

“God and Evil Leaders”

Judges: Shattered Saviors and Fractured Faith

Discussion Questions

- **Introduction:**
 - Give an example of seemingly “unchecked evil” in the world. Where do you wish you could see God bring justice more swiftly?
 - How does the book of Judges serve as a tragic story with moral value? *(How does this book point towards total depravity of man and the consequences of our moral compromises?)*
- **Read Judges 8:22-31**
 - What does Gideon say about his desire to rule? And how does that contradict how he actually lives out his last days?
 - What are the consequences of Gideon not “finishing well” as an appointed leader of Israel?
- **Read Judges 9:1-6**
 - Abimelech’s name literally translates, “My father is king.” How does Abimelech pursue power? *Note: this is the first main character in the book who is not a Judge. God does not appoint him. He appoints himself.*
 - How does a leader with “unchecked power” make you feel? What examples have we seen of this kind of leader in history or in your own personal life?
- **Read Judges 9:7-21**
 - What does the parable of Jotham say about leadership?
 - What outcomes is Jotham prophesying about Abimelech and Shechem (representing Israel)?
 - What roles do pride and humility play for godly leaders?
- **Read Judges 9:22-24**
 - How do we interpret the line “God sent an evil spirit?” What does this say about God’s response to evil in the world?
 - OT Theologian Bruce Waltke will say: ***“Throughout Scripture... the divine causality where God appears responsible for evil refers to instances where God confirms and increases evil already present, to hasten the divine judgment.”***
 - How have you seen God do this in our current culture and in your own life?
- **Read Judges 9:56-57**
 - How does God “return the evil” of both Abimelech and Shechem in this story?
 - How does God repay evil today?
 - What role did Jesus play in taking on the “repayment” of evil?
- **Application & Reflection**
 - How does trusting in God’s justice bring peace for the follower of Jesus?
 - **Read Isaiah 26:3** as a reminder of trusting God and resulting peace.
 - How does pursuing power outside of God’s will bring about destruction?
 - What are some examples of this in your own life?
 - How does the book of Judges expose our need for a better king in Jesus?

- When Jesus is King, how does that impact the way his people are called to live?
 - How does that impact your view of God's justice and response to evil?
- How can this group pray for you and hold you accountable this week?