

Judges Chapter 9

Review

Judges 3 – 16 chronicles 331 years of Israel History: 1434 BC to 1100 BC

Downward progression: Apathy to Apostasy to Anarchy

- Apathy – they did not obey the covenant and did not teach their children the covenant
- Apostasy – the “fell away” and intermingled with the culture through marriage and pagan worship
- Anarchy – they did what was right in their own eyes

The tribes are in the land yet failed on three levels.

1. They did not eradicate their enemies from the land. (Duet 7)
2. They did not obey the law of Moses and kept the covenant. (Duet 6 and 8)
3. They did not teach the next generation the ways of God. (Duet 6)

The Book of Judges is the story of a people who

- Have no king – God was to rule over them through the covenant.
- They do what is right in their own eyes.
- They could not work well together – civil war at times.
- They are contaminated by the pagan culture around them.
- They are in bondage and servitude to the other nations as judgment from God.

Judges we have looked at so far:

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|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| • Othniel | Victory over King of Mesopotamia | 40 years peace |
| • Ehud | Defeats Moab | 80 years peace |
| • Shamgar | Defeats Philistines | No record. |
| • Deborah and Barak | Defeats Canaanites | 40 years peace |
| • Gideon | Defeats Midian | 40 years peace. |

Gideon’s victory gave him special honor

Gideon refuses to be king over Israel – 8: 22-23

Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, “Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson also, for you have saved us from the hand of Midian.”²³ Gideon said to them, “I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you.”

Israel reverted to their old ways of idolatry and Baal worship. 8: 33-35

As soon as Gideon died, the people of Israel turned again and whored after the Baals and made Baal-berith their god. ³⁴ And the people of Israel did not remember the LORD their God, who had delivered them from the hand of all their enemies on every side, ³⁵ and they did not show steadfast love to the family of Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) in return for all the good that he had done to Israel.

Proverbs 26:11 - *Like a dog that returns to his vomit is a fool who repeats his folly.*

Chapter 9 – Abimelech in Three Phases:

1. Seizing the Kingdom VS 1-21
2. Defending the Kingdom VS 22-49
3. Losing the Kingdom VS 50-57

About Abimelech

- Abimelech was the son of Gideon’s concubine – the other 69 sons were from Gideon’s wives.
- Abimelech’s mother was from Shechem.
- Abimelech was probably shunned by his half-brothers.
- Abimelech’s name means, “my father is king.”
- Abimelech moves to Shechem after the death of his father.

VS 1 – 4

- Abimelech persuades Shechem to follow him.
- Abimelech receives money from the house of Baal-Berith (70 pieces of silver).
- Abimelech hires a rogue group to follow him.

Shechem –

- Joshua 8: 30-35
- Joshua 24: 1-28
- Mount Ebal –curses.
- Mount Gerizim -blessings.

VS 5 –6

- Abimelech breaks the first commandment – “no other gods before me.”
- Abimelech breaks the sixth commandment – “thou shall not murder.”
- **Note: David did not take out King Saul in the cave, 1 Samuel 24:1-7; WHY?**
- One escapes, Jotham.
- Abimelech is made king.
- Probably broke the third commandment – “thou shall not take the name of the Lord in vain. -he was crowned “king” of Israel yet was aligned with Baal.

Vs 7 – 21 Jotham’s curse and prophecy

- The olive tree
- The fig tree
- The vine

These three refused to accept the invitation to “reign over them.”

- The bramble – no shadow and catches fire easily.

Jotham’s Commentary

- Gideon, my father fought for you.
- Gideon, my father saved you.
- You have risen against my father.
- Abimelech murdered his brothers, and you allowed it for you are from Shechem.
- The curse. VS 19-20
 - If you have dealt properly then OK
 - If you have been treacherous then let fire destroy Abimelech and Shechem.
- Jotham flees to Beer.

Spiritual Laws

- Forgive and you will be forgiven – Lord’s prayer Matthew 6:12
- Give and it shall be given unto you, pressed down, shaken and running over. - Luke 6:38
- Judge not lest you be judged, for as you judge others you will be judged. – Matt 7:1-3
- God is not mocked, whatever you sow you will reap – Galatians 6:7-8

Abimelech Defends the Kingdom

VS 22-

- Abimelech rules for 3 years.
- Abimelech was a regional ruler, not over all of Israel, only a small portion of the area.
- God sends an evil Spirit.
 - Saul and David – 1 Samuel 18: 10
 - Unbelievers – Romans 1:18 - 23
 - Those who love not the truth – 2 Thes 9-11
 - Satan blinds the eyes of the unbelieving - 2 Corinthians 4:3-4
- The purpose of the evil spirit was to bring justice for killing the 69 brothers, and Shechem’s idolatry.
- Shechem’s betrayal – robbing tribute money being taken to Abimelech in Arumah.
- Gaal leads Shechem’s rebellion against Abimelech.
- Zebul’s betrayal of Gaal.
- Gaal defeated and Shechem punished the people with the sword.
- City sowed with salt.

- The tower burned with everybody inside.
- This fulfills vs 15 – fire from the bramble devours the cedars of Lebanon (leaders).

Losing the Kingdom

- Thebez resists Abimelech.
- Abimelech is wounded by millstone cast down by a woman.
 - Not killed in battle.
 - Killed by a woman.
 - Killed with a Millstone, not a sword, arrow, or spear.
- Followers of Abimelech disburse upon his death.

Abimelech lost his life and his kingdom as was spoken by Jotham – Judges 9: 19-20

if you then have acted in good faith and integrity with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. ²⁰ But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech and devour the leaders of Shechem and Beth-Millo; and let fire come out from the leaders of Shechem and from Beth-Millo and devour Abimelech.”

God notes the “shedding of innocent blood.” – abortion is clearly noticed.