

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

Shamgar Slew Six Hundred with an Ox Goad

Judg. 3:31 "And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines **six hundred men** with an **ox goad**: and he also delivered Israel."

It is not only remarkable that Shamgar slew **six hundred Philistines**, but that he slew them with an **ox goad**! An ox goad is a very unusual weapon to use for waging war. This is the only time that it is mentioned in the scriptures. An ox goad is for prodding the oxen to move who are yoked to pull a plow. It is not generally thought of as a weapon of war.

There are several unusual weapons used in the scriptures by leaders of the children of Israel. Sampson used the jaw bone of an ass: Judg. 15:15 "And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. 16 And Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men." David used a sling: 1 Sam 17:40 "And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine." 50 "So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David."

In addition, Benaiah used a staff to slay an Egyptian with a spear: 2 Sam. 23:21 "And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear. 22 These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men."

All of the above men had one thing in common when they used their unusual weapons to slay the enemy. They had a strong trust in the delivering power of the God of Israel. It was not so much their unusual weapons of war, but their strong trust in God that enabled them to slay their enemies.

In like fashion, we have what the world thinks are unusual weapons of war. 2 Cor. 10:3 "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)" The weapons of our warfare are made for the enemies that we fight

against: Eph. 6:12 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Since this is not a flesh and blood warfare, but a spiritual warfare we must have spiritual weapons in which to engage our enemies.

Paul wrote of the whole armour of God in Ephesians chapter six. There were seven pieces of armour that Paul showed us in this chapter. Five of the pieces were defensive pieces: truth, walking uprightly, preparation of the gospel of peace, faith, and hope of salvation. Two of the pieces were for going on the offense against the enemy. These offensive weapons were prayer and the word of God, which is called the sword of the Spirit. In addition, we read in Rom. 12:21 "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." We are to go forward against our enemies wearing the whole armour of God and going on the offense with prayer, with the word of God and by doing good. With these weapons, we can overcome our enemies if we also have a strong trust in our God: Eph. 6:10 "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."