SHAMGAR

AN OBSCURE SAVIOUR

**DATE: 5/5/2013 pm**

**TEXT: Judges 3:31**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Bible is filled with the stories of obscure people

People who appear and then promptly disappear

These people step out of the shadows …

Are used mightily by the LORD, and then they fade away

Most of them, never to be mentioned again

Among those that come to mind are -

**Adino** – **II Samuel 23:8 …**

David’s Captain, the mightiest of the fighting man

He killed 800 men at one time with a spear

**Eleazar** **– II Samuel 23:9, 10** …

The 2nd of David’s mightiest men

He stood boldly in the day of battle and fought so long, and killed so many Philistines, that his hand would not open and allow him to release his sword

**Shammah** – **II Samuel 23:11, 12** …

The 3rd mightiest man of David’s warriors

Shammah stood alone in a field of peas and fought the Philistines and God gave him a great victory

**Widow of Zarephath** – **I Kings 17**

She fed the prophet Elijah and sheltered him during a famine

**Israelite Maid – I Kings 5:1-4**

She told her master Naaman about the God of Israel and this led to his cleansing from leprosy and to his spiritual conversion

**Little boy and his lunch** – **John 6:5-13**

He gave the little he had and God used that tiny portion of food to feed 5000 +

**Sinful woman** – **Luke 7:36-50**

She anointed the Lord and washed His feet with her hair

She performed a labor of sacrificial love on the Lord Jesus

**Joseph of Arimathea** – **John 19:38-42**

At great personal risk and cost, Joseph buried the body of Jesus

This list could go on and on

It seems that God chooses those who are unknown and obscure to accomplish His work

**I Corinthians 1:26 - 28 …**

Our passage in Judges is no exception

We are introduced to a man named Shamgar

He is an unknown man, who appears on the pages of the Word of God,

Is used by God in a great way, and …

Then vanished back into the shadows from which he came

Not much is known about Shamgar

He is only mentioned twice in the Bible

He is mentioned in our Text and again in **Judges 5:6**

Shamgar is not actually mentioned specifically as a Judge of Israel

But is noted as one, by many of the commentaries

What is said about him reveals a man of Character and Courage

The little information we are given reveals a man whom God uses in a great way

I want to make three *observations*about this man

I want to look at **Shamgar –**

**The “Worker”, The “Warrior”** and **The “Winner”**

Let’s pray and then notice these *observations*as I preach on this thought -

***“Shamgar: An Obscure Saviour”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. SHAMGAR THE “WORKER”**

The name “***Shamgar***” means either “***sword***” or “***cupbearer***” (depending on who you read)

Either name would fit the details we have concerning this man

He was like a “***sword***” in the hand of God,

As God used him to destroy the enemies of Israel

He was like a “***cupbearer***” who brought the cup of God’s wrath to those God would judge

He is called “***the son of Anath***”

There are several scenarios here

“***Anath***” was the Canaanite goddess of war

This might be a nickname for Shamgar

It is possible that he was called this because he was a warrior

This name could also mean that he was from the town of “***Beth-Anath***”,

This was located in northeast Israel on land belonging to the tribe of Naphtali

Of course, it could mean that his father’s name was Anath

One thing we know for sure about Shamgar was that he was a farmer

That’s because he carried, and fought with …

An “***ox goad***”

An ox goad was not a weapon, it was an agricultural tool

It was a pole some 8 to 10 feet long and about 2” in diameter

One end was tipped with a point

This end was used to encourage the oxen the farmer was plowing with

Oxen might not respond to voice commands or the pulling of the reins,

But they would respond to the sharp point of the ox goad

The other end of this tool was shaped like a spade

It was a metal blade used to clean wet clay, roots and other impediments off plow points

**A. The Time Shamgar Lived**

**1.** **A ‘Difficult’ Time**

It was especially difficult for the people of Israel

**Judges 4, 5** tells about the times in which they lived

The nation of Israel was being oppressed by Jabin, the King of Canaan

Jabin was a powerful enemy, who possessed 900 iron chariots – **Judges 4:3**

His army seemed unbeatable

The Bible seems to indicate that the king would not allow the Israelites to arm themselves

**Judges 5:8b – *“…was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?”***

**I Samuel 13:19-23 …**

**2.** **A ‘Fearful’ Time**

It was a time when the people of Israel were filled with fear

**Judges 5:6, 7a …**

They were afraid to travel the highways because of their oppressors

They were afraid to leave their homes because of those who invaded and attacked them

It seems that while Israel was oppressed by Canaan,

They were also under attack from the Philistines

(We will talk more about them in a moment)

**B. The Time in Which We Live**

There are some great spiritual lessons we can take away from Shamgar

When God called Shamgar, He called a man who was already busy

Shamgar was a man who was actively working to feed and care for his family

When the enemy came, God used someone who was already busy

God does not use lazy people

**1. When He looks in the churches …**

He always chooses those who are actively engaged in His work already

We need to remember that He saved us to serve Him

**Ephesians 2:10 – *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them”***

**James 2:18** ***– “Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works”***

As we are faithful to work in the small tasks He assigns …

He will open up larger and more important avenues of service

If He cannot trust you to do the small tasks,

He will never use you in greater ways

**2. These days are hard days for the servants of the Lord**

It seems that the government and society are growing in their hatred of the Lord and His work

It seems that hearts are becoming continually harder against the message of the Gospel and the Lord’s call to salvation

It’s a hard day to raise families

It’s hard day to be in ministry

**3. However, these are the days the Lord has chosen for us to live and work**

I challenge you to do the best you can where you are

Serve the Lord in your home, in your Sunday School class, in the choir, with the youth, in any ministry you can, and in any way you can find

The Lord is watching!

He’s taking note of your faithful service and He will bless you and use you

You can be sure that He will reward you when you get home

**SHAMGAR THE “WORKER”**

**II. SHAMGAR THE “WARRIOR”**

As I said a moment ago, the Israelites were being oppressed by the Canaanites under King Jabin and his powerful army

Jabin had disarmed the Israelites and made them weak militarily

They were not in a position to defend themselves

This provided an opportunity for the Philistines to take advantage of the situation

(A warlike people who lived near the Mediterranean Sea)

They would invade Israel and capture slaves, steal crops, and destroy villages

When the Philistines came, most of the people in Israel would flee in terror

They wanted to avoid death or capture

Shamgar, however, refuse to flee

When the Philistines came, he stood his ground and he fought

He did not have any weapons of war, but he had his ox goad

While this was a tool, it could also be used as a weapon

It would have replaced a spear on one end

It would have served as an axe on the other end

The long pole could have been used to block blows by a sword

Shamgar took what he had and he used it to secure safety for his family and victory for Israel

Over the course of his life, he killed 600 of the Philistine raiders

Using that heavy ox goad to kill 600 men would have been an amazing physical feat

He was a man, who was in top physical condition,

But his power wasn’t merely physical

His power was also backed spiritually (supernaturally)

Shamgar was a man empowered by God

There can be no doubt that the Spirit of God enabled Shamgar to stand and fight like he did

Shamgar stood his ground and fought while others ran away

*Shamgar knew, that some things are worth fighting for*

He was fighting for his home, his family, his freedom, and his land

*He was fighting for the right to worship his God*

Shamgar was a physical and spiritual powerhouse

He was a fighter used in a mighty way by the Lord

**A. Modern Day ‘Warriors’**

Can I just remind you that while we are to be Workers

We must also be Warriors!

When God saved us, He enlisted us in His army and set us about the business of spiritual warfare

**Ephesians 6:12, 13 …**

We’re in a Battle!

We are at war with Satan, like the Canaanites, he would oppress us

We are at war with the World, like the Philistines

They will try to invade us and take away everything we value

**Modern Day ‘Warriors’**

**B. Modern Day ‘Warfare’**

We are at war, and some things are worth fighting for

Some things demand that we stand our ground and fight

If we do not fight and protect the things that matter the most …

We will see them taken by the enemy and destroyed!

What things am I talking about?

**1. Our ‘Homes’**

Your marriage, your spouse and your children are all worth fighting and dying for!

There is no sacrifice too great, or price too high, for those whom God has given into our care

We should fight for their salvation and righteousness

We should fight to the death if necessary to protect them from the World and Satan

**2. Our ‘Church’**

The World will try to slip in and take away the things we value as a church

Things like the Word of God, our preaching, our music, our worship, our doctrines and our separation are all under attack by Satan and the World

Every day the World is making inroads into the churches

We must be willing to fight and die for the things we believe are right

**3. The ‘Lost’**

They don’t know God and they don’t care about God

But they need someone to stand in the gap and maintain the old ways so that they might hear about Jesus

They need people praying for them

They need people who will not run from their sinfulness …

But who will tell them the Truth

They need someone who will fight for them

Someone fought for us!

If you can’t think of anyone, Jesus certainly did!

He went to the cross for us

The least we can do is to stand and fight for others

Do we have any warriors here tonight?

Do we have any saints of God who will sign up today?

To fight the good fight of faith for those things that are worth fighting for?

**SHAMGAR THE “WORKER”**

**SHAMGAR THE “WARRIOR”**

**III.** **SHAMGAR THE “WINNER”**

The Bible tells that Shamgar “***delivered Israel***”

His courage freed the people around him

It allowed them to live in freedom and liberty

He made a difference in the lives of those he fought for

We are fighting for things that truly matter

It may seem that there are very few victories down here

In spite of that, the fight is still worthwhile!

Because we are willing to fight the good fight of faith,

… others have the hope of a better future

If we can pass down a pure Gospel and a holy church to the next generation,

We have been successful!

If we can hear Him say, “***Well done***” at the end of the way,

We have been successful!

When I see our families worshiping, I understand that every battle and every sacrifice has been worthwhile

When I hear my son preach, I know that another generation is going to hear the message that was given to the Apostles and handed down to me

I know that everything I believe had been vindicated

When I see the children’s church stand up here and sing

I know that battle has been worth it all

When I see the older children fall under Holy Ghost conviction and come to the altar

It makes we want to sharpen my ox goad, the Word of God, and go forth to battle once more!

Church, let me encourage you

Stay in the battle

All around us, many are laying down their ox goads and running away in fear of the enemy

Some are running away to join the enemy

Can I encourage you to stay in the fight?

Can I encourage you to keep preaching, to keep teaching, to keep living for Jesus, to keep witnessing, to keep fighting for those things that matter?

We are too near home to quit now!

Be like Shamgar and stay in the fight until Jesus comes

**Galatians 6:9 – *“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not”***

**I Corinthians 15:58 – *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord”***

And, when you feel like quitting, just look to the greatest example of steadfastness of all

Look to Jesus and be encouraged to keep on

**Hebrews 12:1-3 …**

- He faced the greatest odds ever encountered by any man

- He fought in the greatest battle ever waged by a man

- He stood His ground and used His ox goad,

An old rugged cross, to defeat the works of the devil

Let His example inspire you to keep fighting

So that we can say with Paul in **II Timothy 4:7, 8** –

“***I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing***,”

**CONCLUSION**

What can we take away from this study of …

***Shamgar - An Obscure Saviour?***

What lessons can we glean for our own lives

Let me suggest a few as a I close

God can use anyone, even those who think they are nobodies, for His glory

**Shamgar fought where and when he was** **needed**

He did not give in to fear

**II Timothy 1:7 – *“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind”***

He did not wait for better circumstances

**II Timothy 4:2 – *“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine”***

He just took his stand for God and won the victory

**Shamgar fought with what he had** –

No matter how weak you think your weapons are,

Put them in the hand of God and watch Him do great things

An Ox goad, Moses’ rod, David’s sling, the Widow’s meal and oil, Dorcas’ needle and thread, the little boy’s lunch, etc.

**Shamgar stood his ground** –

He just made up his mind to fight!

**Shamgar left the results to God** –

Every time he fought he put his life on the line

Shamgar trusted God with his life

Live or die, he would stand for the Lord and for what was right

**Shamgar enjoyed victory** –

Every time he fought, Shamgar walked off the field of battle, the victor

God honored his faith and He will honor yours too!

Has God spoken to you about this matter of fighting for Him?

Are you standing your ground in the day of battle?

Are you fighting for your home, your marriage, your family, your church and the other things that matter in life?

If you haven’t been fighting like you should and the Lord has spoken to you about it, you should come before Him y

And if you are, still come to thank Him and ask Him to continue to keep you faithful

Let Him have His way in your life

The world may not know your name,

But if you are saved, the Lord of Glory does

He will use you if you will take your stand for Him!

**SHAMGAR –**

**THE “WORKER” THE “WARRIOR” THE “WINNER”**