

# Three Biblical Heroes Compared

|  | <b>Shamgar</b><br>son of Anat | <b>Samson</b><br>(Shimshon) | <b>Shammah</b><br>son of Agee |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Named after the sun god.                         | ✓                             | ✓                           |                               |
| Has divine parentage.                            | ✓ <sup>1</sup>                | ✓ <sup>2</sup>              |                               |
| Is a “judge” of Israel.                          | ✓ <sup>3</sup>                | ✓                           |                               |
| His opponent is the Philistines.                 | ✓                             | ✓                           | ✓                             |
| Fights with an unusual makeshift weapon.         | ✓                             | ✓                           |                               |
| Kills an army of enemy soldiers single-handedly. | ✓                             | ✓                           | ✓                             |
| The fight occurs at a place called Lehi.         |                               | ✓                           | ✓                             |
| Associated with giants.                          |                               | ✓                           | ✓ <sup>4</sup>                |

<sup>1</sup> This is implied by Shamgar’s name, though not explicitly stated.

<sup>2</sup> This is implied by the story of Samson’s miraculous birth following his barren mother’s encounter with an angel of Yahweh.

<sup>3</sup> Although the text does not explicitly say he “judged” Israel, Shamgar is presented as a deliverer by the same formula as the other judges.

<sup>4</sup> Although Shammah is not explicitly involved with giants, he is one of David’s chief warriors who frequently fight against Philistine giants. Furthermore, the son of David’s brother Shimei (2 Sam 21:20) or Shammah (1 Sam 17:13), who may be a version of this character, fights a giant.

## **Judges 3:31**

After him came Shamgar son of Anath, who killed six hundred of the Philistines with an ox-goad. He too delivered Israel.

## **Judges 15:14-15**

When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him; and the spirit of Yahweh rushed on him.... Then he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached down and took it, and with it he killed a thousand men.

## **2 Samuel 23:11-12**

Next to him was Shammah son of Agee, the Hararite. The Philistines gathered together at Lehi, where there was a plot of ground full of lentils; and the army fled from the Philistines. But he took his stand in the middle of the plot, defended it, and killed the Philistines; and Yahweh brought about a great victory.