

11/24/13

Judges 9-10

Gideon commissioned by God was called to liberate the people of God from their bondage under the Midianites. Judges 6

The God gave the victory to Gideon and God defeated the Midianites. Josh. 7-8

Now in chapter nine we see carnal ambition and treachery, rather than spiritual deliverance from bondage and God's vindication of the evil.

* The chapter break could be better if the ninth chapter began with verse 33 of chapter eight.

9:1-6 *The son of Gideon, Abimelech slaughters the house of Gideon.*

- 1) Abimelech knowing his father Gideon is dead, returns to his grandfathers house, at Shechem, in order to speak to the entire family about his right to rule over the people. vs. 1
- 2) The family counseled Abimelech to speak to all the men of Shechem, if it was better for the 70 sons of Gideon to rule over them more one of their own. vs. 2
 - a) "Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites *were* then in the land.

Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him." Gen. 12:6-7

- b) "Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which *is* in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel." Gen. 33:18-20
- 3) The uncles of Abimelech persuaded the hearts of the men of Schechem to follow Abimelech, declaring, "He is our brother". vs. 3
- 4) The men of Shechem gave Abimelech a political contribution from the treasury of Baal-Berith and he hired evil men to help him. vs. 4
 - a) The fact that a religion would support such underhanded treachery, reveals the evil character of the god they worship.
 - b) The irony is Baal-Berith means lord of the covenant, a contradiction.
 - c) The word worthless "reyq rake" mean empty, vain, lewd and unethical men.

- d) The word reckless “pachaz” means light, having no character.
- 5) Abimelech travelled about 30 miles, due north, to the city of Ophrah to slaughter the 70 sons of Jerubbaal, Gideon, leaving one survivor because he hid himself. vs. 5
- 6) The gathering place to coronate Abimelech was at Beth Millo, a fortress at Shechem used as a military headquarters, identified by the terbinth tree at the pillar in Shechem. vs. 6

9:7-21 *The fable of God’s retribution against Abimelech by the surviving heir of Gideon.*

- 1) The lone survivor Jotham, whose name means “Yahweh is perfect” traveled to the top of Mount Gerizim cried out of the treachery and retribution by God, calling for two witnesses according to the law, the Shechemites and God. vs. 7
- a) The city of Shechem was located in the valley between Mount Ebal, the mount of cursings and Mount Garizm, the mount of blessings, where the blessing and cursing were uttered under the command of Joshua. Deut. 27-28; Josh. 8:30-35
- b) Jotham proclaimed the curse over Abimelech and Shechem from the mount of blessings, Gerizm.

- c) Close to Jacob’s well where Jesus spoke to the woman of Samaria, at Sychar. Jn. 4
- 2) The fable spoken is to illustrate the arrogant evil injustice of Abimelech and the men of Shechem to set him up as king. vs. 8-13
 - a) Some call this a parable, but parables teach by presenting lifelike situations or events.
 - b) Fables employ “make-believe” to illustrate a point, trees don’t really talk to each other in real life.
 - c) The olive, fig, the vine were sought out by the trees to rule over the trees, but each humbly declined. vs. 9, 10, 11
 - d) Last of all the bramble was sought out and he excepted to rule over the trees, but there is a bit of irony, for the bramble is a low growing shrub with very few leaved that can offer no shade and in fact is dangerous to all other trees as perfect fuel for fire. vs. 15
- 3) The fable is applied by Jotham to Abimelech and the men of Shechem treacherous slaying of the 69 sons of Gideon. vs. 16-20
 - * Verse 20 pronounces the future justice by the judgment of God!

- 4) Jotham fled to safety to Beer, fearing Abimelech, his half-brother. vs. 21

9:22-25 *The betrayal of Abimelech by the Shechemites.*

- 1) Abimelech enjoyed three years as king, then God moved against him for judgment to repay him and the men of Shechem for their treachery to the house of Gideon. vs. 22-24
- a) God sent a spirit, good and fallen angel can be solicited by God, demons are fallen angel to accomplish His purposes. vs. 23
- b) “But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him. And Saul’s servants said to him, “Surely, a distressing spirit from God is troubling you.” 1Sam. 16:14-15
- c) “The LORD said to him, ‘In what way?’ So he said, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And the LORD said, ‘You shall persuade *him*, and also prevail. Go out and do so.’ “Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you.” 1Kings 11:22-23

- 2) The Shechemites robbed all the caravans that had secured the right of passage from Abimelech by financial payment. vs. 25

* This would create a great frustration to Abimelech and a political problem from the merchants that were robbed in the realm of his kingdom.

9:26-29 *The rival of Abimelech attempts to steal the hearts of the people.*

- 1) Gaal the son of Ebed and his brother came to Shechem and won over the hearts of the men of Shechem. vs. 26
- 2) They joined in the gathering of grapes for the festival in the house of their god to celebrate in a drunken feast and cursed Abimelech. vs. 27
- 3) Gaal to insult and demean Abimelech and his officer in Shechem, and that the men of Shechem should serve the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem. vs. 28
- * Hamor was the Hivite, who Simeon and Levi killed because Shechem his son raped their sister Dinah. Gen. 34:2
- 4) Gaal stole the hearts of the people, “If only this people were under my authority! Then I would remove Abimelech.” vs. 29
- a) Much like Absalom. 2Sam. 15:4

- b) And he challenged Abimelech to come out and face him in battle!

9:30-33 *The messenger Gaal warns Abimelech.*

- 1) Zebul, the overseeing ruler place by Abimelech was furious at the words of Gaal, so he sent word to Arumah where Abimelech resided and warned him about the scheme of Gaal. vs. 30-31
- 2) Zebul told Abimelech to come by night, hide in the field till morning then when Gaal came out to strike him down. vs. 32-33

9:34-41 *The defeat of Gall by Abimelech.*

- 1) Next morning Abimelech was waiting and as soon as Gaal stood at the city gate, Abimelech's four companies began to move down towards the city. vs. 34-35
- 2) Gaal observed groups of people coming down from different directions. vs. 36-37
- 3) Zebul called out Gaal, mocking him about his words against Abimelech and that he go out and fight him, so he did. vs. 38-39
* "**Pride** goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall." Pov. 16:18
- 4) Abimelech chased Gaal, wounded many by the gate and Zebul drove Gaal out of Shechem. vs. 40-41

- * The city of Arumah is mentioned as the residence of Abimelech, fifteen or so miles south of Shechem.

9:42-45 *The city of Shechem conquered by Abimelech.*

- 1) The following day the people of Shechem went out to the fields, Abimelech returned to take the city. vs. 42-44
- 2) He demolished it and salted it, so nothing would grow. vs. 45
 - a) The practice is recorded in Scripture. Deut. 29:23; Jer. 17:6
 - b) The Roman salted the land of Israel in 135 A.D. in the final rebellion of the Jews, so nothing would grow and remained the land of Israel to Palestinia, after their enemies the Philistines, in order to insult them.

9:46-49 *The destruction of the tower of Shechem.*

- 1) The news caused the men of the tower of Shechem to flee to the stronghold of the temple of the god Berith. vs. 46
- 2) Abimelech was informed and he cut down some trees near a wooded area name Mount Zalmon and set the fortress of the temple on fire, killing one-thousand men and women. vs. 47-49

9:50-57 *The death of Abimelech at Thebez.*

- 1) Abimelech continued his attack on the city of Thebez, about 20 miles north of Shechem, probably for their participation in the rebellion. vs. 50
- 2) The people fled to a tower fortress and went up to the top of it. vs. 51
- 3) Abimelech thought he would repeat his strategy to burn it down, but a certain woman dropped a millstone on his head, crushing his skull. vs. 52-53
 - a) A small one that was used by hand, not a huge one to crush the grain.
 - b) Sowing and reaping to his evil life. Gal. 6:7-8
- 4) Abimelech called on his armor-bearer to kill him, lest they say a woman killed him and all departed. vs. 54-55
 - a) Saul also asked his armor-bearer to do the same, lest the Philistines abused him. 1Sam. 31:4
 - b) Remember Deborah received the honor against the Sisera, not Barak, Jael received the glory for killing Sisera, not Barak. Judges 4:9, 21-22
 - * Male leadership is exempt in the time of the judges, women answer the call, to the shame of the men!
- 5) The fable predicting the judgment of God over Abimelech and Shechem was fulfilled. vs. 56-57

10:1-2 *The apostasy and deliverance of the sixth judge Tola.*

- 1) Tola “Towla” means “worm”, the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Isachar. vs. 1
- 2) He lived in Shamir, in the mountains of Ephraim. vs. 1
- 3) He judged for 23 years, he died and was buried in Shamir. vs. 2

10:3-5 *The seventh judge Jair.*

- 1) Jair “Ya; iyr” means “he enlightens”, Gileadite and judged for 22 years. vs. 3
- 2) Jair was very prosperous and his son benefitted from him. vs. 4
 - a) Donkey were for kings to ride on.
 - * The Messiah rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Zech. 9:9, Matt. 21:5
 - b) The towns were called “Havoth Jair”, meaning “villages of Jair”.
 - c) The land of Gilead was on the east side of the Jordan, the land given to Ruben, Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh.
- 3) He was buried in Camon, meaning “raised” in Gilead. vs. 5

10:6-18 *The apostasy and bondage under the Philistines and Ammonites.***10:6-9** *The evil unfaithfulness of Israel against their covenant God, Yahweh.*

- 1) Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord again and served the Baals and the Ashtoreths, the fertility gods. vs. 6
 - a) These were the gods of Ammon and the Philistines.
 - b) Bel of Saturn of Syria, Astarte of Sidon, Chemosh of Moab, Milcom of Ammon or Molech, Dagon of Philistia.
- 2) God in His anger delivered them over to bondage in judgment to Ammon. vs. 7
- 3) This was for 18 year on the east side of the Jordan Rive, modern day Jordan. vs. 8
- 4) Ammon invaded the land of Israel into Judah, Benjamin and the house of Ephraim, to be severely distressed. vs. 9

10:10-16 The crying out to God and repentance.

- 1) The usual confession is made in repentance to God. vs. 10
- 2) God reminded them of His past deliverance against all their enemies. vs. 11-12
- 3) God denied deliverance telling them to call on the gods they had chosen to serve. vs. 13-14
- 4) They cried to God again, pleading for deliverance, put away their gods and served the Lord. vs. 15-16

* An interesting note, the Lord Yahweh could not stand to see His people in misery!

10:17-18 The seeking for a leader to fight against Ammon.

- 1) The two nations encamped facing each other on the east side of the Jordan River. vs. 17
 - a) Ammon in Gilead.
 - b) Israel at Mizpah, meaning “watchtower”.
 - * Jacob gave this name due to his uncle Laban, who he could not trust. Gen. 31:49
- 2) The leader of Gilead took council for a man to be the head of their army. vs. 18