

Date: 27 Sep 2026

Text: Judges 9:1-57

Sermon: Ted Rastatter

Questions: Jason Finke

Overview:

After Gideon died, 1 of his sons, Abimelech, went to the sons of Shechem to entice them to let him rule over them. They agreed and provided him money, which he used to pay other men to join him. He and his men then went to Ophrah to kill his brothers. They killed all his brothers except Jotham who was able to escape. Jotham then went to Mount Gerizim and pronounced a curse on Abimelech and Shechem. After 3 years, there was tension between Shechem and Abimelech and Shechem began to follow Gaal instead. Abimelech came and killed many in Shechem, then went to destroy Thebez, but a woman threw a millstone from the tower and crushed Abimelech's skull, so he had his armor bearer kill him.

Ted organized the sermon around the following 3 points:

1. The rise of Abimelech (verses 1-6)
2. The curse of Abimelech (verses 7-21)
3. Judgement on Abimelech (verses 22-57)

Discussion Questions:

1. In the sermon, Ted noted that Shechem's acceptance of Abimelech (the counterfeit king) was the result of their turning away from the Lord. Why did their turning from the Lord make them susceptible to Abimelech's proposal? How does our "forgetting the Lord" make us susceptible to falling for counterfeits (counterfeit gospel, counterfeit leaders, etc.)? What can we do to protect ourselves from being deceived?
2. Ted also mentioned that we are prone to exchange God for worthless things. What sorts of worthless things are you tempted to exchange God for? Why do these types of things tempt us?
3. Furthermore, Ted stated that the solution is a heart that desires God. **Read Ezekiel 36:26.** How do we get a heart that desires God? What characteristics accompany a new heart that desires God? How does desiring God protect us from turning to counterfeits?
4. Finally, Ted talked about having 2 lives (church life versus the real world). He asked if Jesus is your King at work, at home, and in how you use your time/money. Do these aspects of your life demonstrate that Jesus is King? Why or why not?