

Shamgar

Judges 3: 31

Introduction:

The third judge in the line of judges only has one verse devoted to him.

At the end of chapter 3, the very closing verse sums up the entire life and ministry and judgeship of Shamgar.

"After him was Shamgar the son of Anath, who killed 600 of the Philistines with an oxgoad, and he also saved Israel."

Proposition:

So let's look at this text and see what lessons Shamgar has for us.

It teaches us to...

I. Be Courageous In The Face Of Overwhelming Odds.

The text says that it was at least 600 to 1.

- ❖ Those are not real good odds for anything.
- ❖ Yet God gave Shamgar the victory because he courageously fought for the Israelite people... God's people.

God emboldens those who are courageous.

Application:

When tough times come... you be courageous... even when the odds seem overwhelming because God can give you victory.

Romans 8: 31... *"...If God is for us, who can be against us?"*

Be Courageous In The Face Of Overwhelming Odds.

II. Be Prepared.

- ❖ The very fact that he was using an oxgoad to defend himself and his nation suggests that he may have been plowing in the fields when the Philistines attacked.

Question: "What is an ox goad / oxgoad in the Bible?"

Answer: An ox goad is a wooden tool, approximately eight feet long, fitted with an iron spike or point at one end, which was used to spur oxen as they pulled a plow or cart. It often had an iron scraper at the non-pointed end to clear clods of earth from the plowshare when it became weighed down.

Shamgar had to ready at a moment's notice and use whatever he had handy.

- ❖ Do you know **what the name *Shamgar* means?** It means **"a surprised stranger."**
- ❖ I have a feeling that there were at least 600 surprised strangers of Philistines that happened upon this guy and thought this is going to be a piece of cake.
 - ➡ I wonder what was going through the last 300 men's minds after seeing the first 300 die?

Application:

Sometimes you don't get a whole lot of notice when God is ready to use you... so **be prepared**.

2 Timothy 4:2... Paul's instruction to young Timothy... *"preach the word; be prepared/ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching."*

Be Courageous
Be Prepared

III. Use What You Have.

Use what God has given you to make a difference, even if it doesn't seem like the perfect "weapon" for the job.

- ➡ I doubt very seriously that this would be Shamgar's weapon of choice if he knew that he was going to face an army of Philistines by himself.
 - ⇒ A large hunk of wood that is larger on one end than the other... used to drive or encourage or "goad" the oxen on.

Application:

Don't dare adopt an attitude that you don't have anything to offer God.

- ❖ You may think that you don't have any abilities or talents... but God has something in store for you.
 - ➡ It may be something very simple... It may be something very difficult... but use what God has made available to you to get the job done.

Be Courageous
Be Prepared
Use What You Have

IV. Save As Many As You Can

"Whoever saves one life... saves the world entire" (Schindler's List)

I love the way this verse ends... *"...and he also saved Israel."*

Application: You and I, as Christians, have the highest calling in the world ... and that is to introduce people to Jesus Christ because He is the only One who can save them. So use every opportunity you can to be a part of leading someone to Jesus.