

## THE TALMAGE SERMON

### ONE HEROIC CHARACTER IN JEWISH HISTORY.

'After Him Was Shamgar, Which Slew of the Philistines Six Hundred Men with an Ox-Goad'—Judges Chapter 3, Verse 31.



NE DAY WHILE Shamgar, the farmer, was plowing with a yoke of oxen, his command of whom—haw—gee—was changed to the shout of battle. Philistines, always ready to make trouble, march up with sword and spear.

Shamgar, the plowman, had no sword, and would not probably have known how to wield it if he had possessed one. But fight he must, ergo down under the stroke of the Philistines. He had an ox-goad—a weapon used to urge on the lazy team; a weapon about eight feet long, with a sharp iron at one end to puncture the beast, and a wide iron chisel, or shovel, at the other end with which to scrape the clumps of soil from the plowshare. Yet with the iron prong at one end of the ox-goad and the iron scraper at the other, it was not such a weapon as one would desire to use in battle with armed Philistines. But God helped the farmer, and leaving the oxen to look after themselves, he charged upon the invaders of his homestead. Some of the commentators, to make it easier for Shamgar, suggest that perhaps he led a regiment of farmers into the combat, ox-goad up and down, and this way and that. But the Lord does not need any of you to help in making the Scriptures, and Shamgar, with the Lord on his side, was mightier than six hundred Philistines with the Lord against them. The battle opened, Shamgar, with muscle strengthened by open air, and plowman's, and reapers, and thebes' toil, uses the only weapon at hand, and he swings the ox-goad up and down, and this way and that; now stabbing with the iron prong at one end of it, and now thrusting with the iron scraper at the other, and now bringing down the whole weight of the instrument upon the heads of the enemy. The Philistines are in a panic, and the supernatural forces come in, and a blow that would not under other circumstances have prostrated or slain, left its victim lifeless; until when Shamgar walked over the field, he counted one hundred dead, two hundred dead, three hundred dead, four hundred dead, five hundred dead, six hundred dead—all the work done by an ox-goad with an iron prong at one end and an iron shovel at the other. The fame of this achievement by this farmer with an awkward weapon of war, spread abroad, and lionized him, until he was hoisted into the highest place of power, and became the third of the mighty judges of Israel. So you see that Cincinnatus was not the only man lifted from plow to throne.

For what reason was this unprecedented and unparalleled victory of a farmer's ox-goad put into this Bible, where there was a spare room for the unimportant and the trivial?

It was, first of all, to teach you, and to teach me, and to teach all past ages since then, and to teach all ages to come, that in the war for God, and against sin, we ought to put to the best use the weapon we happen to have on hand. Why did not Shamgar wait until he could get a war charger, with neck arched and back caparisoned, and nostrils sniffling the battle afar off, or until he could get war equipment, or could drill a regiment, and wheeling them into line, command them forward to the charge? To wait for that would have been defeat and annihilation. So he takes the best weapon he could lay hold of, and that is an ox-goad. We are called into the battle for the right, and against wrong, and many of us have not just the kind of weapon we would prefer. It may not be a sword of argument, it may not be the spear of sharp, thrusting wit. It may not be the battering-ram of denunciation. But there is something we can do, and some forces we can wield. Do not wait for what you have not, but use what you have. Perhaps you have not eloquence, but you have a smile. Well, a smile of encouragement has changed the behavior of tens of thousands of wanderers, and brought them back to God, and enshrined them in heaven. You cannot make a persuasive appeal, but you can set an example, and a good example has saved more souls than you could count in a year, if you counted all the time. You cannot give ten thousand dollars, but you can give as much as the widow of the Gospel, whose two mites, the smallest coins of the Hebrews, were bestowed in such a spirit as to make her more famous than all the contributions that ever endowed all the hospitals and universities of all Christendom, of all time. You have very limited vocabulary, but you can say "yes" or "no," and a firm "yes" or an emphatic "no," has traversed the centuries, and will traverse all eternity, with good influence. You may not have the courage to confront a large assemblage, but you can tell a Sunday school class of two—a boy and a girl—how to find Christ, and one of them may become a William Carey, to start influences that will redeem India, and the other a Florence Nightingale, who will illumine battlefields covered with the dying and the dead.

Again, my subject springs upon us the thought that in calculating the prospects of religious attempt, we must take omniscience, and omniscience, and omnipotence, and all the other attributes of God into the calculation. Whom do you see on that plowed field of my text? One hearer says: "I see Shamgar." Another hearer says: "I see six hundred Philistines." My hearer, you have missed the chief personage on that battlefield of plowed ground. I also see Shamgar, and six hundred Philistines, but more than all and mightier than all, and more overwhelming than all, I see God. Shamgar with his unaided arm, however muscular, and with that humble instrument made for agricultural purposes, and never constructed for combat, had not wrought such victory. It was omniscience above and beneath, and back of and at the point of the ox-goad. Before that battle was over the plowman realized this, and all the six hundred Philistines realized it, and all who visited the battlefield afterward appreciated it. I want in heaven

to hear the story, for it can never be fully told on earth—perhaps some day we may be set apart for the rehearsal, while all heaven listens—the story of how God blessed awkward and humble instrumentalities. Many an evangelist has come into a town given up to worldliness. The pastors say to the evangelist: "We are glad you have come, but it is a hard field and we feel sorry for you. The members of our churches play progressive euchre, and go to the theater, and bet at the horse races, and gaiety and fashion have taken possession of the town. We have advertised your meetings, but are not very hopeful. God bless you." This evangelist takes his place on platform or pulpit. He never graduated at college, and there are before him twenty graduates of the best universities. He never took one lesson in elocution, and there are before him twenty trained orators. Many of the ladies present are graduates of the highest female seminaries, and one slip in grammar or one mispronunciation will result in suppressed giggle. Amid the general chill that pervades the house, the unpretending evangelist opens his Bible and takes for his text: "Lord, that my eyes may be opened." Opera glasses in the gallery curiously scrutinize the speaker. He tells in a plain way the story of the blind man, tells two or three touching anecdotes, and the general chill gives way before a strange warmth. A classical hearer who took the first honor at Yale, and who is a prince of preterites, finds his spectacles becoming dim with a moisture suggestive of tears. A worldly mother who has been bringing up her sons and daughters in utter godlessness, puts her handkerchief to her eyes and begins to weep. Highly educated men who came to criticize and pick to pieces, and find fault, bow on their gold-headed canes. What is that sound from under the gallery? It is a sob, and sobers are catching; and all along the wall, and all up and down the audience there is deep emotion, so that when at the close of the service anxious souls are invited to special seats, or the inquiry room, they come up by scores, and kneel and repent, and rise up pardoned; the whole town is shaken, and places of evil amusement are sparsely attended, and rum holes lose their patrons, and the churches are thronged, and the whole community is cleansed, and elevated, and rejoiced. What power did the evangelist bring to bear to capture that town for righteousness? Not one brilliant epigram did he utter. Not one graceful gesture did he make. Not one rhetorical climax did he pile up. But there was something about him that people had not taken into the estimate when they prophesied the failure of that work. They had not taken into calculation the omnipotence of the Holy Ghost. It was not the flash of a Damascus blade. It was God, before and behind, and all around the ox-goad. When people say that crime will triumph, and the world will never be converted because of the seeming insufficiency of the means employed, they count the six hundred armed Philistines on one side, and Shamgar, the farmer, awkwardly equipped, on the other side; not realizing that the chariots of God are twenty thousand, and that all heaven, cherub, seraph, archangelic, Defile, is on what otherwise would be the weak side. Napoleon, the author of the saying, "God is on the side of the heaviest artillery," lived to find out his mistake; for at Waterloo the one hundred and sixty guns of the English overcame the two hundred and fifty guns of the French. God is on the side of the right, and one man in the right will eventually be found stronger than six hundred men in the wrong. In all estimates of any kind of Christian work, do not make the mistake every day made of leaving out the Head of the Universe.

Again, my subject springs upon us the thought that in God's service it is best to use weapons that are particularly suited to us. Shamgar had, like many of us, been brought up on a farm. He knew nothing about javelins, and bucklers, and helmets, and breastplates and greaves of brass and catapults, and machine and iron armor fastened to the axles of chariots. But he was familiar with the fall of the threshing floor, and knew how to pound with that; and the ax of the woods, and knew how to hew with that; and the oxgoad of the plowman, and knew how to thrust with that. And you and I will do best to use those means that we can best handle; those weapons with which we can make the most execution. Some in God's service will do best with the pen; some with the voice; some by extemporaneous speech for they have the whole vocabulary of the English language half way between their brain and tongue; and others will do best with manuscript spread out before them. Some will serve God by the plow, raising wheat and corn and giving liberally of what they sell to churches and missions; some as merchants, and out of their profits will dedicate a tenth to the Lord; some as physicians, prescribing for the world's ailments; and some as attorneys defending innocence, and obtaining rights that otherwise would not be recognized; and some as sailors, helping bridge the seas; and some as teachers and pastors. The kingdom of God is dreadfully retarded by so many of us attempting to do that which we cannot do; reaching up for broadsword or falchion, or bayonet, or sometimes, or Enfield rifle or Paixhan's gun, while we ought to be content with an ox-goad. I thank God that there are tens of thousands of Christians whom you never heard of, and never will hear of until you see them in the high places of heaven, who are now in a quiet way, in homes, and schoolhouses, and in praying circles, and by sick beds, and up dark alleys saying the saving word, and doing the saving deed; the aggregation of their work overpowering the most ambitious statistics. In the grand review of heaven, when the regiments pass the Lord of Hosts, there will be whole regiments of nurses, and Sabbath school teachers, and tract distributors, and unpretending workers, before whom, as they pass, the kings and queens of God and the Lamb will lift flashing coronet, and bow down in recognition and reverence. The most of the Christian work for the world's redemption is done by people of one talent and two talents, while the ten-talent people are up in the astronomical observatories studying other worlds, though they do little or nothing for the redemption of this world; or are up in the rarified realms of "Higher Criticism," trying to find out that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, or to prove that the throat of the whale was not large enough to

swallow the minister who declined to call to Nineveh, and apologizing for the Almighty for certain inexplicable things they have found in the scriptures. It will be found out at the last that the Krupp guns have not done so much to capture this world for God as the ox-goads.

Go out against the Philistines. We must admit the odds are against us—six hundred to one. In the matter of dollars, those devoted to worldliness and sin, and dissipation, when compared with the dollars devoted to holiness and virtue—six hundred to one. The houses set apart for vice, and dissipation and ruin, as compared with those dedicated to good, six hundred to one. Of printed newspaper sheets scattered abroad from day to day, those depraving as compared with those elevating, are six hundred to one. The agencies for making the world worse compared with the agencies for making the world better, six hundred to one. But Moses in his song, chants, "How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight?" and in my text one ox-goad conquers six hundred uplifted battleaxes; and the day of universal victory is coming, unless the Bible be a fabrication, and eternity a myth, and the chariots of God are unwhipped on the golden streets, and the last regiment of the celestial hosts lies dead on the plains of heaven. With us, or without us, the work will be done. Oh, get into the ranks somewhere, armed somehow; you with a needle, you with a pen, you with a good book; you with a loaf of bread for the hungry; you with a vial of medicine for the sick; you with a pair of shoes for the barefooted; you with word of encouragement for the young man trying to get back from evil ways; you with some story of the Christ who came to heal the worst wounds and pardon the blackest guilt, and call the farthest wanderer home. I say to you as the watchman of London used to say at night to the householders before the time of street lamps came: "Hang out your light!" "Hang out your light!"

### A SNAKE THIEF.

How a Reptile Stole the Milk from a Fine Jersey Cow.

W. L. Hewey, living up in the Cross Lake country, has a fine Jersey cow, which usually keeps the family supplied with an abundance of milk, says a Shreveport (La.) paper. On Monday last Hewey noticed a falling off in the milk supply and for every day thereafter there has been a steady diminution. Thinking that perhaps the pasture did not furnish sufficient nourishment for the cow, Hewey began to give her an extra quantity of food at night, but in vain. Every evening she returned to the pen with an empty bag. At last Hewey came to the conclusion that some negro in the neighborhood must be in the habit of milking the cow before she left the pasture; so he set about discovering the guilty party. Yesterday his investigations were rewarded, the thief proving to be a singular one, indeed. In the middle of the afternoon Hewey went into the pasture, taking his stand behind a big oak tree whence he could keep an eye on the cow without being himself observed. For a long time there seemed no chance of solving the mystery, as no one appeared in the pasture. Finally Hewey was about to give up the search as a bad job, and drive the cow to the pen, when he saw a big black-and-white snake glide out from the thicket behind him and make its way across the pasture to the Jersey. Following after as rapidly as he could, what was his astonishment to behold the snake wrap itself around the Jersey's hind legs, holding them hard and fast, and then grasp hold of the bag, sucking away at the teats like a hungry calf. Hewey is a new man to this section, and this singular conduct on the part of a reptile surprised him beyond measure. Since consulting with his neighbors, however, he has ascertained that the snake, called a "cow-sucker," is a very common variety, causing much loss among cattle-raisers and milk men in this section.

### MISSING LINKS.

Lord Kelvin maintains that the earth is 100,000 years old. The skeleton alone of an average whale weighs twenty-five tons. At a Japanese banquet it is a compliment to ask to exchange cups with a friend.

A Dundee, Scotland, man is working on a flying machine that is built on the bicycle plan.

The total public debt of the self-governing British colonies amounts to something like \$300,000,000.

Out of every 100 hotels in England, eighteen are "White Harts," ten "King Arms," and eight "Crows."

Men attending the pans in salt works are never known to have cholera, smallpox, scarlet fever or influenza.

A recent report shows that 1,530 convicts last year passed through the forwarding prison at Truman, Russia.

The wings of an owl are lined with a soft down that enables the bird to fly without making the slightest sound.

It cost Kentucky \$114 to secure the extradition from Ohio of Napoleon Bonaparte Shackleford, who stole a \$2 hog.

The mud baths of Dax, in France, have existed and been more or less celebrated since the time of the Romans.

A carp taken out of the water may be kept alive for twelve hours by a piece of bread soaked in brandy placed in its mouth.

### POINTERS.

A great many girls say "No," at first, but, like the photographer, they know how to retouch their negative. Justice will not ask, "What is the least you will work for?" but rather, "What is the most I can pay?" Keep your troubles to yourself. When you tell them you are taking up the time of the man who is waiting to tell his.

## THE HONEST DOLLAR.

IT CONTAINS 412 1-2 GRAINS OF STANDARD SILVER.

The Gold Dollar Is the Dishonest Dollar Because Its Purchasing Power Is Increased by the Manipulations of Bankers and Their Allies.

In the Chicago Daily Record of May 10 Edward Atkinson repeats the definition of honest money given in his article of April 26: "Coins which, being melted down, retain the entire value for which they were legal tender before they were melted." With this definition as a foundation he builds up an argument against the free coinage of silver, calling it a "dishonest money," and as such to be rejected as a coin metal.

In another paragraph of the same article he admits or states a fact which upsets his own conclusions by verifying a principle which he ignores in his argument.

He states that the silver coinage of India possessed a bullion value equivalent to the value of the coins themselves until the closing of the mints. After the closing of the mints the rupee while not redeemable in gold as is our silver money, yet as bearing the stamp of government and made a legal tender for the payment of debts had a greater value than the equivalent weight of uncoined silver. On the same principle closing the mints of the world to gold would cause the coined gold made legal tender for the payment of obligations to have a greater value than an equivalent weight of gold bullion. His definition of unsoundness applies to all coin money, for all money metals depend for a part of their value on their use for coinage purposes, and while of intrinsic value for use in the arts lose a part of their value as compared with other products when made the object of unfavorable legislation which limits or stops their coinage.

A sound dollar should represent a certain amount of labor and be capable of ready transformation into any product of labor. The rule is the world over that what costs little labor to get is worth little. Blue sky may be quite desirable, but as a product entirely of natural conditions and not of labor it is not counted as having material value. When a promoter by artful persuasion succeeds in getting money for something which has no value except in the mind of the credulous purchaser he is said to have been selling "blue sky." The value of any commodity when carried to its final analysis is the value of the labor expended to secure the portion of the required supply which is produced under the least favorable conditions.

Disregarding the speculative element in mining, which justifies greater expenditures in prospecting and development than are sure to be realized in profits, the average value of silver or gold is measured by the labor expended in working the least productive deposits and reducing the poorest grade of ores necessary to supply the world's demand. Coined money has an intrinsic value which makes it universally acceptable, because when melted up and used in the arts it releases to other occupations labor which must otherwise be expended in mining an equivalent amount of metal for such use.

If the labor cost of producing the metals remained the same, whatever the demand for them, if, in other words, the precious metals were merely a product of labor, and not a natural product, occurring in small and isolated quantities, an increased demand for any one metal would bring about such an increased production as would in a short time restore the equilibrium of values. A corner in money would be like a corner in wheat—only maintainable for a short time. An increased demand for any precious metal causes the deposits of that metal to be worked more closely and a greater amount of labor expended in proportion to the product, so that the labor cost of the most expensive portion is greater and the value of the entire product correspondingly increased.

When the amount of actual or redemption money in the channels of trade fails to increase as rapidly as the commodities to be exchanged the result must be a fall in prices unless the shortage in actual money is made good by an extension of credit. It is not sufficient that the amount per capita be maintained, for the tendency in an industrial nation where property rights are secure is toward a per capita increase in all forms of wealth. What is called general overproduction of goods is more properly underproduction of money. We can never have too much of everything, the consuming classes being in a position to buy, so long as our financial system is based on the use of gold and silver only as the money of final redemption every period of industrial activity such as we call "good times" will be accompanied by an extension of credit and is likely to be followed by a period during which credit is curtailed and a general fall takes place, first in the money value of commodities and second, in the price of labor. This recurrence of hard times will continue until some means is found of effecting exchanges in which the metals will have no greater part than other commodities.

The panic of 1893 and 1894 is a direct result of the demonetization of silver in 1873, the abandonment of silver and the substitution of a gold currency by several leading nations of Europe and the half-way character of the remedial legislation adopted by our government. The downward tendency of prices was well defined from 1873 to 1878. From 1878 the coinage of silver and later the issue of treasury notes in payment of silver purchases offset in a measure the downward tendency and brought about an era of good times lasting uninterruptedly till 1885, when the

fall in the price of silver resulting in a fall in the gold value of Argentine securities caused the Baring failure. From this time the issue of treasury notes nominally secured by silver bullion but actually redeemable in gold began to pass the point of safety. What would have been far removed from inflation with silver and gold at a parity became dangerous because resting only upon a narrow foundation of gold. The structure of paper money was built higher at a time when half the foundation (silver) had crumbled away and the other half was being dug into to supply the increasing needs of European nations. Coexistent with this was great industrial activity and a resulting increase in actual wealth. With the volume of actual money constantly diminishing and the volume of wealth increasing a disturbance in the ratio was inevitable.

In every market in which the natural tendency of prices is downward the fall in prices is resisted by an accumulation of stocks. The classes who buy to sell at a profit will hold property once bought as long as possible before selling at a loss. They will strain their credit to the utmost limit before abandoning the effort to sustain prices, mortgaging their property, borrowing on collateral, exchanging accommodation paper and delaying the payment of their bills.

It is the misfortune of silver that it has been "hanged first and condemned afterward." Previous to its demonetization in 1873 it was worth most of the time more as bullion than when coined at the ratio of 16 to 1.

It is proposed by its friends to restore to it the rights as a money metal which it enjoyed prior to 1873, and which were taken away quietly, almost secretly, without any public demand and without any of the reasons which are now so clamorously urged against its restoration. That a re-establishment of the parity between gold and silver would benefit this country no fair-minded man will deny. Whether the commercial influence of the United States is sufficient to stem the tide and offset the influence of the European nations who have adopted a gold standard can hardly be ascertained without an actual test, but when we face the contingency of gold going to a premium, nothing is seen which will affect unfavorably the prosperity of the country or make such a change in values as would work a hardship to the creditor class.

It has been argued that silver money cannot be coined with sufficient rapidity to replace the gold displaced. It is not necessary that it be coined at all. There are in the treasury of the government 369,000,000 silver dollars in addition to those now in circulation.

With this immense reserve silver certificates calling for silver dollars and made legal tender in the payment of debts could be issued on the deposit of bullion, and since there would be no question of the ability of the government to redeem its promise would circulate as the very safest form of paper money, preferred for the settlement of all large balances to the coin itself.

The United States produced in 1890 nearly one-third of the world's production of gold. It will always as a nation have gold to sell as a commodity in the best market it can find. It mined in 1890 three-fifths of the world's production of silver, and so far from being flooded in the event of free coinage with silver from India, China and Japan will always have silver to dispose of at its market price in exchange for the products of other nations and in paying principal and interest of its securities held abroad. The United States, as a nation, is a debtor nation. The greater part of its debts were contracted on a bimetallic basis when the dollar measured in wheat was worth a bushel.

The Measurement of Values. Money is the universal yardstick. Now an honest yardstick must always be thirty-six inches long. Whatever length was laid off and called a yard at the beginning must always be a yard. If a merchant uses a yardstick only thirty-two inches long he is dishonest and his yardstick is a dishonest yardstick. If on the other hand the customer after contracting for cloth brings a forty inch rod and insists on its being used as a yardstick he will be suspected of dishonesty. When we compare the value (money length) of all staple commodities we find that the yardstick of value has been made longer so that each dollar will purchase more of almost everything than it once could. The single standard dollar is a dishonest dollar.

Legislation which will increase values by making our monetary unit a bimetallic unit, raising the price of silver and all other staple products and releasing our gold to the settlement of foreign indebtedness has not the slightest element of dishonesty. It is just because it will restore to the products of American labor the debt-paying power which has been taken away by class legislation.

It is patriotic because it will promote the prosperity of the whole country, and do more than anything else to secure for it financial independence. For the United States to join with the money powers of Europe in the adoption of a single gold standard is to double its debts and to fasten around its neck forever the chain of financial servitude. It is as mad an act as that of self-destruction, and if I may be permitted an illustration in dealing with so serious a question, as unreasonable and uncalled for a proceeding as that of the man who sat on the limb of a tree and sawed it off between where he sat and the trunk. It is time the common sense and patriotism of the country should prevail. It is time that a majority expressed in law their determination to see justice done between the debtor and creditor classes and the producing classes relieved from the machinations of a grasping, wealth-absorbing, but not wealth-producing combination.

WILLIAM D. WALES.

## If You are Tired

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