

# Judges 8-9 – 4 November 2021

## “You Can’t Appease Evil, You Must Fight”

### Introduction

\*Book of Judges’ theme is “*everyone did that which was right in their own eyes*”. Therefore, a cycle of sin & deliverance develops where God raises up judges

\*In chap 7-8 we saw the mighty man Gideon who didn’t know he was might until God grew him thru many experiences as a judge

\*We finish the story of Gideon & his family in chap 8-9, and it’s a story of warfare

\*Just as Gideon & his family are in *physical war* for the will of God, we fight a *spiritual war* everyday for the will of God

**\*Today, let’s learn 3 lessons from this physical warfare that we can apply to our life of spiritual warfare**

# **1<sup>st</sup> lesson for warfare is: Choose a side – Don't side with “safe”, side with right (Chap 8:1-21)**

Read Chap 8:1-3

1. Remember, Israel was oppressed by the Midianites for 7 years, why didn't the people of Ephraim step up sooner?
  - a. Ephraim came to help only after they saw the tide turning to Israel (chose the safe side)
  - b. We need people of conviction & courage
2. Yet, Gideon compliments the role Ephraim had and it abates their misplaced anger

Read Chap 8:4-7

1. Israelite city of Succoth refused to aid Gideon
2. Thought they were playing it safe to not “rock the boat” (Midian was in charge), but they were wrong
3. Gideon has 300 chasing 15,000 Midianites
4. They had not faith in God nor His promises
  - a. Safe – trusts in changing circumstances
  - b. Right – trusts in an unchanging God

## 5. Faithful or fearful

- a. 300 fearful men would look at 15,000 ahead
- b. 300 faithful men look at the 120,000 that already fell to God!

### Read Chap 8:8-9

1. Israelites of City of Penuel also didn't support, let alone go to war to help Gideon
2. Comfort isn't more important than character
3. Safety isn't more important than service to God

### Read Chap 8:10-12

1. Gideon routes the 2 kings who thought they were safe b/c they made it to other side Jordan

### Read Chap 8:13-17

1. Retribution upon the 2 Israelite cities for no faith (not just for playing it safe, but for no faith)

### Read Chap 8:18-21

1. Gideon elicits confession of sins before executing them as they knew they deserved (Read Psm 144:1)

## **2<sup>nd</sup> lesson for warfare is: Choose an end state – Praise & glory to God, not man (Chap 8:22-35)**

Read Chap 8:22-23

1. This is Gideon's greatest hour of influence & he redirects their affections to God as King
2. They wanted an earthly dynasty of kings and God wanted a spiritual lasting relationship w/ them
3. Gideon knew will of God & how to honor Him

Read Chap 8:24-27

1. Too bad the people worshipped the spoils of war greater than the God who gave them the spoils
2. We so quickly make worship from physical items
  - a. Hezekiah broke serpent from Moses' rod
  - b. The Temple of the Lord (Jer 7:4)
3. Living for the spoil & the ephod makes it an idol
4. Praising the tool, Gideon, they make him an idol

Read Chap 8:28-35

1. Historical linkage between chaps 8 & 9
2. Mankind easily forgets their past
  - a. The good & the bad

**3<sup>rd</sup> lesson for warfare is: Choose weaponry – Don't advance by evil means, but w/ godliness (Chap 9)**

Read Chap 9:1-6

1. Abimelech promotes himself to Kingship w/ help of the people of Shechem
2. When we're bent on our own will, we ask wrong questions like vs 2, instead of relying on Lord's will
  - a. In this case God's will was already declared
  - b. Jug 2 – God wants Israel to submit to His rule
  - c. It's evil to look for your will, not God's
3. Abimelech, Gideon's son by a concubine, murder 69 of 70 of Gideon's other kids publicly
  - a. Notice Abimelech's evil associates in vs 4

## Read Chap 9:7-21

1. On the slopes of Mt Gerizim at Herodium you can hear things 2 miles away.
2. Jotham's Parable: As if the men of Shechem went to the Religiously correct (olive), Nationally correct (fig), & Spiritually correct (vine) person asking them to reign but they wouldn't
  - a. Then they went to the unworthy one (bramble) & he wanted it
3. Prophecy is that this bad choice will mutually destroy each (Abimelech & the Shechemites)

## Read Chap 9:22-28

1. "Who is Abimelech" means why respect him
2. Men against men; there's always another man contenting to be better than the best
3. As Shechem agreed for Abimelech to reign by evil means, now they turn on each other by evil means
  - a. Whatever you sow, that you'll reap
    - i. Whether evil or good (Read Gal 6:7-8)

Read Chap 9:29-38

1. Big mouth Gaal has to back-up his words

Read Chap 9:39-49

1. Now Abimelech takes out the people of Shechem for supporting Gaal against him
2. Joining someone in their evil? You can be sure it will come back on you
  - a. Join someone in gossip? You can be sure they're also gossiping about you
  - b. Join someone w/ cutting rude attitudes? It will come back on you too

Read Chap 9:50-53

1. At Thebez, a woman casts a millstone
  - a. Can be about 400-500 lbs

Read Chap 9:54-57

1. What evil pride to want to control own death!
2. Both City of Shechem & Abimelech are meet with evil in fulfillment of Jotham's words

## Conclusion

The Lord wants to use Israel to teach us His principles for life including that of warfare. As important as physical warfare is, how much more important to learn of spiritual warfare

- 1. Choose a side – Don’t side with “safe”, side with right**
  - a. The “safe” side is necessarily safe, but the right side is always right
  - b. Life w/ conviction to serve God regardless
- 2. Choose an end state – Praise & glory to God, not man**
  - a. Decide to glorify God BEFORE you gain riches & influence or it’s ugly when you get it
- 3. Choose weaponry – Don’t advance by evil means, but with godliness**
  - a. Associating with evil will only cause that evil to come back on YOU later
  - b. Choose armor of the Lord & live at peace