

## Judges 8:33 - 9

### Abimelech

### Lesson 5

Gideon's work in delivering Israel began to unravel when he began to compromise God's ways. Half way through the time of the Judges we read, "No sooner had Gideon died than the Israelites again prostituted themselves to the Baals. They set up Baal-Berith (covenant Baal) as their god and did not remember the Lord their God, who had rescued them from the hands of all their enemies on every side." Judges 8:33, 34

#### **Abimelech - Chapter 8:33 - 9:20**

1. How does it say this cycle began? (vs. 8:33-35)
2. What was said about the next judge named Abimelech? (vs. 6:32 & 8:29-31)
3. Gideon's successful military leadership had prompted the people to say "rule over us - you, your son and grandson" 8:22. Gideon said he would not because "the Lord will rule over you" 8:23. What do you think was happening in Judges 9:1-6?
4. What is historically important about Mt. Gerizim? (Deut. 11:29-32)
5. Jotham, the one remaining son, climbed Mt. Gerizim and shouted a parable to the citizens. What do you think he was saying to them? (vs. 9:7-15)
6. He began by trying to give them the benefit of the doubt in verse 16, but soon dissolves into anger that pours forth. What did he say in Judges 9:16-20?

7. How long had Abimelech been king? (vs. 9:22)
  - What happened then? (vs. 9:23-25)
8. A man named Gaal moved into Shechem and, under the influence of alcohol, started cursing Abimelech. What went on? (vs. 9:26-29)
9. Who is Zebul? (vs. 9:28-30)
  - What did he do about this situation? (vs. 9:30-33)
10. Abimelech and his men followed Zebul's plan and set out that night for Shechem. How did this play out? (vs. 9:34-38)
  - What happened then? (vs. 9:39-41)
11. Abimelech was enraged at the people of Shechem. What did he do the next day? (vs. 9: 42-49)
12. What was the significance of the salt? (Deut. 29:23)

13. Abimelech moved from Shechem to Thebez. What did he do there? (vs. 9:50-52a)
14. Once again Abimelech, planning to use fire, approached the tower. Describe the turn of events. (vs. 9:52-55)
15. Who were the enemies Israel fought during the prior judges?

3:10	Othniel	
3:30	Ehud	
3:31	Shamgar	
4:24	Deborah	
7:14	Gideon	

16. Who was the enemy in this account? Please comment. (Chapter 9)
17. What did it say God was doing and why. (vs. 9:56-57a)
18. This chapter ends with, "The curse of Jotham, son of Jerub-Baal came on them". What was that curse (punishment)? (vs. 9:19- 20)

### Think about it!

Abimelech was a judge God used in the life of Israel. However, he was not used to bring Israel freedom from oppression nor bring them back to God. He liked the power of being God's judge and chose to make himself king, usurping God's right to rule. The result was chaos and destruction of both himself and the people of Shechem. This should serve as a warning to all God's people. He alone is king! Think about it!