

Divine Victory (Sermon based on Judges 4:1-7) – Rev. Adam Nyawo

Introduction: Having been under the second lock down, it seems like a life time. Not being able to meet in church physically and to do the things we used to in ‘normal’ times – because of COVID-19 we continue to ask ‘Is God in control and does He really care?’. As we struggle to come to terms with our crisis, we need to remember that God is faithful and cares for His people.

The story in Judges, is one story of the early Israelite- Canaanite warfare. Judges: The Israelites are in a time of crisis as reflected in vs 1-3.

Human sin provokes God’s anger- The people sin against God. God does not tolerate sin, therefore He punished them by raising an oppressor (King Jabin). For 20 years they lived under unbearable circumstances. They could have asked too like us, “God where are you in this situation? Do you really care?”.

The cry for help (vs.3)- They cried to God for mercy from cruel oppression under Jabin. This was a cry of helplessness but also trusting that God would do something.

- This is a call for us to realise our own sins and shortcomings. We need to cry to God for forgiveness for our failure to love others, to support and care for the needy (the homeless). God is ready to listen and to hear our cry and pleas. He will not play a deaf ear to us.

Divine intervention – vs 6 : Deborah’s words to Barak make it clear that she is acting under divine authority. Deborah is an exceptional woman who is in the highest leadership position chosen by God to lead Israel. God can choose anyone to lead his people , young or old man or woman. Don’t let your prejudices get in the way of those God may have chosen to lead you.

God’s great power to save His people from their crisis...

– What follows is the defeat of Sisera the Canaanite general and his massive army. The description of Sisera’s army (900 chariots) could have been meant to underscore the perilous plight of the Israelites. Chariots were the tanks of ancient world. **14 Then Deborah said to Barak, “Up! For this is the day on which the LORD has given Sisera into your hand. The LORD is indeed going out before you.”**

Victory that is of God and from God- we can see in this story not only evidence of God’s power over even the mightiest of human armies, but most important is also the evidence of God’s mercy toward a sinful and suffering Israel. In this defeat, one thing for sure it was not Barak’s skill nor the valour of his soldiers, but God’s might that threw Sisera and his army into a panic. God is the one rescuing His people.

Our victory is in the Lord- ‘Peace and security’ in this dark world can be hard to find. But those who anticipate the day of the Lord, and already live in the light of the risen Christ, have faith, hope and love as a strong defence against all that seeks to destroy them.

Conclusion: We keep our hope and faith in God who will deliver us from our crisis and times of trouble, through the coming of His son Jesus Christ into our lives. This is our sure hope as we observe the first Advent and anticipate the second coming of Christ. **Amen.**