

Against The Odds (Main)

Picture a young girl—no parents, no platform, no power.
She didn't grow up with opportunity. She grew up with loss.
No father to guide her.
No mother to protect her.
No influence. No voice.
Just a foreign land... and a future that looked like it had already been
decided for her.
Then one day, everything changes—but not in a good way.
She's taken from her home.
Pulled into a system she didn't choose.
Surrounded by power she doesn't understand.
And the odds? Completely against her.
She's the wrong one nationality.
The wrong background.
The wrong position.
Nobody would have looked at her life and said, "God is about to use her."
And yet...
Years later, that same girl is standing in a moment where the fate of an
entire people group rests on her decision.
One move... could cost her life.
One moment... could save a nation.
And here's the tension:
She didn't ask for the position.
She didn't plan the moment.
But now she has to decide...
Will she step forward in courage—or stay silent in fear?
Her name... is Esther.
And her story reminds us of something powerful:
God specializes in taking people who look like they don't belong in the
story...
and placing them right in the center of it.
So, if you've ever felt like:
you started behind
you don't have the advantage
your situation isn't ideal
Then this message is for you.
Because God is still working...
Even when the odds are against you.

I. In the last days (Timothy)

II. (this bible has the Power)

A. Wars and rumors of wars. THESE ARE EXTREME TIMES

B. **2 Tim. 3:2-4.** It says that difficult, hard to deal with times will come and that men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

C. Rev. 12 says that The enemy knows that his time is short

D. Daniel 7:25 says he will come to wear out the Saints.

E. The enemy is rallying his forces to control this area, "this region is precious to the enemy

F. The enemy always tries to intimidate, captivate or eliminate anyone who is a threat to his kingdom

G. BUT God: always raises up a person or a people to confront the powers of darkness.

H. What about Esther?

I. The Story has 4 parts

1. A Hidden Beginning (Chapters 1–2)

King **Ahasuerus** removes Queen Vashti

A young Jewish girl, **Esther**, is taken into the palace

She is: an orphan, an exile, and a minority

Raised by her cousin **Mordecai**

👉 Against all odds... she becomes queen.

God can position you in places you never planned for and purposes you don't yet understand.

2. The Threat (Chapter 3)

A powerful official, **Haman**, rises to power

Mordecai refuses to bow → Haman becomes enraged

He plots genocide against all Jews

👉 A decree is signed to destroy an entire people group.

Odds against them:

No political power

No voice

No protection

3. The Turning Point (Chapters 4–7)

Mordecai challenges Esther:

"Who knows if you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14)

Esther's dilemma:

Approach the king uninvited = possible death

Stay silent = certain destruction for her people

👉 She chooses courage.

"If I perish, I perish."

She: fasts, prays, takes a risk

God begins to reverse everything:

The king can't sleep

Mordecai is honored

Haman is exposed

👉 The man who built gallows for Mordecai is hanged on them himself.

J. God can turn what was meant to destroy you into the very thing that delivers you.

4. The Reversal (Chapters 8–10)

A new decree allows the Jews to defend themselves

Their mourning turns into celebration

What looked like the end becomes a victory

This becomes the Jewish festival of **Purim**

K. The enemy trying to eliminate God's people, but she stood up to the devil and did not back down, "I will go and see the king,... and if I perish, I perish."

L. This is not an hour to wake up and worry about what the devil is going to do to us, but a time when the enemy wakes up and...

M. Expect the enemy to resist any effort to establish God's kingdom

1. **Intimidate**: use fear to get you to sit down, shut up or give up and make you think what you're doing is not making a difference

2. Gideon, the enemy had been terrorizing God's people

3. **Captivate** to bring into bondage. God raised up Moses to bring freedom to the captives. A lot of us have been slaves to something. Drugs, alcohol, people's opinions.

4. **Eliminate**: The enemy tried to eliminate everyone that God was going to raise up to deliver his children (Moses, Joseph, Elijah, Jesus) Probably most of you in this room

N. It's time for the church to stand up. Someone needs to stir themselves up and leave here a man of war, a woman of war.

O. "Cursed is he who keeps his sword from bloodshed." **Jeremiah 48:10**
ESV

- P. "Well, I believe in love not war." If you really love something you'll fight for it.
- Q. There have been a great many battles fought for us to enjoy this freedom that we have. (Veterans, active military)
- R. Right now, there are over 388 million Christians worldwide that face high levels of persecution. That is one in seven believers. More than 13 Christians are killed every day for their faith.
- S. Foxes book of Martyrs.

Thomas Hawkes: 1555 he had a son and refused to have the baby baptized in the Catholic church. In this book there is a two-page argument between him and Bishop Bonner about baptism, praying for the dead and several doctrinal issue between the catholic church and protestants. Bonner complained that Hawkes wouldn't come to hear his chapel or mass because his services weren't in English.

The Bishop said that Christ never spoke in English. Hawkes replied, "neither did he speak in Latin. What good does it to me to hear a language I don't understand?" Hawkes went on to say that the Catholic church engaged in the worship of idols, praying to saints, holy bread, and holy wine, none of which are found or commanded by Scripture.

On February 9, 1555, he was condemned as a heretic. He remained in prison until June 10.

A little before his death, some of Hawke's friends asked him a favor. They were afraid for their lives and wondered how long faith could stand in the midst of fire. Hawkes agreed to lift his hand over his head if the pain was tolerable and his mind was still at peace. When he had been in the fire so long that he could no longer speak, his skin had shrunk, his fingers had been burnt off and everyone thought he was dead, Hawkes suddenly raised his burning hands over his head and clapped them together three times! The people there—especially those who understood his gesture—broke into shouts of praise and applause as Thomas Hawkes sunk down into the fire and gave up his spirit.

- T. There is a promise of victory that God has given us, but you can't enter into that promise without a fight.
 - U. The Children of God were delivered from Pharaoh, then went to Bible School in the wilderness, learning how to fight, learning how to trust God. So, they could go in and possess the promises.
 - V. Like a chessboard. There is a devil on every promise of God, and you have to kill that giant and take the land. (me with finances, tithe)
- II. No détente with the devil
- A. Détente—relax, especially of international tension

- B. You don't bother us we won't bother you. (Russia, Cuba, terrorists)
- C. You're gambling on the fact that they are being honest
- D. Meanwhile they are building weapons of mass destruction
- E. Devil attacked Jesus, then departed for a more opportune time
- F. We must fight; Like being on an escalator, **you can't stop.****
- G. How many feel like you are under attack? How many are not fighting?
- H. How do we fight? Where is the battle?
- I. One of the biggest battlegrounds is the MIND. Galgotha
- J. How do I fight? "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal....."
- K. Prophetic : "New Mindsets" That's God's part.
- L. Our part: Renew our minds, be transformed,.... The washing of the water
- M. The enemy builds strongholds in our minds with lies and other garbage
- N. The mind wants to reason.. I want to know why, when, what for (like your kids)
- O. You need to have some spiritual weapons
 1. Anointed music (**I Sam. 16:16**) (NKJV) "Let your master now command your servants, who are before you, to seek out a man who is a skillful player on the harp. And it shall be that he will play it with his hand when the distressing (evil) spirit from God is on you and you shall be well." (testimony, guy would play piano)
 2. Sometimes when we think and worry too much, we need to put on some music and sing. Get in the presence.
 3. Praise—recounting and declaring the good things of God
 4. Worship—a deeper thing, it's about who God is.
 5. Praying in the Holy Ghost, getting aggressive
 6. Talking back to the devil, reading, speaking and declaring the Word of God.
 7. Devil is trying to get you to lose you grip on the Promises of God
- P. You can get so hurt emotionally that you feel like dying; THAT'S WHEN YOU NEED TO SPEAK THE WORD

- Q. Hang on to the Word, those things you've read, things you've heard
- R. Tighten up the belt of TRUTH
- A. Stop the kind of thinking that brings defeat and destruction, Worry, Fear, Reasoning
- S. "I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be on my lips.." Psalm 34:1 (NKJV)
- B. You need to praise your way into the victory and dance in advance
- T. "I WISH I wasn't so depressed"
- C. PUT on the garments of praise, "they don't do any good just lying there"
- Y. Pick up that bible, blow the dust off of it and Speak the Word (Say to this...)
- U. We must fight the good fight of faith, but not just once
- V. Some of the messes we get ourselves into was not because of just **ONE** thing
- W. So, you can't expect to do just one thing to get back out of it.

III. Areas the enemy really hit you in

- D. Finances—God's answer, be a cheerful giver, thither.
- E. Body & Mind with illness—God's answer, The Word and worship
- F. Relationships—God's answer, Submission and or forgiveness. (Submit to God...)
- G. Each one of these things give you power or authority

H. You are in a battle and Prayer is the Battle.

I. So, it takes Power to obtain the promises, but for the type of power you need, you must get in position to receive. You need to get under the spout where the glory comes out.

Joshua and Jericho.

II. Prayer will get you into position to receive the Power, then take a stand and FIGHT

A. **FIGHT**

B. **F—Forward.** (Ex. 14:15) NKJV "And the lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go FORWARD.'"

1. We whine and moan, waiting for someone to clear a path for us
2. Forward means motion, it's a fighting word, on-going, goal oriented, sense of direction

C. **I—Inch by inch** (Ex 23:30) ESV "Little by little I will drive them out before you, until you have increased (grown). Inch by inch it's a cinch. God strengthens us to handle promotion and power.

D. **G—God of Peace** (Rom. 16:20) ESV "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." Crush, to shatter, annihilate, torpedo, disintegrate, to totally demolish.

1. God has given us the victory. We go from Faith to Faith, Victory to Victory.
 2. It's progressive and it's under **Our** feet.
 3. That means that **We** are involved! "We will tread on serpents and scorpions."
- E. **H—Holy Ground**. Those who wait on the Lord...
1. You have to go from the battleground to the Holy Ground (renew strength)
 2. The time you have on the holy ground will determine the outcome on the battleground
- F. **T—Take back ground**. Be aggressive; Claim it, Take it. Drive a stake in the ground.
1. Use your authority, tap into your treasures, prophecy your promises
 2. Declare your destiny, fall into the favor,
- G. IF God Can Use Anyone He Can Use Me
- H. If you'll just get close enough to God, so you can feel His breath. Because when He breathes on that dream that He put in you.....who knows what can happen.
- I. For instance, in 1774 a leader named John Adams boldly declared his vision of a new nation, a union of 13 states independent from the King of England. Against all odds, his words came true. Within two years of his prophetic proclamation, the United States of America was born.
- J. In 1789 William Wilberforce stood before the British Parliament and cried out that men and women should not be bought and sold like farm animals. Each year for 18 years the bill was defeated. Finally, in 1833, four days before his death, Parliament passed a bill completely abolishing slavery.
- K. In the late 1800's two brothers, Wilbur and Orville Wright, announced that " the age of the flying machine" had arrived. Ten years of disappointing experiments followed. But on December 17, 1903, they made history when their small biplane lifted off a sandy beach in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina
- L. In the early 20th century Henry Ford stood in front of a rag tag band of employees and vowed to make automobile transportation affordable for the average American family. The nation laughed out loud. But barely fifteen years later, millions of Ford's model T automobiles had been bought and sold and a cost of just \$209 each
- M. In the 1940's a young evangelist named Billy Graham had a radical dream. He and a few college buddies envisioned packed stadiums where people far from God could hear the proclamation of the

gospel. 215 million people have heard Billy Graham preach live, while over 2.2 billion have heard him over TV or radio

N. Who can forget 1963? Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. and painted a picture of a world without prejudice, hatred or racism. "I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

Although Dr. King was cruelly assassinated, his dream lives on.

Close: Now what about you? Do you believe that God has a purpose and a plan for you. Do you believe that no matter what the odds are, No matter what you have been through. That if you seek first the Kingdom of God and press into Him. God can bring it to pass in your life.

1. It was against the odds that I would play professional football.
2. But I did.
3. It was against the odds that our daughter would live (premature)
4. But she did.
5. It was against the odds that I could be in the ministry.
6. But I am.

Close: Love at its best.

There is a story in the old testament of a women named Gomer. With a name like that.

God, "Hosea marry a woman who will be unfaithful."

He had to woo her. Court her. Pursue her.

Finally, someone who just listened to Gomer and didn't want something Love at its best.

1st child together.

Then she starts to be gone a few nights, then weeks or months at a time

Two more children, probably not his.

One named "you're not my kin" You're not my family.

Hosea had to raise those kids, pray every night for mommy.

Gomer kept walking away from him.

She made choices that hurt him.

She broke trust.

She left the relationship.

Most people would say:

"That marriage is over."

Then Gomer ends up at the end of her rope. Being sold as a slave.

The world will use you up and spit you out. Sin always takes you to a place you never thought it would take you, costs you more than you thought it

would cost you and leaves you in a place you never thought it would leave you.

Hosea is in the marketplace and hears about his wife.

Kid get the house ready, mommy is coming home

Love at its best.

He goes to the place where they are selling his wife as a slave. Men could have been standing around laughing and making fun of her.

"I'll give you 25 cents" Haha.

Hosea comes running to the front and says \$100. There was a hush.....

That's love at it's best. He goes and get her, hugs her. Said we're going home. He gets home "welcome home mommy".

That's love at it's Best

Now here's the surprising part.

That story isn't really about Hosea and Gomer.

It's about **us and God.**

Because every one of us knows what it feels like to drift.

To make mistakes.

To carry regret.

To wish we could start over somewhere in life.

And the message of the Bible is this:

God doesn't walk away from people.

He moves toward them.

That's love at its best.

Most people think love sounds like:

"I'll stay if you do everything right."

But God's love sounds like:

"I'm still here—even when you don't."

That's the kind of love God has for this city.

That's the kind of love God has for families.

And that's the kind of love God has for you.

You might me someone who has come to church for quite a while or someone that is here for the first time.

It's simple.

We believe God still comes looking for people.

Still restores people.

Still gives fresh starts.

Because your story isn't finished yet.

And no matter what life has looked like so far...

God's love is still reaching toward you.

That's love at its best. ✨