

### Chapter 1 : 14 Bible verses about Failure

*Rabbi Benjamin Blech, a frequent contributor to Aish, is a Professor of Talmud at Yeshiva University and an internationally recognized educator, religious leader, and lecturer.*

The article makes us rethink an attitude that has become culturally accepted as unquestioned truth, and more profoundly, its conclusions encourage us to acknowledge the wisdom of Jewish tradition and the insights it asks us to emphasize in our observance of Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur is a day dedicated to acknowledging our failings. Everyone Falls Over and over again we repeat the words, "I have sinned. If we were to be graded by God for our actions during the past year, we confess that in some areas we deserve an F. And yet whoever heard of a mark like that in our contemporary culture? For decades now parents have been told by many ostensible experts that all they are permitted to do in rearing children is to praise them. Criticism is always destructive of self-esteem, and self-esteem is the highest value we must pass on to our progeny. Make them feel good about themselves; that way they will feel happy and self contented. Rewards, not criticism or punishments, are what children need to become responsible adults. The teaching profession, too, was slowly drawn into this philosophy of "praise at all costs" without any reminders of failure. More liberal schools eliminated competitive sports - or if they had them, rejected keeping score - so that nobody would ever have to admit to being a loser. We need to acknowledge our weaknesses and failings if we are ever to improve and become what we are capable of becoming. But what if the real secret to success is failure? What if we need to keep score in our own lives and to acknowledge our errors, our weaknesses, and our failings if we are ever to improve and become what we are capable of becoming? The New York Times article is an eye-opener because it forces us to confront what previous generations knew and we chose to forget: Recognizing our shortcomings is the only way to achieve success in life. Paul Tough, the author of the essay the appropriateness of his last name is stunningly obvious , concludes his lengthy analysis with this observation: Most Riverdale students can see before them a clear path to a certain type of success. To learn how to fail is nothing less than a succinct five word summary of the Yom Kippur confessional. It requires us to be mature enough to face up to the personal failings which well-meaning parents, teachers and friends tried to shield us from recognizing. On Yom Kippur we have to define ourselves in light of a concept that Benjamin Barber, a political scientist at Rutgers University, believes is an ultimate truth about human behavior. We love to categorize people, usually by labeling them by one of two distinctly different characteristics. People are skinny or fat, introverted or extroverted, optimists or pessimists, serious or funny. But there is one division of people that Barber claims is the most crucial and correct way to differentiate between them. On the contrary, it affords us the wisdom and strength to grow and to improve. On Yom Kippur we evaluate ourselves. On Yom Kippur we are critical of our failings. On Yom Kippur we realize the truth that failure - acknowledging it, learning from it, and rising from it - is really the secret of success.

### Chapter 2 : The blessing of failure - Heritage Florida Jewish News

*The failure, relatively speaking, of the Mac, sowed the seeds of success with the iPhone – a product which has propelled Apple to being the most valuable company in the world. Last month was the.*

I read about the new best way to organize governing boards and committees that do away with tired forms from the s. I read about the changes that Christian education programs require to thrive when families and youth have so many more activities competing for their attention. I read about increasingly creative worship ideas to engage people who need something to stimulate them in ways other than the printed or auditory word. Some of these are more concerned with big picture inspiration, calling the church to have the courage to think and act in new ways. Others are more practical, detailing how a faith community might pursue its goal to provide the envisioned model or program. Far and away, a feature common to many of these writings is the success story. Listen to all these wonderful life-changing anecdotes! If they can do it, so can you, wherever you are! Of course, these pieces never tell the failure stories. They never share accounts of when churches meet a wall of opposition or a black hole of apathy, encounter a strong start that quickly flames out, or sabotage themselves by trying too hard to do things the exact way listed in the book. These stories of failure are better tucked into couch cushions or hidden behind corners. You have to believe me! Just go ahead and do it! I have plenty of my own failure stories. I could tell you about the pub discussion group that enjoyed a few months of high interest before fizzling out. I could tell you about the young adult group that ended after a few meetings because everyone became too busy. I could tell you about the community mission that was too ambitious and disorganized to work. These stories caused me to go back and figure out what could have gone better. They taught me about expectations and what to consider the next time. But nobody wants to tell those. Jeff Nelson is a pastor, spiritual director, and writer. He is author of the book *Coffeehouse Contemplative: Spiritual Direction for the Everyday*. He lives with his wife and two children in Uniontown, Ohio, where he serves in ministry at Grace United Church of Christ. In his free time, he enjoys playing music, reading, and keeping up with Michigan sports teams. He regularly blogs about ministry, spirituality, and pop culture at [http:](http://)

### Chapter 3 : The Purpose Of Failure | cfcindia, Bangalore

*BYU-Idaho values suggestions and ideas that can improve the university. Use our Feedback Form to let us know what you think.*

Harvard University is perhaps the most prestigious academic institution in the world. Oprah Winfrey has often been called one of the most successful women in the world. But what was truly remarkable was the subject that Oprah chose as her theme. To a group almost certainly assured of great success in life, Oprah stressed the need to understand the message of failure. And when you do, I want you to know this, remember this: There is no such thing as failure. Failure is just life trying to move us in another direction. Of course failure of any kind is never pleasant. It comes clothed with pain. It needs time to recover. But invariably, if we analyze it carefully, failure is accompanied with purpose. Hayakawa, the distinguished former U. Failure only becomes a serious problem when we confuse it with our self-identity. Fields was not a philosopher. The Talmud however, wisely enjoins us to remember that "If one says to you: I have struggled mightily and I have not prevailed, do not believe him" Megillah 6b. We cannot hope to never fail; that is impossible. What we can do is to continue to rise every time we fall, which will guarantee us success. If you learn from your experience, if your failure inspires you to surpass yourself and to do it better next time, if you understand that failure is merely a momentary event but never defines a person "then you are an alumnus of the best school in the world, and your failure was the tuition you paid for your eventual success. The world is divided between learners and non-learners. We love to categorize people, usually by labeling them by one of two distinctly different characteristics. People are skinny or fat, introverted or extroverted, optimists or pessimists, serious or funny. There is one division of people, however, that Benjamin Barber, a political scientist at Rutgers University, teaches that may summarize an ultimate truth about human behavior. Barber was asked his opinion of the common division of people into successes and failures. His insights deserve not only to be quoted, but to be observed and committed to memory by every one of us: I divide the world into learners and non-learners. There are people who learn, who are open to what happens around them, who listen, who hear the lessons. When they do something that works a little bit, they do it even better and harder the next time. The question to ask is not whether you are a success or a failure, but whether you are a learner or a non-learner. It is a talmid chacham. Not simply a chacham, a wise person, but a student of wisdom, someone who continues to learn from his studies and his experiences. The first of our patriarchs, Abraham, was tested with 10 trials. Torah commentators point out that the Hebrew word for a test, nisayon, is related to the same root as the word for raised or elevated: And from a personal perspective, it was particularly meaningful to me that Oprah stressed the potential blessing of failure at a graduation ceremony "because that is where in my own life I first learned its meaning. I will never forget my moment of greatest embarrassment. My elementary school graduation ceremony featured a play. As reward for academic achievement, I was granted a leading role. My excitement knew no bounds. I was to play Moses. There could be no greater honor. I practiced my part faithfully. I memorized it perfectly and in rehearsal I performed it flawlessly. Can you imagine what it was like for me when in front of the entire audience I froze? I was a stranger to the spotlight and I began to stutter and stumble. How would I ever again face my family and friends who I had so deeply disappointed? No sooner was the play finished than the principal school stood up to thank everybody. In total shock and amazement I heard him single me out for praise:

### Chapter 4 : The Blessing of Failure - Epi Mabika

*Nathan Meeker, the department chair of the Sociology and Social Work Department at BYU-Idaho will be the devotional speaker for this week. The title of his talk is "Purpose and Blessing of Failure."*

August 29, by Nancy Ruegg M. Would this letter contain news to celebrate? It was her birthday—her fortieth. What could be more perfect than to receive the announcement she longed to read? In spite of early triumphs as an author, she had not written a successful book in a decade. This letter, on this day, brought tears to her eyes, and *M. A Wrinkle in Time*, a beloved book of millions. Even the most successful people have failed at one time or another. God always makes good use of failure—to develop maturity, wisdom, and humility. Think of Peter, who denied Jesus three times as his Messiah was being interrogated by the chief priests and Sanhedrin. Yet Peter became the rock on which Christ built his church. Matthew Lee, commander of the Confederate army during the Civil War, wrote this in *The Red Cross* was founded, a number of hospitals were established, and in the decades that followed, America rose from the ashes stronger than ever. Edward once introduced a young shoe salesman to Jesus. That salesman grew in faith by leaps and bounds, and strongly desired that others know the One who changed his life so dramatically. Moody—evangelist extraordinaire and founder of Moody Bible Institute. Kimball seems a nobody. But the ripple effect that still reaches around the world today through Moody 2 can be traced back to Kimball. Most of us will never know the ripple effect emanating from our lives until we reach heaven. True success is not financial security, great respect from throngs of people, or high rank in the public arena. My eyes are often distracted by the wrong prize.

### Chapter 5 : Nathan Meeker: The Purpose and Blessings of Failure

*Failure IS An Option | First Christian Church of St. Paul Share On Twitter Share On Google Pastor Jeffery Nelson wrote a blog post recently where he talked about the custom in Christian circles to see books and articles about success stories, those stories where a church is down on its luck and a new pastor comes along or the church tries a new.*

This though cannot be further from the truth as history has shown that the greatest success is actually born out of failure. Oprah Winfrey, Bill Gates, Colonel Sanders and Walt Disney are just a few famous names who had to face failures and through a determination to succeed became stronger for it. I now have realised the power that exist inside of failure – the power to become a better person, to learn from your mistakes and to know how to handle the situation the next time. There is a true sense of growth when you overcome obstacles – suddenly what felt like Mount Kilimanjaro has turned into a small ant hill. Always look behind you to realise how many mountains you have scaled. It will provide courage for the climb ahead. The ultimate second chance that God gave us was when He sent His only begotten Son to die for our sins on the Cross John 3: We have only been pierced and wounded and need to let go of our pride and fear of failure in order to cure its wounds. When we learn from our past failures and look to the future we can use the battle scars to gain the needed strength to attain victory. There is true blessing in failure as it showcases your shortcoming and the need to improve yourself to become a better warrior. Have you ever wondered how your life would be if you had everything handed on a silver platter? You would probably have never known how to work hard and how real success feels. That exhilarating feeling of accomplishment knowing that you have surpassed your own limits and breached new territory in your life is something truly special. Failure is delay, not defeat. It is a temporary detour, not a dead end. Failure is something we can avoid only by saying nothing, doing nothing, and being nothing. It is important to stand up and face your failures. That is the only way how we will grow. This is what the Lord says: You know if a man falls down, he gets up again. And if a man goes the wrong way, he turns around and comes back. We have only hit a roadblock, we need to turn back, improve and return to ultimately turn failure into our biggest success and a marvelous blessing. With God on our side we will never be defeated and will triumph in His ultimate love for us:

### Chapter 6 : The Blessing of Failure

*Every mom has days where she feels like a total failure. Dealing with that failure in a godly way comes with hidden blessings that can't be received without falling first.*

They interviewed a large number of people, and the only criteria to be chosen for the study was that you had to be at least ninety-five years old. They were asked this one question: If you could live your life over again, what would you do differently? If you think about it, most of the great accomplishments in life are the result of people willing to step out of their comfort zones into the unknown, knowing that failure is a possibility. In the work I do with men, I have concluded that the fear of failure paralyzes most men. It is like a psychological death. Larry Crabb says that men try to arrange their lives so that everything is predictable and under their control. They pursue endeavors where they feel competent and hide their inadequacies, avoiding what they fear and thereby creating a feeling of safety. However, have you ever thought about how God sees failure? I contend it can be one of the great blessings of life, depending on how we respond to it. He found that quite often humans are presented with rare opportunities to develop and grow through hardship and trial — particularly failure. The Bible is quite clear about the importance of persevering and how it shapes you as a person. The best example of this I have seen is Abraham Lincoln, who was apparently quite a student of the Bible. Lincoln tried and failed many times over the course of his political career as depicted in this timeline. In he was elected President of the United States and is considered by many to have been our greatest President. It makes you wonder if he ever considered himself a failure, a loser. I cannot say for sure, but look how he persevered in the midst of defeat. This should be of great value to each of us. Though no one wants to fail, maybe when it does come, it can serve a purpose as it shapes and molds us into the people God designed us to be. To read more by Richard E. Simmons III visit our website at [www](http://www).

### Chapter 7 : Yom Kippur: The Blessing of Failure

*Failure is a blessing. It is natural to not like failing and to want to avoid it at all costs. It is natural to not like failing and to want to avoid it at all costs. Yet, only through failure can we achieve more than we thought possible.*

Rowling, that rock bottom is a solid foundation like no other. With each loss I discovered unnecessary parts of me that I had not realized were present until they were removed from me. I had toyed with the idea of being an entrepreneur for several years. But I was always too afraid to take the risk. I mean what if I failed? What would people say? So I never did it. I allowed my fear to prevent me from venturing out on my own. That was until I decided to do it "afraid". I decided to invest all I had into myself and my business venture. So I did my research, talked to experts in the field, studied the market and I took the risk. I pulled all my resources together in attempt to start a business of my own and guess what? So with relatively no income outside of child support and three teenage kids looking to me for provision I had a decision to make. I had to determine how I was going to provide in a job market where I was told I was overqualified. So when I was turned down for the positions that I was fully qualified for, I did the only thing I knew to do. I took three low wage paying part-time jobs and I put them together. With the help of my friends and family, child support and my three part-time jobs I was able to make ends meet. There were times when I would go to bed at night not knowing how I would provide food for my kids the next day but every single day I woke up and God made provision for us. I can honestly say I know what it is to trust God for provision of my daily bread. Prior to that time no one could have told me that I had the physical ability to stand on my feet for 12 hour days. I suffer from chronic pain that makes it hard for me to go about my day. But there is something about knowing that I am responsible for three kids that made me push through the pain. And no one could have told me that I could work 16 hours in a day at two different jobs. Moreover, the concept that I would have to run to the bathroom and vomit due to exhaustion was inconceivable prior to me living that reality. No one could have told me that I would see all of my needs met in ways that seemed to signal that divine intervention had certainly played a hand in taking care of me, but I lived through it. Things definitely arrived for me just in the nick of time on more than one occasion. I began to question if I was going the wrong way. The failure of my business, the failure to secure a job that would provide adequate pay, the struggle of working three low paying jobs in an attempt to make ends meet, the feeling I got when all I could afford to give my kids for their birthday was a cake, not being able to afford to provide the life my kids were accustomed to when their father and I were married, were the times that shaped and made me into a stronger version of myself. Because ironically the greatest lesson that my failure taught me is that I cannot fail. Indeed I am my own limit! Nothing can come between me and my destiny but me! I recognize that by taking another leap that I could fall even lower than I did the last time, but whether I fall again or soar, I have decided to leap nonetheless. But there are some things that I will let go of. I will let go of bad habits so new ones can unfold. I will let go of negative thoughts so new ones can take hold. I look at my check register and wonder do I have what it takes to make it or will I fail like I did the time before. Then I tell myself that my destiny lies beyond those numbers. I have to tell myself to stop worrying about the people who are betting against me and to remember that what I think of me is all that matters. I am taking the lessons of my yesterday and I am applying them to my today. For I have a choice, I can give this my all or I can not do it at all. It is possible that I may fall all the way to the bottom. But we already discussed the benefits of being at the bottom at the top of this blog entry. For almost three years I felt like a hamster on a wheel. I was running at top speed exerting a bunch of energy and I never seemed to get any traction. And now I stand with the glimmer of hope that this time I can make it. It is my firm belief that this time I can achieve my goal but I am going to have to put in the work to earn it. With that said I am going to keep trying to achieve my dreams and keep reaching for my goals. Before my failure I thought that obstacles were meant to destroy me. Because, much like a trainer sets up exercises for an athlete to enhance their ability, so does life set up exercises to advance us. Life gives us hindrances and obstacles with the hopes that we will become stronger. We need that strength for where we are going. For that reason I am thankful for kids who ask why we live in an apartment when their friends live in a house. I have grown to value the eye rolls, scoffs,

rejection and judgment as much as the love, kindness, support and care that I received from those around me. I tell this story not as someone who has achieved my dream. Far too many of us become paralyzed by our fear of failure.



**Chapter 8 : “The Purpose and Blessings of Failure” • Nathan Meeker - BYU-Idaho**

*The Blessings of Failure. March 24, I came across an interesting pair of ideas this week, ones that made me pause and ponder. The writer posited that most of us.*

I have never met anyone who purposely set out to be a failure. Thus, the ability to handle failure in its various forms and degrees is a vital part of the spiritual life and another sign of maturity. A careful study of the Bible reveals that most of the great figures of Scripture experienced failure at one time or another, yet those failures did not keep them from effective service for God. Though they failed at some point, and often in significant ways, they not only recovered from their failure, but they used it as a tool of growth—they learned from their failure, confessed it to God, and were often able to be used in even mightier ways. The manner in which a leader meets his own failure will have a significant effect on his future ministry. Instead, the depth of his repentance and the reality of his love for Christ reopened the door of opportunity to a yet wider sphere of service. Their very failure and repentance secured for them a more ample conception of the grace of God. They learned to know Him as the God of the second chance to His children who had failed Him—and third chance, too. Peter the apostle, through forewarned, thrice denied his Master on the first alarm of danger; yet that Master, who knew his nature in its strength and in its infirmity, chose him. While there may be consequences to live with as with David and serious issues to work through, the mature believer rests in the grace of God and uses the failure as a backdoor to success through growth and understanding. In fact, Christians are super-conquerors in Christ. Significantly, this statement by Paul is made in a context that considers the reality of the varied onslaughts of life which must include failure. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or death? In view of this, we often speak of the victorious Christian life. Further, the amount of deliverance we each experience is a matter of growth; so on the road to maturity and even after reaching a certain degree of spiritual maturity, Christians will sin and fail—sometimes seriously so. And why is that? Because we are so concerned with the glory of God? I would hope so, but there are also other reasons. Too often, it is because we look at failure with eyes of scorn. We view failure as a Waterloo. We see it as the plague of plagues and as the worst thing that could happen to us. As a result, the fear of failure has many people in neutral or paralyzed or playing the game of cover up. People often refuse to tackle a job or take on a responsibility for fear of failure. People believe if they fail they are no good. They think failure means you are a bad person and you are a failure. But, as previously mentioned, most of the great leaders in Scripture at some time in their careers experienced some sort of failure. When Abraham should have stayed in the land and trusted the Lord, he fled to Egypt because of the drought. Moses, in trying to help his people, ran ahead of the Lord and killed the Egyptian. Later, against the command of God, he struck the rock in his anger. When David should have been out in the field of battle, he stayed home and committed adultery with Bathsheba and then plotted the murder of her husband. There is a fundamental principle here. Sometimes God must engineer failure in us before He can bring about success with us. Our failures are often rungs on the ladder of growth—if we will learn from our mistakes rather than grovel in the dirt. This is not to make excuses for sin or to place a premium on mistakes or failure. This does not mean that a person must fail before they can be a success, but our failures, whether in the form of rebellion or just foolish blunders, can become tools of learning and stepping stones to success. The point is, we should never allow our fear of failure to paralyze us from tackling a job or trying something that challenges our comfort zone. Nor should we allow past failures to keep us down or keep us from recovering and moving on in the service of the Savior. The Bible says we are all sinners and prone to failure, but in Christ we can become overcomers. Lee wrote this to Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy: They are sent to teach us wisdom and prudence, to call forth greater energies, and to prevent our falling into greater disasters. We may have to live with the results of some of our failures or sins, yet God is free to continue to love us in Christ and use us for His purposes because of grace cf. Mature believers will act on two principles: We reap what we sow. This is the law of harvest. Failures remind us of what can happen, they can make us careful, but they should not be allowed to paralyze us. Thomas Edison invented the microphone, the phonograph, the incandescent light, the

storage battery, talking movies, and more than other things. December he had worked for 10 years on a storage battery. This had greatly strained his finances. This particular evening spontaneous combustion had broken out in the film room. Within minutes all the packing compounds, celluloid for records and film, and other flammable goods were in flames. Fire companies from eight surrounding towns arrived, but the heat was so intense and the water pressure so low that the attempt to douse the flames was futile. He finally found him, calmly watching the fire, his face glowing in the reflection, his white hair blowing in the wind. She will never see anything like this as long as she lives. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start anew. Acknowledge their failures and refuse to hide behind any lame duck excuses. Confess any sin to God when sin is involved is involved in the failure. Study or examine what happened so they can learn from the failure. They will know and act on certain truths: We are accepted in the Lord on the basis of Grace, not our performance. We are human and, as a result, we are not now perfect nor will we ever be. God still has a plan for our lives. God is not through with us yet, and we need to get on with His plan. There are those who have genuinely failed according to the principles of Scripture. There is a false guilt of failure because of a wrong view of success. There is another class of failure; those who mistakenly believe they are successes! Heaven will be filled with surprises! There are a number common worldly beliefs about success that people apply to themselves and others, but they are all distortions of the truth. To those who were guilty of this kind of foolishness, the apostle Paul wrote: We are all to do our best according the abilities God has given us and we are right in using others as models of Christ-like character. But this is not the same as when we compare ourselves with other people from the standpoint of their gifts, abilities, bank accounts, possessions, position and other such standards and then attempt to determine our success or failure or that of someone else based on such comparisons. Naturally, we all anticipated or dreaded, as the case might be, looking through the little glass door and seeing that little Blue Book stuffed in our box. Some students, regardless of how hard they studied, actually began to see themselves as failures because they were not able to make the high grades of some of their class mates and questioned whether or not they should even stay in seminary. Other people determine their level of success by their bank accounts as measured by the luxury items they are able to purchase—a huge home, furniture, automobiles, boats, etc. Lutzer writes, If money is a basis of judging success or failure, it is obvious that Jesus Christ was a failure! Most of us would be appalled if our children could not be born in a modern hospital! When He died, the soldiers cast lots for His garment. He died naked, in the presence of gawking bystanders. Was Christ a failure? Yes, if money is the standard by which He is judged. The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man did not have a place He could call home. Of course, earning money and even saving some is both legitimate and necessary. The point, then, is the absence or presence of money is not in itself proof of success or failure. The comparison game reaches out to almost every area of life. It may involve comparing friends, i. A classic illustration is when Moses struck the rock when God had told him to only speak to the rock. The people were jubilant! Was Moses a success? Yes, in the eyes of men. No, in the eyes of God! His disobedience brought water, but it also brought punishment. Results in themselves are not a proof that God is pleased. It is possible to win attendance contests and disseminate the Gospel and see results; all these activities can be done without pleasing God! Such results can be achieved by deceptive gimmicks or for purely personal satisfaction. Some are the product of specific acts of sin, but some are not. Some are simply the product of ignorance or of circumstances beyond our control like a drop in the stock market or extreme weather conditions drought, floods , which can cause a farmer or rancher to lose his shirt, as they say. Naturally, this kind of failure, as serious and painful as it is, is not as serious as spiritual failure like, for instance, the sin of David. While David did recover from his sin and was still used of God afterward, there were lifelong consequences in his life and in the lives of others.

### Chapter 9 : 10 Hidden Blessings in Failure | Planet of Success

*Rejection. Losing. Failure. Nobody strives for them. No athlete sets out to lose, no entrepreneur's goal is bankruptcy. But as if an act of divine mercy, there's positives to be found in the.*

Chapter 0 Introduction Do you see yourself as a "hopeless failure"? Have you failed repeatedly in your attempts to please God? Have you made a mess of your life? Are you tired of pretending that you are victorious when you are not? It is an amazing truth that God has a glorious purpose to fulfil even through the failures of His children. Whatever blunders you may have made in the past, you can make a new beginning with God today. Even if you have made a thousand new beginnings in the past and have failed, you can make the st new beginning today. God can still fulfil His perfect plan for your life. If God does not do miracles for many of His children, it is not because they have failed Him in the past, but because they do not trust Him now. If you have come to the end of yourself and are thinking of "giving up", then this book will have an encouraging word for you. Here we read of Jesus warning Peter of a danger that lay ahead of him. He told him "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers. In verse 34, we read that Jesus told Peter, "I say to you, Peter, the cock will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me. This will encourage all of us who feel frustrated and discouraged because of our failures to have hope. The question first of all is: Does God allow failure? Does He permit it? Is there a purpose in failure? When we read this passage, we see that God did not prevent Peter from denying Him. Some of us would like the Lord to pray for us that we might never fall. We would like the Lord to say to us "My son, my daughter, I have prayed for you that you will never fall and never fail. What did Jesus pray for Simon? That when Satan tempted him, his faith would not fail. That was the confession of the prodigal son. When he had reached so low that he could not go any lower, he still believed that his father loved him. That boy was at rock-bottom. But when he reached rock-bottom, he remembered one thing: That his father still loved him. Otherwise he would never have returned home. He knew what his elder brother was like. And knowing that, he would never have come back. He came back only because he knew that his father loved him. There are sinners who never come to some churches because they sense that the pastor or elders there are like that elder brother in the parable. If however the elders of a church are like that father, then the worst of sinners will come to that church seeking salvation, just like they came to Jesus. Our church must have such an image, that the worst of sinners feel free to come to us. If Jesus is really in our midst, the worst of sinners will definitely come and find salvation in our midst. From there the Lord can pick you up and take you to the heights of glory. Remember one thing in that day: Faith is basically believing that God still loves us. Think of a mother who sees her child full of leprosy or tuberculosis. That mother loves her child so much, but hates those diseases with all her heart. God loves sinners but He hates their sin. His love for sinners is seen in that He allowed Jesus to die on the cross for us. His hatred of sin is seen in His turning His face away from Jesus when Jesus bore the sin of the world on the cross. People sometimes ask how a God of love can send people to Hell. What is Hell like? Hell is a place that God has forsaken completely - a place where God cannot be found. This earth has not been forsaken by God. Look at the beauty of creation, for example. Look at the decency and goodness there is in many human beings. All these blessings are bestowed by God on both good and evil people. All this proves that God has not forsaken this world. But Hell is not like that. In Hell there is no mercy at all - because Hell is a truly God-forsaken place. There is goodness in many unconverted people in this world, because the influences of God are still over them. But once they go to Hell, those very same people will become as evil as the devil himself - because the mercy of God will no longer be over their lives. In Hell, people will experience for the first time what it is like to be totally forsaken by God. That was what Jesus experienced on the cross. Jesus experienced Hell on the cross for those three hours of darkness, when God actually forsook Him. There we see how much God hates sin. So what is the answer? Can a God of love send people to Hell? The answer to that lies in the answer to this other question: Could a God of love allow His own Son to face Hell on the cross, when the sin of the world was upon Him? If He could do that, He can send people to Hell too. A God of

love will turn His face away from those who continue in sin, who say to God, "I am not going to listen to you. I have chosen my own way and I will continue along it forever. It was not written for those who try to live in purity but keep falling. It was written for rebels, who defy God and want to keep on sinning. How can you know whether you are a rebel? Just ask yourself whether you have a desire to repent and to turn back to God? It was with a purpose that God allowed Peter to fail. That purpose was to sift Peter. What Satan really wanted was to destroy Peter altogether, but God would not allow him to do that. God does not allow us to be tested or tried beyond our ability. So Satan was allowed to sift Peter. As a result of his failure, Peter was cleansed of a whole lot of chaff in his life. That is the real purpose with which God allows us to fail too. When a farmer harvests the wheat, he has to sift it before he can use it. Only then will the chaff be removed from it. The Lord uses Satan to remove the chaff from our lives. Amazingly enough, God accomplishes this purpose by allowing us to fail repeatedly!! God used Satan to fulfil that purpose in Peter and He will use Satan to fulfil that purpose in our lives too. And God uses Satan to make us fail repeatedly, in order to remove that chaff from us completely. Whether the Lord is succeeding in fulfilling this purpose in your life or not, you alone know. But if the chaff is being removed, you will be humbler and less self-righteous. As I said, God permits Satan to remove the chaff from us, by allowing us to fail repeatedly. It was when Peter reached that point, that he had a second "conversion" Luke God had let him go on a long leash. But when Peter reached the end of that rope, God pulled him back. When God lays hold of us, He puts a rope around us to protect us. And then God will pull you right back to Him. Of course, you can decide at that point, to cut off the rope and run away. He wept and turned back to the Lord. Jesus then told Peter, "When you turn back and are strong once again, strengthen your brothers". It is only when we are broken that we can be strong enough to strengthen others. It was only when Peter was weak and broken, that he became really strong - so strong that he was able to strengthen his brothers and sisters. If he had been filled with the Holy Spirit, without this experience of failure, he would have stood up on the day of Pentecost as a proud man, as a man who had never failed, who could look down, despisingly, at the poor lost sinners in front of him. And God would have become his enemy, for God resists the proud!!