

Read 1 Samuel 17: 1-51

The story of David and Goliath is one that is used to illustrate an underdog coming up and winning against all odds. However, there are two lessons there that show it's not really about underdogs at all.

Slide 2 David girded his sword over his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. So David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them." And David took them off. (1Sa 17:39)

Still slide 2 And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone and slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground. (1Sa 17:49)

David was wise. The warriors were stuck in the "that's how we've always done it" mode. They saw Goliath armed for hand to hand battle, they had all done hand to hand battle, they realized there was no chance if they went toe to toe. If they went up against the much larger man wearing their armor and wielding their swords, they would get slaughtered. David realized he could not move in the armor, so he left it behind. It was also prophetic for David to be dressed in the king's armor by the king. It foreshadowed Saul giving up his right to the throne and transferring it to David. However, if David had defeated Goliath wearing the king's armor, it would have been a supreme insult to the throne.

Slide 3 "This day YHVH will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that YHVH does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is YHVH'S and He will give you into our hands." (1Sa 17:46-47)

This is pretty cocky. David actually told Goliath what he was going to do before doing it. He said outright he wasn't going to use a sword or a spear. And then he took the guy out with a sling shot. That's some serious confidence.

But here's the bottom line right in the beginning of the message. If YHVH is with you, you are not the underdog. Ever. Even though David slew the lion and the bear in combat, he was shrewd with Goliath and effectively shot the guy, David knew the battle belongs to the Lord. David didn't go with heavy armor and sword to try and meet a huge, trained warrior on the warrior's turf, he changed the game. David had the experience of beating the lion and the bear, but he also had wisdom. But

the bottom line was that young David *trusted YHVH to deliver* Goliath, not his own abilities. David was never the underdog.

We have the similar situation with Gideon. Gideon defeats the Midianite army with just 300 men using cunning. Gideon was also the least in his father's household and not from a well-known clan. But the same theme held true, Yahweh wanted to make sure He (Yahweh) got the credit, not Israel's might. David had experience being saved from wild animals.

In both cases, Yahweh used underdogs to make strong points. With Gideon, the masses had allowed idolatry into the land. Israel had done evil so they were smote by the Midianites. In fact, the Israelites had to make dens for themselves in caves in the mountains to hide from Midian. Sound familiar? This is going to come up later. Gideon was used to first tear down the false god altars of his father, which he did in secret, before being called to be a warrior. Tearing down those idols caused offense to the Midianites who then wanted to kill Gideon. Gideon put Yahweh to the test and survived that test. Yahweh then defeats the Midianites with a tiny force specifically to prove the battle belonged to him.

Slide 4 Is someone right just because they are the underdog? This is a rampant notion in our society today. For our society, it begins with the birth of our nation and our entrance into the two world wars. The British army, the famous redcoats, were the most feared army on the planet. The sun never set on the British empire. That meant they were so large, and possessed so much land through colonializing, that it was daylight somewhere on British soil 24 hours per day. Our forefathers defeated the British where the maximum number of British regulars peaked at 52K plus whatever mercenaries and Indians they had hired. The colonial army never numbered more than 48K and there were untrained, non-standard, rag-tag, unfunded, normal folks. We also had no navy whatsoever. He had to be reinforced from the French, who also provided troops and weaponry. We should not have won that war by any stretch of the imagination. We weren't just the underdog, we should have been dispatched quickly.

When we entered WWI, we had been providing weapons to the allies for a while. But in 1917, we only had 85K troops in France. One year later, we had 1.2 million. This ramp up was beyond remarkable. To field an army large enough to liberate Europe in a year is miraculous. For WWII, however, we were in full isolationist mode before the war. We were the 17th largest army on earth when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. By the end of the war, we were the second largest and had deployed more than two million men to Europe alone. Our navy became the world's largest, and this was when we became the de facto leader of the free world. Our underdog story in WWII is one that's unparalleled in history. Millions of people did remarkable things to not only raise an army,

navy, and create and air force, but then deploy that to Europe. We landed 156K men on the beaches of Normandy, France, in one day. We then pushed to liberate all of western Europe and liberate millions of Jews held in concentration camps. The horrors of battle in Europe and the Pacific against Japan caused our nation to defeat Japan in the most horrific of manners. We erased two Japanese cities with one bomb a piece. And then we came home.

After WWII, there was a big shift. Partly because we chose to, and partly due to necessity, we didn't draw down. The world had shown twice that it can't govern itself. The need for someone to keep the peace was more than apparent. The weapons of war were everywhere. Ships, tanks, planes, bombs, small arms, the place was an absolute mess. And the Soviet Union existed. The same ideology the Nazis had now had a base of operations inside a very scary, godless, communist regime which was also as armed to the teeth as we were. The USSR kind of gets short shrift in the defeat of the Nazis, but it would not have happened without them. The USSR also got the capability to make atom bombs, so we had to become.... the overwhelming power. The thrice underdog was forced into the position of being the free world's superpower and we then effectively became Greece, Rome, and the British army all at once. Drawing down to a pre-WWII military after the world developed the atom bomb and the ability to move millions of people all over the planet in relatively short amounts of time made it plain that freedom required maintenance.

Talk about super-hero justice and how we are conditioned that the one with all the power is always bad. Star Wars 1-3 had two overwhelming armies that were both led by the bad guy. By series 4-6, the good guys were the rag-tag guerilla warfare people who had to come from behind. It never made sense, because it was a movie, that a tiny rebel force could even matter to the Empire, yet they persisted and came from behind.

The Marvel movies are even stranger because people who lose repeatedly, ultimately come back and defeat the overwhelming force. In these movies there is a particularly perverse justice system. The bad guys kill enormous amounts of people. Sometimes entire planets of people. The good guys kill a ridiculous amount of people to get to the bad guy or bad guys. When the bad guy is finally caught, the good guys are like "no, we can't harm him!" and he ends up living to fight another day. This is not justice at all.

The one that really gets me is the Hunger Games. This is where a 120 pound gal defeats tons of athletic men and soldiers with a bow and arrow. While the trained military men have firearms. It seems in Hollywood, the more absurd the underdog story, the more money it makes.

We absolutely love it in sports when the underdogs win. But we forget those underdogs are on the field, in the pool, on the court, etc. because they trained to get there. It's not a fluke that a 10th

rated basketball team or a 20th ranked tennis player wins a championship. They just peaked at the right time. These people have often trained for their entire lives in their sport, so while they haven't been the best in the past, they have the capacity to be that way.

This repetition has conditioned our society to automatically root for the underdog. Our society is not raised from the bible anymore. It's raised by sports and entertainment. We are conditioned to root for the underdog. Admit it, you do this, too. A caveat to this is self-loathing. In my lifetime, there has always been whispers of people within our country wanting us to draw down and go back to the way things were. This is fair and desirable. But some inside the superpower feel guilty for being the superpower and view us as bullies, which is a title we have earned a few times. Our forefathers didn't want us to have a large standing army because it would lead to the temptation to use it and become imperial. But the world needs good guys. And the good guys have the ability to mess up in this world. However, without a large footprint of good guys, the world will turn to chaos.

Slide 5 So Moab was in great fear because of the people, for they were numerous; and Moab was in dread of the sons of Israel. Moab said to the elders of Midian, "Now this horde will lick up all that is around us, as the ox licks up the grass of the field." And Balak the son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time. (Num 22:3-4)

Many parallel the United States with ancient Israel, myself included. It's hard not to see the parallels. Sometimes it's impossible to ignore them. The horde here were the good guys sent by God to purify Canaan. They were flawed, but they were an overwhelming force that the inhabitants feared while they grew up in the wilderness. This nation was born for battle, organized for battle, and marched and camped in a tactical formation. They could lose battles, mostly due to disobedience, but as is written here, had they stayed unified they could have marched across the land with nobody to stop them. Yahweh tempered their invasion so the land would not become desolate. They took Canaan in pieces because God specifically did not want them to take it all at once and have it become a wasteland.

Let me ask a question or two. Was Jericho the underdog? Yep. Was Jericho supposed to be the underdog and lose? Yep? Same with all the nations they came across. They were called to be the overwhelming force to bring Torah to the land and annihilate the idolators.

God's people are NEVER the underdog... "and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; **for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands.**" (1Sa 17:47)

God's people were not the underdog when they entered the land. They were an overwhelming force. While there are parallels between ancient Israel and the United States, there's a much more direct and clear correlation:

Slide 6 I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (Rev 6:12-17)

Satan is the underdog. And he's bad. When Yeshua comes back, He's coming with overwhelming force. And He's the good guy. Mankind is going to be hiding in the rocks. Not Israel. Sin is overwhelming the world today and those of us who strive for the goal of Messiah are the underdogs in this realm, Yahweh and Yeshua are never the underdogs and are completely righteous. I have to wonder about this conditioning society has to favor the underdogs, even when they are clearly the monsters like in the case of Gaza. Could this be part of Satan's conditioning to get mankind to go to fight against Jerusalem? Perhaps. But understand when we see Yeshua return with overwhelming force, that means the good guys have finally arrived.