

SHAMGAR – THE UNKNOWN JUDGE

--JUDGES 3:31--

INTRODUCTION:

Othniel was a model judge, Ehud was an unlikely judge, and this morning we meet Shamgar an unknown judge. It is like he comes out of nowhere, does what he does and disappears almost without a trace. Shamgar is a man of mystery, and he is part of the larger mystery of salvation in the book of Judges. Shamgar is one of the saviors of Israel. The history of Shamgar raises more questions than answers, but if we follow the few clues we are given we will find that this event will lead us on to the greatest event in all of history and we will learn some more about our God, some might even surprise you along the way.

I. THE MYSTERY OF SHAMGAR'S TIME AND SITUATION

(Judges 3:31)

- a. Shamgar is inserted into the passage between Ehud's _____ over the Moabites and Ehud's _____.
- b. The main influx of _____ arrived in Canaan not long after the Israelites arrived.
- c. Shamgar's _____ over the Philistines described in this verse is the first time we meet them directly in the book of Judges.

II. THE MYSTERY OF SHAMGAR'S ANCESTRY (Judges 3:31)

- a. As we begin to look at Shamgar's _____ and any background that we can find, this unknown judge becomes even more mysterious.
- b. Even his _____, the only piece of information we have about him is mysterious.

III. THE MYSTERY OF SHAMGAR'S TRIUMPH (Judges 3:31)

- a. Shamgar's _____ was not the sword or the spear of a professional soldier, or a purpose-made weapon like Ehud's dagger.
- b. This verse tells us that the weapon he used was an ___ goad.

- c. How Shamgar killed _____ Philistines with this farm tool we are not told.
- d. Beyond what we have in this verse we only have a couple of other clues as to how Shamgar accomplished this _____ for Israel. (Judges 2:18; 10:11)

IV. THE MYSTERY OF GOD

- a. We can be thankful to God that not everything about Him is _____. (Romans 10:6-9; 1 Timothy 3:16)
- b. We have passages like this short little verse about Shamgar to _____ us that God has not given Himself into our hands that our knowledge of Him is exhaustive. (Romans 11:33-34)
- c. The traditional way of describing this seeming paradox is in terms of contrast between God's revelation of Himself in the history of salvation (this is called _____ revelation) and His sovereignty in the behind-the-scenes ordering of all things (often called _____). (Judges 2:16,18; 10:11)

CONCLUSION:

What can we take from this one little verse about mysterious, unknown Shamgar? I believe there are three main lessons that can be learned from this mysterious savior of Israel.

First, like the brief history of Shamgar, the basic facts of the gospel are clear, but it is not a message that dispels all mystery. Never lose your sense of wonder at the astonishing, unexplainable uniqueness of God.

Second, this brief one verse history of Shamgar should make us thankful that no one is too obscure or too tainted for God to use. He can use anybody, even you and me.

Third, in the history of Shamgar we get a glimpse of unbroken rest. This too is a sign pointing us to something greater—a rest in which there will be no need for emergency action to keep the enemy from disturbing our rest. This rest will last for all eternity.