

Judges: Broken Heroes/Faithful God

JUDGES 9

My Kingdom Come

A warning from Gideon's life:

- **Be careful with success!**

A warning from Abimelech's life:

- **Be careful not to exalt yourself!**

Judges 9:56-57 (ESV)

Thus God returned the evil of Abimelech, which he committed against his father in killing his seventy brothers. And God also made all the evil of the men of Shechem return on their heads, and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

What does Abimelech's story teach us?

1. God's judgment is slow and sometimes subtle but always sure.

2 Peter 3:3-5 (NLT)

3 Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. 4 They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created."

5 They deliberately forget that God made the heavens long ago by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. 6 Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood.

2 Peter 3:8-10 (NLT)

8 But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. 9 The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment.

2. The problem isn't "out there," it's "in here."

- **Selfish ambition (vv. 1–2)**

One day Gideon's son Abimelech went to Shechem to visit his uncles—his mother's brothers. He said to them and to the rest of his mother's family, 2 "Ask the leading citizens of Shechem whether they want to be ruled by all seventy of Gideon's sons or by one man. And remember that I am your own flesh and blood!" **Judges 9:1-2**

James 3:16

For where you have envy and **selfish ambition**, there you find disorder and **every evil practice**.

Matthew 23:12 (NRSV)

“All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.”

- **Idolatry (v. 3-4)**

So Abimelech's uncles gave his message to all the citizens of Shechem on his behalf. And after listening to this proposal, the people of Shechem decided in favor of Abimelech because he was their relative. 4 They gave him **seventy** silver coins **from the temple of Baal-berith**, which he used to hire some reckless troublemakers who agreed to follow him. **Judges 9:4**

- **Murder (v. 5)**

He went to his father's home at Ophrah, and there, on one stone, they killed all seventy of his half brothers, the sons of Gideon. But the youngest brother, Jotham, escaped and hid. **Judges 9:5**

- **Dishonesty (v. 6)**

Then all the leading citizens of Shechem and Beth-millo called a meeting under the oak beside the pillar at Shechem and made Abimelech their king. **Judges 9:6**

- **Pride (vv. 7–21)**

Judges 9:7

7 When Jotham heard about this, he climbed to the top of Mount Gerizim and shouted, “Listen to me, citizens of Shechem! Listen to me if you want God to listen to you!”

Judges 9:14-15

“Then all the trees finally turned to the thornbush and said, ‘Come, you be our king!’ And the thornbush replied to the trees, ‘If you truly want to make me your king, come and take shelter in my shade. If not, let fire come out from me and devour the cedars of Lebanon.’”

3. We need a new King, a better Judge.

Mark 10:45 (LB)

“For even I, the Messiah, am not here to be served, but to serve others, and to give my life as a ransom for many.”

2 Timothy 4:7-8 (NIV)

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.