

Shamgar: the Farmer Becomes a Warrior

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Internet Sources)

Introduction:

- A. Judges 3:31, 5:6-7
 - 1. Shamgar is unknown
 - 2. Shamgar was a farmer; oxgoads were used by ox plowmen or cattle herdsman who went on foot
 - 3. Shamgar had no access to standard military weapons and training
 - 4. Shamgar shared his role as judge with the better known Ehud
 - 5. Shamgar was a judge at a time when people lived in terror
 - 6. Shamgar appeared to be a man of character and courage.
- B. The Bible is filled with accounts of unknown people who appear briefly in scripture, and promptly disappear. These people are used by the Lord and then fade away, most of them never mentioned again.
 - 1. Adino - 2Sam. 23:8 - One of David's mighty men, killed 800 men in one battle with a spear.
 - 2. Eleazar - 2Sam. 23:9-10 - Another of David's mighty men, fought so long, and killed so many Philistines, that his hand would not open and allow him to release his sword.
 - 3. Shammah - 2Sam. 23:11-12 - Another of David's warriors, stood alone in a field of peas and fought the Philistines until God gave him victory.
 - 4. The Widow of Zarephath - 1Kings 17 - She fed the prophet Elijah and sheltered him during a famine. No Israelite was chosen to take him in
 - 5. The Israelite Maid who told Naaman about the Man of God - 1Kings 5:1-4 - She told her master about the God of Israel leading to his cleansing from leprosy.
 - 6. The little boy who gave his lunch to Jesus - John 6:5-13 - He gave up his own lunch and God used it to feed a vast multitude of people.
 - 7. Joseph of Arimathea - John 19:38-42 - At great personal risk and cost, Joseph buried the body of Jesus. The list could go on for hours

I. SHAMGAR THE WORKER

- A. The name Shamgar is of unknown origin; it can mean either sword or cupbearer. Either name would fit
 - 1. He was like a sword in the hand of God, and he was like a cupbearer who brought the cup of God's wrath to the Philistines.
 - 2. He is called the son of Anath. Anath was the Canaanite goddess of war. It could also mean that he was from the town of Beth-Anath, located in NE Israel in Naphtali. It could simply mean his father's name was Anath
- B. He was a farmer.
 - 1. An oxgoad was not a weapon. It was a pole 8 to 10 feet in length and two inches in diameter.
 - 2. One end was tipped by a long iron point used to prod oxen. Oxen often did not respond to commands or pulling the reins, but they would respond to the sharp point of the oxgoad.

3. The other end of this tool was shaped like a spade used to clean wet clay, roots and other impediments off plow points.
- C. He lived in hard times.
 1. Israel was oppressed by Jabin, King of Canaan who had 900 iron chariots, the peak of military technology in that day - Judges 4:3.
 2. He would not allow the Israelites to arm themselves - Judges 5:8
 3. Israel lived in fear - Judges 5:6-7
- D. When God called Shamgar, he was already busy.
 1. God does not use lazy people very often
 2. He saved us to serve Him - Eph. 2:10; James 2:18.
 3. If He cannot trust you to do the small tasks He will never use you in greater ones - Luke 16:10

II. SHAMGAR THE WARRIOR

- A. Jabin disarmed the Israelites and made them weak militarily. They were not in a position to defend themselves, providing an opportunity for the Philistines to take advantage of the situation. They invaded Israel to capture slaves, steal crops, and destroy villages.
 1. When Philistines came, he stood his ground fighting with an oxgoad. He had to have a strong body and an even stronger spirit - 400 soldiers
- B. We have our own war against opportunistic invaders - Gal. 5:17.
 1. Your marriage, spouse, and children are worth fighting for. There is no sacrifice too great, or price too high, for those whom God has given into our care. We should fight for their salvation and righteousness. We should fight to the death if necessary to protect them from the world and Satan. But what most men and women forget is that they need to give up their sins, weaknesses, and excuses, because these are the opportunistic enemies that are the most dangerous
 2. The world can slip in and take away the treasures we share in the Lord's church. Love for truth, sound and edifying preaching, and reverential worship are all under attack by Satan and the world. We must be even more vigilant as the most dangerous attacks come from within.
 3. The lost don't know God and often don't care, but they need someone to stand in the gap and maintain the old ways so that they might hear about Jesus. They need people praying for them. They need people who will not snub them because they are in sin. They need someone who will fight for them. Someone fought for us.

III. SHAMGAR THE WINNER

- A. He kept fighting until he died and was replaced by Deborah
 1. Gal. 6:9; 1Cor. 15:58; Heb. 12:1-4; 2Tim. 4:7-8
- B. God can use anyone to accomplish His will.
 1. Shamgar fought where and when he was. He did not wait for better circumstances.
 2. Shamgar fought with what he had. He didn't wait until he had better
 3. Shamgar stood his ground; he made up his mind to fight
 4. Shamgar left the results to God. Live or die, he would stand for the Lord and for what was right.