

Shammua and His Brethren

Please do not be like these men!

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Scripture Reader and Reading: Lake Thomason – First John 5.1-5

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – Songs on faith

Prelude:

I. While the Shang dynasty was making its mark in China,

- A. while Pharaoh Amenhotep II was making his mark in Egypt (because he was the Pharaoh of the Exodus),
- B. Shammua,
- C. Shaphat,
- D. Igal,
- E. Palti,
- F. Gaddiel,
- G. Gaddi,
- H. Ammiel,
- I. Sethur,
- J. Nahbi, and
- K. Geuel
 - 1. were making their mark on Israel.
 - 2. What? You have not heard of those men?

Persuasion:

I. Who Were Shammua and His Brethren?

- A. They were leaders in Israel,
 - 1. men who stood out among the Israelites, because they
 - a) *cared* for their people,
 - b) had *compassion* for their people, and

- c) had *skill* to lead their people to their goal.
- 2. They had established themselves in the eyes of their tribes,
 - a) demonstrating *success* in *getting things done*.
 - b) When Moses gave them a new job,
 - (1) he knew he could count on them to do it.
 - (2) As leaders, he knew they had *influence*.
- B. They did something that *Moses* never did as a leader in Israel,
 - 1. although he had privileges that no one else on Earth had.
 - 2. Shammua and his brethren experienced something every Israelite wanted.
- C. Also, they *obeyed* Moses and the Lord.
 - 1. Moses told them to do something and they did it.
 - 2. Yet, for some reason we do not know these men by *name*.
- D. A valley was even *renamed* because of something they discovered there.
 - 1. What they did in that valley we often picture in a *large* way, and
 - 2. the name of the valley reflects what they took from there.
- E. Shammua and his brethren were like *Judas*
 - 1. of whom we say, What might have been.
 - 2. Judas did many good things during his three and a half years with Jesus.
 - a) Shammua and his brethren did many good things.
 - (1) Then they ruined their good,
 - (2) which is why you do not know these men by name.
 - (a) They should have become famous.
 - (b) Instead they became infamous.
- 3. Do not imitate these men.
- F. Do not *think* like Shammua and *nine* his brethren.

1. Think like two other of his brethren whose names I did not read earlier.
2. Do you know who Shammua and his brethren were?
 - a) *Joshua* and *Caleb* traveled with Shammua and
 - b) the other *nine* into the land of Canaan.

G. Why do we know the names of Joshua and Caleb, but

1. we do not know the names of
2. Shammua, Shaphat, Igal, Palti, Gaddiel, Gaddi, Ammiel, Sethur, Nahbi, and Geuel?

H. Let us find out.

II. The Thinking of Shammua and His Brethren

A. Numbers 13 shows that Shammua and his brethren were

1. leaders in their tribes,
 - a) who went into the land of Canaan,
 - b) which Moses never did.
2. They obeyed Moses and the Lord by going through the land of Canaan,
3. bringing back some of its fruit,
 - a) carrying *one* cluster of grapes on a pole between two men, and
 - b) so renaming the valley where they got it,
 - (1) the Valley of Eshcol, or
 - (2) the Valley of Cluster, yet,
 - (a) they ruined any good that they might have done for Israel and
 - (b) they ruined any good that they might have done for themselves
 - i) when they said this,

27 Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 Nevertheless the people who dwell in the

land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan” (Num 13.27–29).

(1) They negated their own report

(2) with that word, “Nevertheless,” or whatever you have.

ii) Caleb quieted and encouraged the people,

30 “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it” (Num 13.30).

iii) However, the ten contradicted him,

31 But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.” 32 And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. 33 There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight” (Num 13.31–33).

B. Caleb saw something that the ten did not see.

1. He encouraged Israel to go immediately and take possession of the land,
2. declaring, not only that they could overcome it, but
 - a) that they were well able to overcome the land.
 - b) We will see later why he thought that way.

B. However, the people were more inclined to listen to ten rather than two.

1. If you do not think we are the same way,
 2. see how the news affects you.
- C. The ten spies focused on the size of the Canaanites,
1. who evidently were quite large,
 2. perhaps Goliath (three inches short of 10 feet) was their descendent.
 - a) Thirty-eight years later Moses reminded Israel
 - b) of the size of one of the kings in the land,

11 “For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the giants. Indeed his bedstead was an iron bedstead. (Is it not in Rabbah of the people of Ammon?) Nine cubits is its length and four cubits its width, according to the standard cubit” (Deu 3.11).

- (1) This man’s bed was at least 13.5 feet long and 6 feet wide, and
- (2) since he weighed hundreds of pounds, he had a bed of iron.

C. Numbers 32 will show you just how bad their reporting was.

1. Almost four decades later
 - a) when two and a half tribes wanted to stay on the east side of the Jordan,
 - b) Moses rebuked them,
 - (1) referring back to the bad report of the ten spies,
 - (2) calling it sin,

7 “Now why will you discourage the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD has given them? 8 Thus your fathers did when I sent them away from Kadesh Barnea to see the land. 9 For when they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, so that they did not go into the land which the LORD had given them. 10 So the LORD’s anger was aroused on that day, and He swore an oath, saying, 11 ‘Surely none of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and above, shall see the land of which

I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because they have not wholly followed Me, ¹² except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have wholly followed the LORD.’ ¹³ So the LORD’s anger was aroused against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD was gone. ¹⁴ And look! You have risen in your fathers’ place, a brood of sinful men, to increase still more the fierce anger of the LORD against Israel. ¹⁵ For if you turn away from following Him, He will once again leave them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all these people” (Num 32.7-15).

2. Do not be guilty of discouraging your brethren to do the right thing.
3. Do not be guilty of sounding like we are defeated before we even begin.

D. The ten reported accurately of the *land*, but

1. they gave a bad report of the *nations*.
2. They believed the Canaanites were stronger than Israel.

E. The ten spies concluded that Israel was:

1. out-gunned,
2. out-financed,
3. out-manned, and
4. out-sized.
 - a) Were the Canaanites greater than the Egyptians?
 - b) How did Israel manage to escape the Egyptians,
 - (1) both in Egypt and at the Red Sea, and
 - (2) how did Israel survive the two years
 - (a) from the escape
 - (b) to the sending of the ten spies?
 - i) Forgetting history diminishes faith.

ii) Remembering history increases faith.

III. The Problem

A. The ten spies looked at

1. the power and size of the *world* and
2. it was impressive.

B. They looked at

1. *themselves*, small of stature and former slaves, and
2. they were not impressed.

C. They failed to look at the *Lord*, and what He had already done!

1. How could they forget the ten plagues?
2. How could they forget the Red Sea crossing and Egypt's destruction?
3. How could they forget the manna that God dropped out of the sky for them every morning?
 - a) They may have reasoned:
 - (1) That was then,
 - (2) this is now.
 - (a) God did those things then, but
 - (b) that does not mean He will do them now.
 - b) Why does humanity think
 - (1) that what God did yesterday,
 - (2) He cannot do today?
 - (a) He may not do it miraculously, but
 - (b) He will still do it providentially.

D. By their leadership and by their greater numbers,

1. Shammua and his brethren outnumbered the faithful 10 to 2, and

2. influenced Israel not to live by faith and by history.
 - a) Therefore, the Israelites complained about the leadership.
 - b) You know it has to be the fault of leadership, or so the masses think.

1 So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. 2 *And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron*, and the whole congregation said to them, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3 Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?” 4 So they said to one another, “Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.” ... 10 And all the congregation said to stone them with stones (Num 14.1-4, 10a).

- c) For their sins of
 - (1) faithlessness,
 - (2) fear, and
 - (3) frightening Israel,
- d) the Lord took their lives,

36 Now the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report of the land, 37 those very men who brought the evil report about the land, died by the plague before the LORD (Num 14.36, 37).

E. Do you believe the Lord is in charge or

1. do you believe that the world is just too strong
2. for the church to overcome it?
 - a) Do you believe the message of First John 5?
 - b) Our brethren over the centuries
 - (1) lived by this verse and

- (2) they were victorious!

4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith (1Jo 5.4).

- (a) Can we also live victoriously through that faith?
- (b) Or are our problems greater than theirs and greater than faith?

IV. The Faith of the Two

A. Numbers 13 shows that Caleb knew that they could take the land,

30 Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it” (Num 13.30).

- 1. Why did Caleb believe they were well able to overcome it?
- 2. Did he just have high self-esteem? National-esteem?
 - a) No, from what I read next,
 - (1) you will see that it was not self-esteem or national-esteem,
 - (2) it was God-esteem.
 - b) Where does your faith rest?

B. Numbers 14 shows

- 1. that even after the people complained and
- 2. did not believe in the Lord’s ability,
 - a) Joshua and Caleb still tried to persuade the people,

*6 But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: “The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. 8 *If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, ‘a land which flows with milk and honey.’* 9 Only do not rebel *against the LORD*, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection*

has departed from them, *and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them*” (Num 14.6-9).

- (1) They knew it depended upon the *Lord*,
 - (a) not their ability, strength, or size, but
 - (b) on whether the Lord *delighted* in them.
- (2) Therefore, they urged the people
 - (a) not to *rebel* against the Lord, and
 - (b) not to *fear* the Canaanites.
- (3) They revealed that the Canaanites’s *protection* had been taken away.
- (4) They reminded the Israelites that the *Lord* was with them.
 - (a) Could not the God who poured out the plagues upon Egypt
 - (b) pour out the same or greater plagues on the Canaanites?
- b) Why were the Egyptians no match for the Lord, but
 - (1) the Lord was no match for the Canaanites?
 - (2) Did not the previous two years teach the Israelites anything?

C. Do we learn anything for their history?

V. They Still Did Not Get It

39 Then Moses told these words to all the children of Israel, and the people mourned greatly. 40 And they rose early in the morning and went up to the top of the mountain, saying, “Here we are, and we will go up to the place which the Lord has promised, for we have sinned!” 41 And Moses said, “Now why do you transgress the command of the Lord? For this will not succeed. 42 Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, for the Lord is not among you. 43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you shall fall by the sword; because you have turned away from the Lord, the Lord will not be with you.” 44 But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop. Nevertheless, neither the ark of the covenant of the Lord nor Moses departed from the camp. 45 Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that mountain came down and

attacked them, and drove them back as far as Hormah (Num 14.39-45).

- A. Man does the opposite of what the Lord commands,
 - 1. believes the opposite of what He announces, and
 - 2. values the opposite of what He prizes.
- B. Yes, the Lord forgave them, but
 - 1. He had already changed their course.
 - 2. However, they decided to go
 - a) when the Lord said no.
 - b) Moses warned them that they would not succeed, and they did not.

Exhortation:

I. Let us not have the spirit of the ten!

- A. If the *world* fights against the church,
- B. who do you think will win?

II. Is the Lord with us even as He was with Israel?

- A. Does the Lord delight in *us*?
- B. What has He done for us in *Jesus Christ*?
 - 1. Or do you believe that the Father has pulled *back* and left us on our own?
 - 2. Do you have the spirit of Joshua and Caleb?

III. Has not the Lord Jesus promised that He would be with us to the *end*?

- A. Do you believe that with all your heart?
- B. Do you encourage your brethren to so believe?
 - 1. Or do you have a defeatist attitude?
 - 2. Are you defeated even before you begin?

IV. Rededicate yourself today or start following Him fully today.