

SHAMGAR – A NOBODY WHO BECAME A SOMEBODY

John Hannah

INTRODUCTION

We often look at the giants of the faith in the Old and New Testaments and stand in awe of that which God achieved through them. At a glance it seems as if we and they have so little in common. However, a closer reading reveals some startling facts.

- Most would never have been the obvious choice as a leader.
- Many had a time of significant failure in their lives.
- Some had severe personal weaknesses.

It is also clear that there have been times of great spiritual famine when God has stepped deliberately and decisively into the pages of history in order to change a people. On occasions He has chosen to use obscure, unknown men and women to bring about spiritual change.

SETTING THE SCENE

In Judges 2: 6-15, we find: (a) That there was no God fearing leadership in Israel, the people had turned away from the Lord and forsaken the law; (b) There was a leadership vacuum, and; (c) That Israel had compromised with their enemies, tolerated evil and, in many respects, had embraced the lifestyle of the surrounding nations.

God sent judges to help free Israel from the bondage that had resulted from their own actions. The first such judge was Othniel, son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, and the second was Ehud (after whom the land had 80 years of rest). Then Shamgar appears on the scene – c.f., Judges 3:31 and 5:6-8. It is not clear if Shamgar was a judge, but we see that *"he also delivered Israel"*. Indeed, it is not even clear that he was an Israelite - his name perhaps being of Hittite origin. He was not from a family of any note nor was he from the priestly tribe. He apparently lived in the latter part of the days of Ehud.

WHERE DID SHAMGAR LIVE?

Judges 5: 6,7 indicates that he lived in enemy occupied territory! The Philistines had infiltrated the land, dominating the major trade routes such that there was constant danger in travel. We too live in enemy occupied territory. Eph.6:12 *"We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against the principalities and powers and world rules of this present wickedness"*.

WHAT DID SHAMGAR DO?

He joined the resistance movement and got involved in the battle. It appears that he engaged in guerrilla warfare. We too are part of a resistance movement – c.f., II Tim.2:3,4 *"Take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No soldier on service gets entangled in civilian pursuits"*.

HOW DID HE BEGIN?

1. He ignored all the things that should have stopped him. No training, no leadership skills, and no support base.
2. He started where he was. It is better to serve the Lord where we are, because we cannot serve him where we are not! Many people have an opportunity to start where they are, but they don't. It's "the wrong time" or "it's the wrong place", or, "if only I had - - -".
3. He started with what he had - an oxgoad. Wars are fought with swords and spears not oxgoads. We observe from Judges 5:8 that there was not a shield or a spear to be found amongst 40 000 in Israel. We start with what we have, not what we don't have!
4. He went after the enemy. We are told that he slew 600 Philistines. A US survey by the

If you are new or visiting; a special warm welcome to you. We trust you enjoy your time with us.

Today we will be having communion. If it is your practice to participate in this we welcome you to join with us in celebrating the Lord's Supper. If this is not your custom or if you are unsure of what to do please just pass the emblems (bread and wine) to the person next to you.

This Morning

Speaker John Hannah

After church service there will be a Pot Luck Lunch at the Wray Street Hall, 18 Wray Street.

This Evening

- JCF 5.00pm
- Creation Evangelism 7.00pm

Next Sunday

31st May. Queens Birthday Weekend. Structured Service. Feast of Weeks.

7th June. Tony Hewson. Romans 8:1-17

Thursday Kidz Club

6:30 - 8:00 pm
7 - 12 year olds
Ph: Allan Maguire - 4767197

Coming Up

Planning Meeting 8th June.

Please advise the elders of any items you wish to have added to the agenda.

Prayer Items

Please give prayerful consideration to the upcoming OAC outreach endeavours and thought to activities that our we can be involved in.

