

“Thy Kingdom Come” Judges 9

1. As the story of Gideon comes to a close, we now pick up the story of Gideon’s son, Abimelech. In chapter 9, Gideon is always referred to as Jerub-baal (see 6:32). Abimelech was the son of Gideon by a concubine and in that social environment, he was no doubt shunned by his half-brothers. But Abimelech was accepted by his mother’s family so Abimelech goes to Shechem to speak with them. And he asks them: Which is better for you, for me to rule over you or to have seventy sons of Gideon do so? When Abimelech’s mother’s relatives speak all these words on his behalf to the leaders of Shechem, what’s their reply? (v.3)

The leaders then donate 70 pieces of silver from temple of Baal-berith to Abimelech. What does he do with the money?

2. What first assignment does Abimelech have for these “worthless and reckless fellows”? (v.5)
What happens to Jotham, the youngest son of Gideon?
3. The men of Shechem assemble together to make Shechem their king but Jotham courageously goes up to the top of Mount Gerizim and proceeds to give a fable about trees and a thornbush. And the main point is: only worthless people (the thornbush) seek to lord authority over others, for worthy individuals (the olive tree, fig tree, and the vine) are too involved in useful tasks to seek after such places of authority. Jotham’s final rebuke in verse 20 takes on the form of a curse: If you have dealt in truth and integrity with Gideon and his house today, then rejoice. But if not, let fire consume both Abimelech and the Shechemites.

How long does it say that Abimelech ruled over Israel? (v. 22)

God sends an evil spirit to fulfill Jotham’s curse and arouse distrust and jealousy in the Shechemites. Who begins to stir up the city against Abimelech? (v. 32)

4. Zebul, the governor of the city, warns Abimelech about the rebel Gaal. What is Abimelech’s response toward Gaal and the city of Shechem? (v. 45)

What tragically takes place to the approximately 1000 men and women who have fled to the tower of Shechem? (v. 49)

5. Abimelech moves on to capture Thebez and is planning on doing the same thing to the strong tower in the center of the city but what happens this time? (v. 53)

6. We read in verses 56 and 57 that God “repaid” and “returned”. How did this passage of Scripture speak to God’s divine providence?

What kind of godly character traits should we look to in a leader?