

# Judges 9

Jesus

- **12 Judges/Deliverers in Book of Judges**

1. Othniel
2. Ehud
3. Shamgar
4. Deborah
5. Gideon

## No Judge in Chapter 9

- **Ch. 8** Israel asked Gideon to be King but he refused...

**Judges 8:22** ... "Rule over us, both you and your son, and your grandson also; for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian." 23 But Gideon said to them, "**I will not rule over you**, nor shall my son rule over you; **the Lord shall rule over you.**"

- **Gideon accepts reward of a King:** Admiration/Gifts... w/out accepting responsibilities of King
- So, Gideon was never a King...

**Judges 8:30** Gideon had seventy sons who were his own offspring, for he had many wives. 31 And his concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, whose **name he called Abimelech.**

- **Gideon dies...**

1. Leaves behind 70 sons from many wives and...
2. **Only one son from a concubine...Abimelech**

**Judges 8:33** So it was, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel again **played the harlot** with the Baals, and made Baal-Berith their god. 34 Thus the children of Israel **did not remember the Lord** their God, who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side; 35 nor did they show kindness to the house of (Gideon) in accordance with the good he had done for Israel.

- **Gideon dead:** People deep back into Idolatry
- **Gideons family:** Disrespected by Israel yet 70 sons seem to be trying to lead in Gideons city Ophrah...

## There is no Judge. No King. No Deliverer

**Judges 21:25** In those days there was no king in Israel; **everyone did what was right in his own eyes.**

## I. Abimelech's Conspiracy

1 Then Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal [Gideon] went to Shechem, to his **mother's brothers**, and spoke with them and with all the family of the house of his mother's father...

**Gideon personally named this son Abimelech... "My father the King"  
Abimelech has a complex**

- **Inferiority Complex...**Chip on shoulders

**Cognitive dissonance** between his name/what he was known as

- **Name means son of a king** Yet Gideon was never a king
- **Known as son of concubine** Black Sheep of the Gideon family

Not getting along well with 70 step-brothers  
Leaves father Gideon's town goes to his hometown of Shechem

- **Family meeting:** Casa Nostra
- **Abimelech makes a speech to his uncles...**

2 "Please speak in the hearing of all the men of Shechem: 'Which is better for you, that all seventy of the sons of Jerubbaal reign over you, or that one reign over you?' Remember that I am your **own flesh and bone.**" 3 And his mother's brothers spoke all these words concerning him in the hearing of all the men of Shechem; and their **heart was inclined to follow Abimelech,** for they said, "**He is our brother.**"

- **Question in Israel? Who will lead?**
    1. No record of prayer
    2. No record of calling out to God
    3. 70 sons of Gideon seem inept at leading...
  - **Abimelech begins Political Campaign:** Sends Uncles throughout Shechem
- Vote for Abimelech:** He is one of our own
- Father Gideon waited for God to tell him who he was: Mighty Warrior
  - Abimelech could be the son of a King; i.e. King of Kings...instead

#### **Wants to make a name for himself**

As Christian workers, worldliness is not the trap which endangers us, nor is it sin, the trap we fall into is extravagantly desiring spiritual success. Never seek after anything other than the approval of God. Oswald Chambers

- Abimelech did not need self-esteem he needed God-esteem. All we need.

4 So [the men of Shechem...] gave [Abimelech] seventy shekels of silver from the temple of Baal-Berith, with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless men; and they followed him.

#### **Silver from temple of the devil to hire men to do his bidding**

A work begun under the name and influence of the devil is not likely to end to the glory of God, or to the welfare of man." [Clarke]

- **Worthless:** Vain, empty, idol, worthless, poured out
- **Reckless:** Wanton, frothy, stuff on top of boiling water. **No substance**

5 Then [Abimelech] went to his father's [Gideon's] house at Ophrah and **killed his [own] brothers,** the seventy sons of Jerubbaal [Gideon], on one stone. But **Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal [Gideon] was left,** because he hid himself. 6 And all the men of Shechem gathered together, all of Beth Millo, and they went and made Abimelech king beside the terebinth

tree at the pillar that was in Shechem.

### Abimelech and Motley Crew go to father Gideons city

- **Orchestrated Assassination:** Kill all 70 step-brothers on one stone
  1. **Jotham:** Gideon's youngest son only son who escapes
  2. **Abimelech/Losers go back:** Big celebration at Shechem

### Made Abimelech King at the Terabinth Tree Gideon told who he was by Jesus at a Terabinth Tree

**Judges 6:11** Now the Angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah....**12** And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said to him, "The Lord is with you, you **mighty man of valor!**"

- We need to allow Jesus to tell us who we are.
- **No matter...**
  1. ...who our parents are/are not
  2. ...what we've done
  3. ...where we're from...other side of tracks
  4. ...why we're in this predicament
- God says you have great value...

**Matthew 13:44** Again, the kingdom of heaven is like **treasure** hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

**Matthew 13:45** "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one **pearl of great price**, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

He bought you with His own blood  
Let Jesus find you. Bad stuff happens when we try to find ourselves.

- **NOTE:** Men of the city made Abimelech King but God did not

SUMMARY Abimelech's Conspiracy

## II. Parable of the Trees

7 Now when they **told Jotham**, he went and stood on top of **Mount Gerizim**, and lifted his voice and cried out. And he said to them: "Listen to me, you men of Shechem, That God may listen to you! 8 "The trees once went forth to anoint a king over them. And they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us!' 9 But the olive tree said to them, 'Should I cease giving my oil, With which they honor God and men, And go to sway over trees?' 10 "Then the trees said to the fig tree, 'You come and reign over us!' 11 But the fig tree said to them, 'Should I cease my sweetness and my good fruit, And go to sway over trees?' 12 "Then the trees said to the vine, 'You come and reign over us!' 13 But the vine said to them, 'Should I cease my new wine, Which cheers both God and men, And go to sway over trees?'

- Jotham Gideon's youngest son climbs/stands atop Mt. Gerizim
- Place where Moses proclaimed Blessings for Obedience to the Lord

**Worthy men were asked to be King but chose not to...**

- **Olive Tree** I'm not called to be a King but to bless with oil [Holy Spirit]
- **Fig Tree** I'm not called to be a King but bear good fruit for God/man
- **Vine** I'm not called to be a King but to bring Joy the people

**Not all are called to be Kings but we are all called to serve the King**

- Last tree to be called **not a tree at all...**

14 "Then all the trees said to the **bramble**, 'You come and reign over us!' 15 And the bramble said to the trees, 'If in truth you anoint me as king over you, Then come and take **shelter in my shade**; But if not, let fire come out of the bramble And devour the cedars of Lebanon!'

**Sticker Bush: If you want me to be King I will.  
If you serve me fine ...if not I'll devour the best of you**

- Abimelech is the bramble...Jotham got one part wrong...
- No one called Abimelech to be King. God surely did not.

**How many Spiritual Leaders were never called by God? Follower get burned?**

Take shelter in my shade? Trying to find shade of a sticker bush?

- Jotham continues speaking to men of Shechem from mountain...

16 "Now therefore, if you have acted in truth and sincerity in making Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubbaal [Gideon my father] and his house, and have done to him as he deserves— 17 for my father fought for you, risked his life, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian; 18 but you have risen up against my father's house this day, and killed his seventy sons on one stone, and made Abimelech, the son of his female servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother—

- **My father Gideon...**Fought for you/Risked his life for you/Delivered you

**Repaid him by killing his 70 sons...**

19 **if then you have acted in truth** and sincerity with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you.

- **If this was right...**go on partying...

20 But if not, **let fire come** from Abimelech and devour the men of Shechem and Beth Millo; and let fire come from the men of Shechem and from Beth Millo and devour Abimelech!"

**If what you men of Shechem and Abimelech did was wrong...be cursed  
Devour one another until there is nothing left**

21 And Jotham ran away and fled; and he went to Beer and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

- **Jotham ran to Beer:** Not adult beverage but the place

**Found courage and ran to Beer. Some run to beer to find courage. Everybody knows him...Look it's a bird, it's a plane no its Super-drunk**

#### SUMMARY Parable of the Trees

### III. Abimelech's Demise

22 After Abimelech had reigned over Israel **three years**, 23 God sent a spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech, 24 that the crime done to the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might be settled and their blood be laid on Abimelech their brother, who killed them, and on the men of Shechem, who aided him in the killing of his brothers.

**As with all sin:** Everything was going swimmingly. Got away with it. Not so quick

- Actually first to be crowned king of Israel though a usurper
- **After 3 years:** God sends a spirit of ill-will; i.e. Demon to get into their heads

**1 Samuel 16:14** ...the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a **distressing spirit** from the Lord troubled him.

**1 Samuel 19:9** Now the **distressing spirit** from the Lord came upon Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing music with his hand. 10 Then Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence; and he drove the spear into the wall. So David fled and escaped that night.

**If there is a devil and there is a devil...it is God's devil to use as he desires**

- Devil can't read minds, **but he can plant thoughts** as obvious here...
- Plants seed of ill-will between men of Shechem/Abimelech to accomplish His purpose

**Serve justice on one another for killing Gideon's sons  
God's Efficiency/Manifold Wisdom**

25 And the men of Shechem set men in ambush against [Abimelech] on the tops of the mountains, and they robbed all who passed by them along that way; and **it was told Abimelech**. 26 Now Gaal the son of Ebed came with his brothers and went over to Shechem; and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him.

- **Men of Shechem**

1. Robbing people that Abimelech might be told and drawn to them
2. Looking for a new leader to overthrow Abimelech. **Gaal shows up...**

27 So they went out into the fields, and gathered grapes from their vineyards and trod them, and made merry. And they went into the house of

their god, and ate and drank, and **cursed Abimelech**. 28 Then Gaal the son of Ebed said, "Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerubbaal, and is not Zebul his officer? Serve the men of Hamor the **father of Shechem**; but why should we serve him? 29 **If only this people were under my authority!** Then I would remove Abimelech." So he said to Abimelech, "Increase your army and come out!"

- **Big talk from super-drunk Gaal/Everyone listening is drunk...**
- **Gaal** lit. means loathing. Ever listen to a drunk?

**Gaal to Abimelech**  
**Let's take it outside and bring your commander Zebul**

30 When Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, his **anger was aroused**. 31 And he sent messengers to Abimelech secretly, saying, "Take note! Gaal the son of Ebed and his brothers have come to Shechem; and here they are, fortifying the city against you. 32 Now therefore, get up by night, you and the people who are with you, and lie in wait in the field. 33 And it shall be, as soon as the sun is up in the morning, that you shall rise early and rush upon the city; and when he and the people who are with him come out against you, you may then do to them as you find opportunity."

- **Zebul to Abimelech...**

Gaal wants to be king. He is gathering the people to himself in Shechem  
Set your alarm for middle of the night/**rush the city at daybreak**

34 So Abimelech and all the people who were with him rose by night, and lay in wait against Shechem in four companies. 35 When Gaal the son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance to the city gate, Abimelech and the people who were with him rose from lying in wait. 36 And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, "Look, people are coming down from the tops of the mountains!" But Zebul said to him, "You see the shadows of the mountains as if they were men." 37 So Gaal spoke again and said, "See, people are coming down from the center of the land, and another company is coming from the Diviners' Terebinth Tree."

- Look a lion. Looks your shoes untied!!!

**I don't think so.**

- **Super-drunk sobering up... Zebul calls him out**

38 Then Zebul said to him, "**Where indeed is your mouth now**, with which you said, 'Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?' Are not these the people whom you despised? Go out, if you will, and fight with them now." 39 So Gaal went out, leading the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech. 40 And Abimelech chased him, and he fled from him; and **many**

**fell wounded**, to the very entrance of the gate. 41 Then Abimelech dwelt at Arumah, and Zebul drove out Gaal and his brothers, so that they would not dwell in Shechem.

- Face the toothless bully

**James 4:7** Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

- Zebul victorious for Abimelech. Gaal leaves to cause trouble for somebody else

Men of Shechem now without leader after Gaal chased off  
**Abimelech now knows they want him out**

42 And it came about on the next day that the people went out into the field, and they told Abimelech. 43 So he took his people, divided them into three companies, and lay in wait in the field. And he looked, and there were the people, coming out of the city; and he rose against them and attacked them. 44 Then Abimelech and the company that was with him **rushed forward** and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city; and the other two companies rushed upon all who were in the fields and killed them. 45 So Abimelech fought against the city all that day; he took the city and killed the people who were in it; and he demolished the city and sowed it with salt.

**People of Shechem come out of city into field to fight Abimelech**

- **Abimelech hears:** Divides army into 3 groups
  1. He and his men rush toward Shechem
  2. Shechem rushes toward Abimelech
  3. Two other groups surprise/surround/ambush men of Shechem
  4. Abimelech kills people/A-salts the city. Pours salt so nothing can grow

**Still some men of Shechem left...**

46 Now when all the men of the tower of Shechem had heard that, they entered the stronghold of the temple of the god Berith. 47 And it was told Abimelech that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together. 48 Then Abimelech went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people who were with him. And Abimelech **took an ax in his hand** and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it and laid it on his shoulder; then he said to the people who were with him, "What you have seen me do, make haste and do as I have done." 49 So each of the people likewise cut down his own bough and followed Abimelech, put them against the stronghold, and set the stronghold on fire above them, so that all the people of the tower of Shechem died, **about a thousand men and women.**

- Cut down trees laid them at tower and lit it on fire with everyone in it
- **If what you did was right...party on**

**V 15** But if not, let fire come **out of the bramble** and devour the cedars of Lebanon!

50 Then Abimelech went to Thebez, and he encamped against Thebez and took it. 51 But there was a strong tower in the city, and all the men and women—all the people of the city—fled there and shut themselves in; then they went up to the top of the tower. 52 So Abimelech came as far as the tower and fought against it; and he drew near the door of the tower to burn it with fire.

- **Abimelech still on the rampage:** Another tower to burn like last one
- **Thebez:** Lit. Conspicuous /Obvious

### **It worked before it will obviously work again**

53 But a certain woman dropped an **upper millstone** on Abimelech's head and **crushed his skull**. 54 Then he called quickly to the young man, his armorbearer, and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, lest men say of me, 'A woman killed him.'" So his young man thrust him through, and he died. 55 And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed, every man to his place.

- **Certain Woman**
  1. Upper Millstone on head/crushed skull
  2. **Still speaking:** Kill me w/sword before I die by a woman

**2 Samuel 11:21** Who struck Abimelech? Was it not a woman who cast a piece of a millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez?

- **Poetic Justice:** Killed 70 brothers on a stone/No killed by a stone

56 Thus God **repaid the wickedness** of Abimelech, which he had done to his father by killing his seventy brothers. 57 And all the evil of the men of Shechem God returned **on their own heads**, and on them came the **curse of Jotham** the son of Jerubbaal.

- **Curse of Jotham fulfilled...**
  1. Fire devoured Abimelech for killing 70 step-brothers
  2. Fire devoured Shechem for helping him
- **Efficient Justice:** Not a lot of clean-up.

### **Can Abimelech blame his sin/lousy life/death on childhood?**

- **Believe world**      People can't change. Born that way stay that way?
- **Believe God**      New Creation: Cleansed/Forgiven/Valuable/with Purpose

Bad stuff happens when we try to find ourselves within ourselves  
We need to let Jesus find us and let Him tell us who we really are and walk in it

- Treasure/Light/Warrior/Man, woman, youth bought by Living God. Don't settle.

**SUMMARY Abimelech's Demise:** Could have been the son of the King of Kings



