

# Sermon Notes by Pastor Jamie Tonge



## Better than a New Year resolution.

Seven things we can learn from Shamgar.

Seven simple truths that are God's gift to us.

**Judges 3:31 "After Ehud came Shamgar son of Anath, Who struck down six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad. He too, saved Israel".**

We may wonder what we can learn from this man who is found only here and in 5;6, which tells us he ruled in the days when the roads were abandoned and people used winding paths.

He came at a time when the enemy was beginning to return, the roads were becoming dangerous. The people were still living under the effects of Ehud's rule and deliverance, yet the enemy was starting to influence and harass the people. The people were beginning to travel on winding tracks instead of the Kings highway.

### 1. Shamgar broke the cycle of backsliding.

The people of Israel had been in a cycle of freedom and God's blessing, then because they began to walk away from following God they fell under the oppression of their enemies. God raised up Shamgar who was not prepared to live in this, he chose to believe that their past did not have to be their future.

He remembered God's promises *Deut; 28* blessings of obedience and the curse of disobedience.

He applied God's promise into his life *Deut; 28* God gives the promise that if the people live in obedience to God's commands then they will live in God's blessing, prosperity and protection. *v 1 "if you fully obey the Lord your God, you will be blessed".*

Our past is not our future

No matter what our past has been, it does not have to mean that our future is going to come out of the same mould,

Last time I spoke, we looked at how we can live by a well or in a cave. God's word tells us "He is the fountain of life" *John 4;10, 7;38*

Just as Ehud had built a safe nation, so Shamgar trusted in God to continue it. We also can continue in our life in Christ. The enemy will try to take back what God has delivered us from. We can chose to live in it "*because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him for that day*" *2 Tim 1:12*

It can be our past life, before we knew Christ or it can be something that we have been struggling with, as a child of God.

We don't have to live there, believe what God's word says and ask the Holy Spirit to empower you.

*Q: Do I find that I am being bogged down by something, a habit or attitude that's hindering me?*

*A: Begin to pray God's word into your life; refuse to believe the lie of the enemy.*

### 2. Shamgar took his place in the nation.

He could have spent his life living on his own, living a Godly life. But, that would not change the nation. He had to take his God given place in God's plan for the nation. He had to stand up and be counted.

We see in many of the OT men and woman of God that they were reluctant to do what God called them to (see in **Heb; 11** the list of men and woman of God and read their testimonies. See their first response to God's call).

Even though they knew their inability, they believed God and did what He called them to.

### *Stand in the place He has for us*

Shamgar took his place in the nation to bring about God's continued purpose in the land.

Like him we can make a choice to be involved within the local church, or we can live our own Christian experience just looking after ourself.

However, there is no biblical place for this stand. We are called to be together.

We are called to take our stand against the powers of darkness **Eph 6:10-20, Heb 10:19-25,**

*Q: What place do I fill in the local Church?*

### *3. Shamgar delivered his generation*

At a time when things were beginning to slip away, he was raised up for God and the nation was delivered.

### *Serving God and His people*

The bible says of Shamgar "**he to saved Israel**".

It tells us there were others who had gone before and played their part and seen the nation set free. So for us, there are those who's footsteps we follow. As Shamgar was different to Ehud, so to we are different to those who have gone before us, yet we seek the same outcome reaching our generation, different time, different set of circumstances but the same result.

The Bible is constantly encouraging us to be together and work together.

*Q: Take the list at the end of these notes and see how many times we find 'one another' in the NT. See how we are called to work together.*

### *4. Shamgar built on Ehud's accomplishments.*

He was able to build on what another had done; he did not have to start again.

The fact that there is very little mentioned about the time, is perhaps the fact that it was easier to carry on a work that had already been established by another.

### *Build on the present – don't live in the past.*

One of the amazing things about the kingdom of God is that He never seems to do something in the same way twice. The Church is not about what was, but what is and is to come.

When we allow the failures of the past to become the focus and the thing that holds us back, then we will never move on to where God is moving.

- The woman at the well took a risk and talked to Jesus
- She then took another risk and went back to the town and told the whole town what she had heard and found in Christ **John 4**
- Blind Bartimaeus when told to be quiet took a risk and called out all the more so Jesus would stop for him **Mark 10:46**
- Peter when he saw Jesus walk on the water took a risk and asked "can I do this too?" **Matt 14:22**

Q: What is there in my life that I need to take risks for God in?

5. *Shamgar saved Israel from the enemy's tyranny.*

He struck down the enemy, where the enemy had invaded the nation of Israel. The enemy were beginning to take over the highway, the straight and level road, so the people were taking the twisting byroads. Shamgar stopped this, so the people could once again walk on the road in safety.

He cut down the enemy with an oxgoad.

*An oxgoad was a long staff with a point on one end and a blade on the other used to prod the ox and to clean the ploughshare.*

With an everyday tool he defeated the enemy.

He put out the enemy. He stopped the enemy taking more control of God's inheritance.

*Put the enemy where he belongs.*

There is something we can learn from this period in the history of the nation of Israel, that the enemy is never far away. When they walk in blessing and obedience, then the enemy is contained within their own borders and even in subjection to the people of God.

What we can learn is that we will never get rid of the power of darkness, until the coming of Christ, but until then, he will be around seeking to invade the people of God. Like them, when the enemy is trying to get at us we stop walking in the light and the straight road of God's word, we stop believing what God's word says and walk on the twisting path of our own judgment and thinking. *Judges 5:6, Matt 7:13, Isaiah 35:8-10.*

Note that sometimes even when the people were walking in obedience, the enemy would seek to attack. *2 Kings 18 & 19.*

The Bible tells us that we can prevent the enemy from taking over and destroying the work of God in us.

Paul tells us that we are aware of the devil's schemes. *2 Cor 2:11.*

We are called to stand firm against the principalities and powers. *Ephesians 6:10-12.*

Peter tells us to resist the devil and he will flee from us. *1 Peter 5:8-9.*

Q: Are there areas of my life where I am allowing the enemy to influence me, and where I need to resist him?

6. *Shamgar served Israel in righteousness.*

Having defeated the enemy, only returning to God's commands in obedience would enable them to continue to live in peace and blessing.

*Serve God in our community.*

If Shamgar had not stood up and taken on the enemy, then who would?

If David had not taken on Goliath, then who would?

It's very easy to say "it's not my job".

People who overcome adversity don't say "why me?" They say "why not me!"

Whether your name is George Muller or Joe Bloggs

The only difference is the size of the task.

Whether your name is Smith Wigglesworth or Samantha Smith

The only difference is the size of the task.

We are all called to serve the Church and our community to bring our generation to Christ. In his book 'The Connecting Church' Randy Frazee makes the point of how busy we are in the world we live in and how we become so taken up with everything that we lose sight of the Kingdom of God in our life and our community. We are all called.

Q: What am I doing? Why am I doing it? If I'm doing nothing why is that?

Q: What do I think I am gifted to do?

Q: What would I like to do?

Q: What do I have a passion to do?

### 7. Shamgar used what was in his hand.

We know very little about Him. The fact that he used an oxgoad might tell us that he was a ploughman. The oxgoad was the OT cattle prod, as we have already said; it was around 8 feet long with a spike one end and a chisel shaped blade on the other.

God empowered Shamgar to use the tools of his everyday life to bring victory.

### Use what is in your hand.

Shamgar used an oxgoad, because he was probably a ploughman.

We start where we are, with what is in our hand.

Q: What's in my hand?

## APPENDIX

### ONE ANOTHER

Eighteen times in the New Testament the term 'one another' is found. It is found many more times repeating the same things.

Romans 12:10	Be devoted to one another. Honour one another.
Romans 12:16	Live in harmony with one another.
Romans 13:8	Love one another.
Romans 15:7	Accept one another.
Romans 16:16	Greet one another.
1 Corinthians 1:10	Agree with one another.
1 Corinthians 16:20	Greet one another with a holy kiss.
Galatians 5:13	Serve one another.
Ephesians 4:2	Be patient, bearing with one another.
Ephesians 4:32	Be kind & compassionate with one another.
Ephesians 5:19	Speak to one another (with psalms, hymns & spiritual songs).
Ephesians 5:21	Submit to one another.
Colossians 3:13	Forgive one another.
Colossians 3:16	Teach and admonish one another.
1 Thessalonians 5:11	Encourage one another.
Hebrews 3:13	Encourage one another <b>daily</b> .
Hebrews 10:24	Spur one another (on towards love and good works).
1 Peter 4:9	Offer hospitality to one another.

1 Peter 5:5            Clothe yourselves with humility towards one another.  
1 Peter 1:22           Love one another deeply from the heart (see also 1 John 4:7, 11, 12).

The words 'each other' also repeat some of the above, but add some others.

1 Corinthians 11:33    Wait for each other.  
1 Corinthians 12:25    (have) concern for each other.  
Galatians 6:2            Carry each other's burdens.  
Ephesians 4:32          Forgiving each other.  
Philippians 4:2          Agree with each other in the Lord.  
Colossians 3:13          Bear with each other.  
1 Thessalonians 5:11    Build each other up.  
1 Thessalonians 5:13    Live in peace with each other.  
1 Thessalonians 5:15    Be kind to each other.  
James 5:9                Don't grumble against each other.  
James 5:16                Confess your sins to each other.

Every one of these is a positive statement about how we affect, respect and connect with **each other**. Every one of us is involved in these things.

Every one of us can do them.