

GODS ODDS ARE 1:1 1 SAMUEL 17: 1-11; 25-37; 45-49 ROMANS 1:2-4

In the fall of the year I like to turn to the OT and see how it pointed to Jesus Christ. David was a type of Christ in that he suffered, like Jesus, at the hands of his own people, Saul, and that as David delivered the nation of Israel from Goliath so Jesus saved us from the Goliath of sin. But that is not why I chose David. I chose David because of the odds that were against him.

Regarding the odds 1:1, if you are a gambler you know that 1:1 means if you bet 1 then you will win 1. But I am talking about God in that when he says something, the odds he will do it are 100% that he will do what he says. David's odds were not so good from a human point of view.

David vs. Goliath! Who has not heard of that story? It is a story that's retold whenever there is a little guy who goes to battle against a giant. And against all odds the little guy wins! Cheers for the little guy and boo and hiss to the defeated giant. All of us who has experienced the schoolyard bully feel a special connection to that story, isn't that true? We want the Davids to beat the Goliaths. A while ago Walmart wanted to move into Marine Dr in Vancouver. Well, the little mom and pop stores and the little people of South Vancouver banded together. And after a lengthy battle, they managed to prevent the giant store from setting up shop there. The Goliath Walmart lost! Indeed, the David and Goliath story is retold time and time again, no one wants the giant to win. But there is more to the story than just the underdog becoming the hero.

The real story behind the David and Goliath story is the story not of David, or Goliath, but the story of the God who goes against all odds. I don't have the time to tell you all the stories of God defeating all the enemies of Israel in the book of Joshua and the book of Judges. It is significant to note that the numerous stories of God's heroism were not in the memory of the Israelites. And what about the most significant victory of all time, the story of the Exodus. God used Moses, an old man in his 80s, whose only weapon was a stick, whose army is made up of refugees to defeat the most high tech civilization at that time and not only that but the military powerhouse and might of ancient Egypt. We all know that this powerhouse was routed by God as the horse and the rider fell into the sea. Why did no one remember those stories that made Israel, Israel? I guess when you see with your own eyes, the fearsome colossus Goliath, your knees would buckle and involuntary amnesia would set in. All you can see is the giant. His whole frame would have blocked out the sun and the fear that your life would soon be over would just make you scream at the top of your lungs. Can you imagine Goliath, a veteran warrior, experienced fighter, and he's huge, bigger than anyone, more than nine ft tall. It is like a Hummer vs. the smart car. A nuclear bomb vs. a little pistol. Life is over!

However, God's people ought to know that Goliath is the underdog! In God's book, over and over again we are told stories of successful battles against insurmountable odds. God's people with God on their side and with God as their king and warrior, has always won, as long as the Israelites obeyed and trusted God. What about the story of their father Abraham, against all odds, grey haired old Sarah had a son, and from him came the nation of Israel, and now they are as numerous as stars in the sky! Against all odds, it is the story of their existence! Did Israel forget their history, their God? Yes, for 40 days they ran away. If you remember the movie, Monty Python and the Holy Grail, those fearless knights riding on their imaginary ponies would many times cry out, "run away, run away." That was Israel whenever Goliath appeared.

The conclusion is quite clear they are terrified and discouraged and Israel has forgotten their God would go with them wherever they go. One person did not, David and that was his secret.

36 Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. 37 The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

The God who delivered His people in Egypt, in the book of Joshua and the book of Judges is the same God who will deliver now and today. That is the God David trusted in.

45 David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin (natural), but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, (supernatural) the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. (purpose of the story)47 All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands."

One point to make is that the phrase, "birds of the air and beast of the earth," is Covenant language. God in Covenant with us or agreement with us says, "I will be your God and you shall be my people." When God made his covenant with Abraham, after cutting the animals in half, the birds of prey came down but Abram turned them away. In Dt. 28:26 it says that a sign of the Covenant when it is broken is that you will die and your body will be given over to the birds of the air and beast of the earth and it adds, and no one will be there to frighten them away. So David is using Covenant language to tell Goliath and the Philistines they have no Covenant with God because the birds of the air and the beast of the earth will come and eat you and there will be no one to frighten them away. David has faith in the God of the Covenant and he knows he will prevail. He did, against all odds David won because God's odds are always 1:1. That means God always wins. It means God is always right and he never makes mistakes. God is exactly what Numbers 23:19 says he is. He does not lie. What he says will be done. So the question before us is about God's odds and how the OT points to Christ. The question we want to get answered is what are the odds in human terms that all the words written about Jesus in the OT are fulfilled by Jesus' coming in the NT? We know God's odds are 1:1 but what about the odds in human terms?

Let us look at predictive prophecy, which is a word spoken in the past about Jesus Christ that comes true 100s of years later. The OT contains over 300 references to the Messiah that were fulfilled in Jesus. The 1st objection is that they were written after Jesus came. Hogwash, the OT was formed at a minimum of 250 years before Christ and more accurately it was finished 450BC,. The 2nd objection was the prophecy was deliberately filled by Jesus. Hogwash again. There are 8 prophecies that Jesus fulfilled that are totally beyond human control. Such as Place, time and manner of birth. 3rd objection is where it really gets interesting. Some say it was an accident that Jesus fulfilled them. You might could find a couple that might look like an accident or could be matched to other humans but to have 60 major prophecies accidentally fulfilled by Jesus is lunacy.

Peter Stoner, a scientist, by using the science of probability in reference to 8 prophecies says that the chance anybody might have lived and fulfilled 8 prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th power. That would be 1 with 17 zeros behind it or 100, 000,000,000,000,000 or a Zillion. Actually a Zillion is considered a number too large to express with zeros so 10 to the 17th power is as good as it gets.

Lets make this a real life situation using silver dollars. My mother use to give her sons silver dollars for gifts and then she would take them back and hide them so we would spend them. So I am familiar with silver dollars. Lets take 10 to the 17th power in silver dollars and cover the great state of Texas. That many silver dollars would cover the entire state of Texas 2 feet deep. Get that picture in your mind. Texas, 2 feet deep in silver dollars. Take one silver dollar and mark it with a big X on it, fly in a helicopter over Texas and have some one throw out that marked silver dollar anywhere in the entire state. Then, somehow, stir up the whole pile, blindfold a person, drop them somewhere in the state of Texas and tell him he can go as far and wide as he wants. Instruct this blind person that he has one opportunity to reach down and pick up the marked silver dollar. The odds are 1 in 10 to the 17th power. I would bet everything I had and then some that he would fail. That is using only 8 prophecies. Does that not confound you? Our faith ought to be bursting at the seams. Jack it up to the top 48 prophecies. That is 1 in 10 to the 157th power.

That number is really hard to illustrate but here goes. We need a smaller object like an electron. Electrons are so small that it will take 2.5 times 10 to the 15th power of electrons laid single file, to make the line one inch long. Now we are going to count the electrons at a rate of 250 a minute and counting day and night it would take us 19 million years or 6.9 times 10 to the 21st power. Oh, I can see the inside of your heads spinning around. I was playing with my granddaughters Play Station Two, a snow ski competition game. Sherri decided to watch and then her head starting going round and round and she had to get up before she got sick. That is the image I get seeing you all react to having to count electrons 19 million years 24/7. I think I better not say anything for a minute so our heads can get back to normal. It is like trying to comprehend that God has no beginning or end. Try and think about eternity. Your head will hurt after a while, at least mine did.

When I hear about God's Odds and what He has done and what is written and spoken in the Bible, my faith in God and His word is so strong that my faith is really bursting at the

seams. I want to go out and do something for God that is so awesome that it is bound to fail unless he be in it. That is a quote by John Haggai. Just make sure it is His idea and not your own.

I remember when God called me into the ministry. That was all I said yes to. I did not say yes to seminary but I found out that is what I had to do to become ordained in the PC(USA). Then I discovered I had to take Greek and Hebrew. I told God there was no way I was going to make it through those courses. I was 26-27 years old, married with two sons. How was I going to make it? Then I was shown in the bible where it says, "those whom God calls, he also equips." I said, "huh, we will see." I got through it. Then everybody got all worked up as to how I was going to do this financially. By then I was starting to believe God about everything. I was told, you can't go off to seminary. You have a house note and a car note, a wife and two sons. You can't do it. Yet we lived by faith for 4 years. I had more money living by faith, working a part time job, trying to be a husband and father and go to seminary full time than I did my first year and a half at the richest Presbyterian church in the state of Ms. When I finally said something to the senior pastor he spoke to the Session and they gave me a 27% raise just to get me up to the minimum standard of the Presbytery.

God can do anything because his odds are 1:1. He can do far more than we can ask or even think as written in Romans. I want to confess as I was writing this message I was having some free-floating anxiety and not sure what that was about but there it was. Maybe it was about the universal health care. I am saying God will and can do anything but I was anxious. Two different days last week in my devotional book, Streams in the Desert, quoted the Scripture, Philippians 4:6, "Don't be anxious about anything." That brought me to a place where I had to examine my faith. God will test our faith in order to build our faith. On October 14 the devotion that day was about Peter in prison and Paul and Silas in prison where they were praying and singing hymns when God suddenly delivered them.

The writer that day went on to say, "This is the way God works. In our darkest hour, He walks to us across the waves, just as an angel came to Peter's cell when the day of Peter's execution dawned. ... Dear soul, you may have to experience the very worst before you are delivered, but you will be delivered. ... God in His providence has a thousand keys to open a thousand different doors in order to deliver His own, no matter how desperate the situation may have become.... Difficulty is actually the atmosphere surrounding a miracle..."

The next day was even more pointed when it said, "Those people God uses most to bring glory to Himself are those who are completely broken, for the sacrifice He accepts is a 'broken and contrite heart,'" Psalm 51:17. If I was in jail and waiting to be executed, by the dawn of that day I would be broken. I would be praying like crazy. I have been in places like that and I know you have as well. What do we do?

First speak to that Goliath situation and tell it that it comes to you in the natural but you come at it in the supernatural. Remind that situation that God has delivered you from the Lion and Bear and he will not fail you now because God does what he says He will do.

Tell it this day God will reveal Himself as the deliverer of His people, of which you are one!

Lets not stop praying, lets not stop banging on the doors of heaven for God to explode in our lives and the life of our church and move us on the greater faith and greater victories because we know God's odds are 1:1.