

Judges, Sermon #13

Judges 3

Only one verse is devoted to our third judge.

His name is Shamgar!

Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar

I've entitled tonight's message "Little Is Much—When God Is in It"

Judges 3:31

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word

Judges 3:31

Let us pray

You may be seated.

Little Is Much When God Is in It

We know very little about this judge, but what was significant about Shamgar was the weapon that he used.

An ox goad – this was a farmer’s tool instead of a soldier’s tool.

An ox goad was a strong pole about eight feet long.

It was used to control and train animals by prodding them with the sharp point.

At one end was a sharp metal point for prodding the oxen and at the other end was a spade for cleaning the dirt off the plow.

It was the closest thing Shamgar could find to a spear because the enemy had confiscated the weapons of the Israelites (5:8)

I Sam. 13:19-22

The use of such an impromptu weapon is paralleled elsewhere in Judges: Ehud had to make his own weapon (3:16); Samson improvised with the jawbone of a donkey

No matter what our resources are—little or much—we are to give them to and use them for God.

Here was a man who obeyed God and defeated the enemy even though his resources were limited.

Instead of complaining about not possessing a sword or spear, Shamgar gave what he had to the Lord, and the Lord used it.

“What is a feeble instrument in the hands of one man is a mighty instrument in the hands of another, simply because the spirit of that other burns with holy determination to accomplish the work that has to be done.”

I Corinthians 1:27, *“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.”*

Illustration

1. Ox goad
2. Tent spike
3. Trumpet
4. Pitchers
5. Lamps

. . . and so on.

Charles Spurgeon once gave a lecture at his Pastor's College entitled "To Workers with Slender Apparatus."

Shamgar didn't hear that lecture, but I'm sure he could have given it!

And I suspect he would have closed his lecture by saying, "Give whatever tools you have to the Lord, stand your ground courageously, and trust God to use what's in your hand to accomplish great things for His glory."

Even an ox goad can be dedicated to God if it is in the right hands.

It is not the method that is remarkable.

"Oh, we must have the best and the latest methods."

It is fine to have good methods, but what about the message?

It is wonderful to have airplanes that transport missionaries, but when the missionary gets to his field, is he giving out the Word of God?

The important thing is not the method, but the message.

Remember that God used the rod of Moses.

He used a stone from the slingshot of David.

And all Dorcas had was a needle and thread.

Whatever we have, friend, if we will put it in His hand, He will use it.

Think of these three judges who are mentioned in this chapter.

They are three little men—plus God.

The world is looking for better methods, but God is looking for better men and women who understand the basics: the power of the Holy Spirit, wise strategy, and steadfast courage.

Shamgar lived in southwest Canaan where the Philistines were beginning to move in with force and gain a strong foothold.

The area where Shamgar lived had become infested with villains, bands of outlaws, and raiders.

The bandits attacked travelers and caravans, stealing from and then murdering the victims.

The situation became so hazardous, people abandoned the main roads and traveled cautiously along winding, secret paths (Jud. 5:6).

Most likely he killed the bandits over a long period of time . . .

To stand face-to-face in combat with 600 individuals as a farmer, each time being in a life-threatening situation—and to win all 600 contests—took great strength, took a body that was physically fit and very powerful.

What bravery! What courage!

No matter who the enemy is, no matter how powerful the enemy, no matter how often the enemy attacks

We are to persevere in courage, be unshakable and immovable, always standing fast for the Lord.

God cares deeply about the human body.

God says that our bodies are to be sacrificed, dedicated to Him (Rom. 12:1-2)

God says that our bodies are the very temples of God's Spirit (I Cor. 6:19-20)

God has promised to raise up our bodies in the last days (I Cor. 15:42-44)

God says that He is going to judge us for the things we have done in our bodies (II Cor. 5:10)

Romans 13:14

Physical fitness—keeping the body healthy and strong—is important.

The more fit a person is, the more a person can do, achieve, accomplish.

Sports teams have always known the importance of physical fitness.

Today, businesses are becoming more and more aware of the need for workers to be physically fit and are encouraging their employees to exercise.

A worker who is physically fit is able to concentrate longer and work more diligently.

A physically fit person simply feels better.

Just think about the matter for a moment: a person who is not physically fit is:

weaker	not as alert
more sluggish	not as focused
more lethargic	not as energetic

A physically fit person has more energy and is able to be more active, able to be a more responsible person.

He or she can do more at home, work, school, or play.

Physical fitness played a large part in the life of Shamgar, the deliverer.

He was a strong, physically fit person, and it may have been his physical strength which enabled him to do so much for the Israelites and for God.

Let us stand for closing invitation.

Can God use us?

Can God use what we have?

Look at Medora – little is much when God is in it.