

## ABIMELECH – THE WORTHLESS THORN BUSH – PART 2

--JUDGES 9:22-57--

### INTRODUCTION:

Last week we met a son of Gideon, a son born to him by a concubine from Shechem. Gideon named this son Abimelech, which means “my father is king.” When Gideon died, this son decided that he would succeed his father as king. Going to his mother’s hometown of Shechem he petitioned the leaders to make him king instead of the 70 sons of Gideon ruling over them. The leaders of Shechem decide to make their relative their king and to stand with him against any opposition. With the help of a band of worthless and reckless men hired by Abimelech, he murders the 70 sons of Gideon on one stone, almost 70, one escapes by hiding, Gideon’s youngest son Jotham.

The leaders of Shechem show their approval of what Abimelech had done by crowning him as their king. When Jotham hears that his half-brother has been crowned king he speaks out against the treachery and unfaithfulness the people of Shechem have shown toward his father and he pronounces a curse on Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem. This morning we will see the retribution of God as Jotham’s curse is fulfilled.

- I. KINGDOM TROUBLE (Judges 9:22-25)
  - a. So far in the book of Judges the \_\_\_\_\_ that a judge ruled is given to us at the end of their history.
  - b. Verse 23 announces that things started to go wrong when “...*God sent an \_\_\_\_\_ spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem...*” (Judges 9:23a, NASB95)
  - c. The first effect that this evil spirit had was that the men of Shechem who had been Abimelech’s supporters, now begin to act \_\_\_\_\_ him, instead of for him.
- II. KINGDOM BETRAYAL (Judges 9:26-33)
  - a. The situation and the disloyalty of Abimelech’s subjects in Shechem provides a situation for someone else to make a bid for \_\_\_\_\_.

- b. Gaal and those supporting him do not immediately confront Abimelech, but they do begin sowing seeds of \_\_\_\_\_ among the people.

- III. KINGDOM BATTLE (Judges 9:34-41)
  - a. Abimelech takes the advice given to him by Zebul, understanding the full betrayal of Shechem now and that a \_\_\_\_\_ is in the city trying to take the throne.
  - b. Early the next morning Gaal goes and stands outside the city \_\_\_\_\_.
  - c. Gaal leads out the forces of Shechem to go to \_\_\_\_\_ against Abimelech.
  - d. Like Gideon and his relentless pursuit of the two kings of Midian, Abimelech is not \_\_\_\_\_ with his victory at Shechem that day.
- IV. KINGDOM DESTRUCTION (Judges 9:42-57)
  - a. We read that the day after the \_\_\_\_\_ the people of the city went out to the field near the city.
  - b. But this is not the end, some of the leaders of the city and leaders of the tower of Shechem have \_\_\_\_\_ into the tower.
  - c. He moves a few miles northeast of Shechem to the town of \_\_\_\_\_, this is the first it is mentioned, and we are not told why Abimelech decided to attack it.
  - d. At the beginning there is no sign at all that Abimelech is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - e. There are no winners here except \_\_\_\_\_.

### CONCLUSION:

The history of Abimelech is not enjoyable to read, but like all Scripture it is there for our good. The history itself bears witness to the precision of divine judgment. God will punish evildoers, there will be no unfinished business with God, all who have not submitted to His rule in their lives will be judged. This history warns us not to test God by choosing evil. It should make us deeply grateful to God

for His mercy on us and it should drive us to renewed prayer for those we love and care about who continue to defy Him, that they would turn to Him and that He would not bring upon them the terrible retribution that they deserve.