

Week #:	171	Series:	God's Judgment	Title:	Judge #3: Shamgar
Scriptures:	Judges 3:31; Judges 3:30; Joshua 19:38; Joshua 15:38; Ecclesiastes 12:11; Acts 26:14				
Songs:	Draw Me Close – Michael W Smith (4:28)				
	I Need You More – Lindell Cooley (5:03)				
	PRAYER:	In Jesus Name (God of Possible) – Katy Nicole (3:41)			
Videos:	Judges Song – <i>What's in the Bible #4</i> (Time- 31:31-33:25)				
	Interview – Sid Roth interviews Jonathan Cahn about his new book <i>Return of the gods</i> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhdaPVmQiZw&amp;t=2622s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhdaPVmQiZw&amp;t=2622s</a>				

## Judge #3: Shamgar

The first two judges in our study have been:

#1 – Othniel

He was Caleb's nephew. Israel lived in peace after him for 40 years

#2 – Ehud

He was known for the physical feature of being left-handed. Israel lived in peace after him for 80 years.

### **Now we get to Judge #3 - Shamgar**

Judges 3:31

<sup>31</sup>After Ehud came Shamgar the son of 'Anat [Anath], who killed 600 P'lishtim [Philistines] with an oxgoad; and he too rescued Isra'el.

This note about Shamgar is almost like one of those newsbreaks sandwiched between regular programming on radio or television. The writer slips him in between Ehud and Deborah in the briefest sort of way. Yet 'he too saved Israel.' So, if anything, we have a salvation break.

We don't have much information in the scriptures about this third judge. He leaves us with more questions than answers, actually. We know he came after Ehud.

Judges 3:30

<sup>30</sup>Thus was Mo'av [Moab] subdued that day under the power of Isra'el. Then the land had rest for eighty years.

Ehud killed King Eglon of Moab, and peace ruled in Israel for 80 years. Then Israel obviously falls back into that cycle of apostasy that they keep falling into. After 80 years – several generations – they start to accept the idols and false gods of the culture around them. They turn away from God, and once again God's hand of protection was taken from them. The Philistines rose up against them, oppressing Israel.

*Was he an Israelite or not?*

His name seems to be non-Israelite; some say it is Hurrian. He could have been from one of the Canaanite people surrounding Israel, or he could have been half Israelite and half Canaanite.

*What does "son of Anath" mean?*

There are three possibilities here:

- (1) His father's name could simply have been Anath. This is the simplest explanation.
- (2) "Son of..." is often in reference to one who worships, so "Son of Anath" could refer to his father being a worshipper of Anath, who was a Canaanite goddess. If his family is not Israelite, this explanation makes perfect sense.
- (3) It could be a reference as to where the family lived. There were several cities known as "Beth-Anath" (House of the goddess). One of these are in Galilee (Joshua 19:38) and another in Judah (Joshua 15:38). He could have simply been a resident of one of these cities.

That is about all we can know of Shamgar's roots.

*Did Shamgar knock off these Philistines single-handedly or as the leader of the farmers' militia?*

We simply do not know. We are not given this information.

The Philistines began to overtake Israel, and we do not know how long this went on, but eventually the Israelites turned back to God and God rose this man up, Shamgar, who took action against the Philistines. With an ox-goad, he killed 600 men. We don't know if he fought alone or if he led a contingency of men. All we know is that he was known to slay 600 with a farmer's tool.

The Philistines were a sea-faring people who lived in Canaan during the period of the Judges. Since the Philistines were known as warriors, the fact that Shamgar killed 600 of them was an amazing – or even miraculous – accomplishment.

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.

A goad/ox-goad is mentioned several times throughout the Scriptures. Ecclesiastes 12:11

<sup>11</sup>The sayings of the wise are as sharp as goads, and those given by leaders of assemblies are like well-fixed nails; [in this case,] they are presented by a single shepherd.

In this verse, a comparison is made between the Word of God, its doctrines, and its effects upon the heart of man and an ox-goad that pricks, drives, and directs sinners like oxen. The Shepherd uses the Word to prick our consciences, drive us to repentance, and direct us to Christ for salvation.

When an ox was poked with a goad, its response was sometimes to kick out at it in resistance. Naturally, kicking back at the goad was futile, not to mention painful. Jesus used this as an analogy when He confronted Saul on the Damascus Road.

Acts 26:14

<sup>14</sup>We all fell to the ground; and then I heard a voice saying to me, in Hebrew, ‘Sha’ul! Sha’ul! Why do you keep persecuting me? It’s hard on you to be kicking against the ox-goads!’

Jesus asked Saul why he was persecuting Him and reminded him that, just as an ox that kicks against the pricking of the goad can hurt itself, Saul’s continued resistance to the gospel would only result in danger to himself. Saul wisely submitted to the goad and yielded himself to Christ.

Using this ox-goad, what was a crude, ancient version of a bo staff, Shamgar destroyed the enemies of Israel. The text does not specify whether his success came in one battle (as with Samson) or in a series of battles. The only other judge to show such strength would be Samson, whose heroic feats of strength would later eclipse those of Shamgar.

Shamgar’s use of an ox goad shows how low the men of Judah had been brought at that time by their oppressors. Later, Israel was disarmed to the extent that “not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel.” This comes up in Judges 5, a portion of text known as Deborah’s Song, along with the information that during the days of Shamgar the highways were abandoned and travelers took to winding paths. People had to be careful when traveling because of the oppression of the Philistines (and possibly other enemies).

Little else is known concerning Shamgar. His period of leadership bridged the time between Ehud and Deborah. God used one man with one simple weapon to rescue His people from oppression. This example of God working through one person to change the lives of many applies today. We are each called to live for God, knowing that our actions can have tremendous influence over many people. Further, God often chooses to use unknown people to accomplish great achievements to bring glory to His name.

