



VILLAINS OF THE BIBLE

STUDY QUESTIONS AND CONVERSATION GUIDE

Every story of intrigue has a villain - those people who plot and scheme treachery in a feeble attempt to thwart noble plans and pursuits. In this series, we consider some of the most insidious n'er-do-wells, who because of their influence, cause strife and destruction against the people of God. Can God's people overcome these forces of evil or will the causers of catastrophe prevail?

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ABIMELECH THE ATROCIOUS

Nothing brings out the worst in people more than when their thirst for power goes unchecked. Abimelech, the son of the famed Gideon, sees his chance to rule over all Israel after his father dies. In unbridled zeal for his self-aggrandizement, he murders his brothers in his quest to be made king.

QUESTIONS

- Let's discuss the context of today's villain. What is the spiritual landscape of the Israelites, and why do they cyclically embrace the pagan worship of Baal?
- Who is Abimelech? Where did he come from?
- To the modern reader, it might be confusing why a son of a famed spiritual leader would go in the exact opposite direction of this father, especially when he would know the supernatural victory over Israel's enemies. Why would this happen?
- Let's dig into Abimelech's MO - He manipulated the town of Shechem to garner their support, he murdered his opposition, and led with such an iron fist that his very own subjects tried to overtake him. How can we learn from this man?
- Did God use him for a GOOD means?
- God will not be mocked. In the end, Abimelech was killed. He wanted to be remembered as being thrust with a sword in battle, but the Bible reveals that he would have succumbed to the blow he received when a mere woman dropped a millstone on his head. Embarrassing! Does this mean that all villains will meet humiliating ends? What good could possibly come from this account?
- What are we to learn today?

- Any words of encouragement?

SPRINGBOARD VERSE

2 Samuel 11:21 ESV Who killed Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman cast an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?' then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.' "

