

(1) 8:33-9:21 → Abimelech gives Israel what they want: a king

(2) 9:22-57 → God gives Israel what they deserve: judgment

(2) 10:1-5 → God gives Israel what they do not deserve: grace

- (1) **Read Judges 9:1-3.** Why do you think the leaders of Shechem's hearts were inclined to follow Abimelech?
- (2) **Read Judges 9:4-5.** What is significant about the payment made by the leaders of Shechem?
- (3) How have you seen power corrupt a person, whether in history or in your own life?
- (4) What does Jotham's parable of the trees say about the nature of leadership?
- (5) Look up the following verses in 1 Samuel about Saul. What similarities do we see between Saul and Abimelech? Why do you think that is significant?

9:4, Abimelech kills 70 brothers	1 Sam. 22:18–20
9:7-20, Abimelech's rule denounced by Jotham	1 Sam. 13:14
9:22, God sends an evil spirit to divide Abimelech & Shechem's leaders	1 Sam. 16:14
9:34-57, Abimelech wages war with his own people	1 Sam. 22:18–20
9:20, Prophecy of negative outcome for Abimelech & Shechemites	1 Sam. 28:15-19
9:54, Abimelech wounded in battle asks his armor bearer to kill him	1 Sam. 31:4

- (6) **Read Judges 9:23, 56-57.** How do these verses help us understand God's sovereignty and human responsibility? (*See also Acts 2:22-23*)
- (7) How does the unseen reality of God's present judgment encourage or challenge your view of the world?