

[shammah]

:: 2 samuel 23.11-12 ::

Today our one-verse-wonder is found in 2 Samuel, chapter 23, verses 11 and 12.

2 Samuel 23.11-12 - And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had gathered together into a troop where there was a piece of ground full of lentils. So the people fled from the Philistines. But he stationed himself in the middle of the field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the Lord brought about a great victory.

So our man this morning actually has 2 verses dedicated to him, but other than here he is nowhere mentioned again.

There are 5 different guys in the Bible who are named Shammah. The first was the son of a man named Reuel, he was a leader of the Edomites. The second was a brother of David. He was the 3rd oldest son of Jesse.

Then there are 3 Shammah's in the company of David's mighty men. Apparently it was a pretty popular name at the time.

One was a Hararite, another was a Harodite and the fifth and final Shammah was our man, also a Hararite, but he was the son of Agee.

His father's name means *fugitive* according to Bible commentator Herbert Lockyer. And so, like many of David's mighty men, his background wasn't great. He and his family were at some point on the run from something but found a new life when coming to king David.

This passage records one of his mighty deeds during his time of service as a warrior of Israel.

It says:

2 Samuel 23.11b - The Philistines had gathered together in a troop where there was a piece of ground full of lentils. So the people fled from the Philistines.

Philistine soldiers were serious and skilled. They employed giants in their armies and some archaeological information seems to indicate that they were a tall people themselves.

They were also a chronic problem for the people of Israel, thus Bible teachers will often point out that they typify our flesh, the sin nature, as it continually comes back again and again to attack us and to discourage us, to oppress our spiritual lives.

This can definitely be seen in our passage, but the Philistines can also symbolize all of our spiritual enemies. Here we find a testimony of God's man overcoming these foes and therefore we can gain insight into how we win victory against our flesh and our other spiritual enemies which seek to destroy us.

First, let's take a look at this battlefield. Today we have sort of a One-Verse-Wonder and a Battle Ready study rolled into one.

The Philistines gathered together in a field full of lentils, and there they drove out the people.

Lentils are a small, reddish bean in the legume family. They're a summer crop and are particularly nutritious, full of protein and other good stuff that the body needs. In 2006, *Health Magazine* listed them as one of the 5 healthiest foods. Lentils also happen to be a type of pulse.

All this wonderful legume information gets us thinking devotionally about a couple of different passages.

First, we can think about 2 Samuel 17, verses 27 through 29, where we read this:

2 Samuel 17.27-29 - Now it happened, when David had come to Mahanaim, that Shobi...brought beds and basins, earthen vessels and wheat, barley and flour, parched grain and beans, lentils and parched seeds, honey and curds, sheep and cheese of the herd, for David and the people who were with him to eat. For they said, "The people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness."

David was on the run from Absalom and the Lord provided this nourishment, including lentils, for the refreshing of the people in the wilderness.

Second, we can think about Daniel chapter 1, where Daniel was explaining to the chief eunuch that he would not eat the unlawful delicacies of Babylon, but instead wanted a different menu. From the King James Version we read in verse 16:

Daniel 1.16 -Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

So as we think about these lentils, devotionally we can see them as the spiritual nourishment, spiritual fruit that God bears in our lives. Heavenly sustenance.

The Philistines came and drove the people away from their summer crop, which would not only affect their business and livelihood, but could also impact their physical health, as people who famers and dependent on their crops for survival.

Spiritually speaking we can see some parallels here. The flesh is at odds with the Spirit, and therefore it is in our sin nature's best interest to attack you at the place where you're being spiritually nourished, the place where you're bearing spiritual fruit. The flesh tries to drive you away from prayer and away from Bible study. The flesh tries to keep you from those things that God is growing in your life. Those things that God wants to give us so that we can be nourished in the wilderness of this world.

This is why we have a tendency to fall asleep when we're trying to pray at night. This is why the phone starts ringing when we try to get into our Bibles. This is why when we're serving the Lord and living out the wonderful life He has for us, opposition arises. Because our spiritual enemies want to drive us away from the place of spiritual growth.

That's what the Philistines did. Let's see what Shammah did.

2 Samuel 23.12a - But he stationed himself in the middle of the field, defended it, and killed the Philistines.

He may have been a man who was raised by a fugitive, but once he became one of David's mighty men, Shammah discovered strength and courage and victory in his life.

The text says that he stationed himself right in the middle of that field that the Philistines were trying to rob away from God's people. I love that word because it gives us a little insight into his mindset. He was dedicated to that place, he was going to plant himself there, station himself there, and he wasn't going anywhere. That field was not going to be surrendered to the enemies of the king.

Not only did he station himself in that field, but then he actively defended it. He saw what he was up against, and then he engaged and contended against those forces which were trying to take from the kingdom.

He did so with conviction and with absolute severity. He didn't contract with the Philistines. He didn't bargain with them. He didn't use diplomacy or compromise. He killed them. He dealt with them in absolute terms.

The result?

2 Samuel 23.12b - "So the Lord brought about a great victory."

So for us this morning, we can see these 2 verses, this solitary record of the man named Shammah, as a parable. We are God's man, in His service. We were once fugitives on the run from the penalty of the law, but now we've been taken in by the King and have been equipped as one of His mighty men.

Here in the world we will find opposition because we have spiritual enemies who seek to drive us away from the spiritual growth and the spiritual harvest that God has given to us.

When that happens, we must remember that we do not have to be afraid and that we can overcome difficulty, we can overcome temptation, we can overcome spiritual opposition by walking in the victory of the Lord.

God is able to bring us victory when we station ourselves in a place where we are receiving His nourishment and His filling, His spiritual growth in our lives. When we come against opposition, whether from temptation within or some other attack from without, then we must remember that our spiritual lives must be defended and that we must absolutely deal with sin. If we have that understanding and if we keep ourselves in the middle of that place of Godly growth, then the Lord will bring great victory into our lives.

That's what we want. Let's go out there and get it.