "Then the men who were left came down to the nobles; the people of the LORD came to me with the mighty. v14 Some came from Ephraim, whose roots were in Amalek; Benjamin was with the people who followed you. From Makir captains came down, from Zebulun those who bear a commander's staff. v15 The princes of Issachar were with Deborah; yes, Issachar was with Barak, rushing after him into the valley. In the districts of Reuben there was much searching of heart. v16 Why did you stay among the campfires to hear the whistling for the flocks? In the districts of Reuben there was much searching of heart. v17 Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan. And Dan, why did he linger by the ships? Asher remained on the coast and stayed in his coves. v18 The people of Zebulun risked their very lives; so did Naphtali on the heights of the field. v19 "Kings came, they fought; the kings of Canaan fought at Taanach by the waters of Megiddo, but they carried off no silver, no plunder. v20 From the heavens the stars fought, from their courses they fought against Sisera. v21 The river Kishon swept them away, the age-old river, the river Kishon. March on, my soul; be strong! v22 Then thundered the horses' hoofs-- galloping, galloping go his mighty steeds. v23 'Curse Meroz,' said the angel of the LORD. 'Curse its people bitterly, because they did not come to help the LORD, to help the LORD against the mighty.' v24 "Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, most blessed of tent-dwelling women. v25 He asked for water, and she gave him milk; in a bowl fit for nobles she brought him curdled milk. v26 Her hand reached for the tent peg, her right hand for the workman's hammer. She struck Sisera, she crushed his head, she shattered and pierced his temple. v27 At her feet he sank, he fell; there he lay. At her feet he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell-dead. v28 "Through the window peered Sisera's mother; behind the lattice she cried out, 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why is the clatter of his chariots delayed?' v29 The wisest of her ladies answer her; indeed, she keeps saying to herself, v30 'Are they not finding and dividing the spoils: a girl or two for each man, colorful garments as plunder for Sisera, colorful garments embroidered, highly embroidered garments for my neck-- all this as plunder?' v31 "So may all your enemies perish, O LORD! But may they who love you be like the sun when it rises in its strength." Then the land had peace forty years.