

***Rebellious People, Evil Leaders - Judges 9:1-12:15***  
**Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

**Notes from the Sermon**

We're covering a large portion of Scripture this morning. Four entire chapters and seven judges. Five of those judges we're told little to nothing about. Two, however, we get a chapter or more. One winds up getting enslaved by his idols and one is so influenced by the pagan idols around him that it taints his worship of the one true God.

Abimelech was a son of Gideon, whom we read about last week. Gideon had seventy sons because he had a lot of wives and then he had Abimelech. Abimelech was born to Gideon by his concubine. A concubine was a legal girlfriend. They had some privileges but nothing compared to being a wife. We're not told anything about Abimelech's upbringing. Chapter 9 of Judges starts with Abimelech as a grown man.

We find Abimelech talking with his mother's family her town of Shechem and using his family ties to try and secure leadership of the region. The family relays this to the leaders and they agree. The leaders pay Abimelech out of the coffers of their pagan god. He then uses this money to hire some hit-men and they go to his father's home town and sacrifice all of his seventy brothers save the youngest, Jotham. He is able to hide and flee. Jotham curses both Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem because of their treachery. After three years, God sends an evil spirit between Abimelech and the leaders to sow strife and disunity.

This all comes to a head and Abimelech kills the people in town and all the leaders run to the tower in the town. Abimelech and his men set fire to the tower and he murders one thousand men and women. He then goes to the next town. The leaders there do the same thing by going into the tower. Abimelech attempts the same thing here as well. However, before he can set fire to this tower, a woman drops a millstone on his head giving him a mortal concussion. So as to try and avoid disgrace by being killed by a woman, he has his armor-bearer finish the job.

Jephthah was the son of a man named Gilead by a prostitute. His half-brothers born to Gilead by his wife treated him poorly, drove him from the home, and excluded him from his father's inheritance. Instead of enacting revenge like Abimelech, he flees to the land of Tob.

After some time, the Ammonites come to fight against Israel to try and get the land back that the Israelites "stole" from them. The elders of Gilead track down Jephthah and try and get him to lead the charge against this invasion. Jephthah is obviously suspicious of their intent so he makes them vow to the Lord, that if he's successful, he can be their leader.

Jephthah sends messengers to the king of the Ammonites trying to diffuse the situation. He provides a history lesson of when the Israelites came from Egypt and God delivered the land to them. They had lived there three hundred years and the Ammonites are just now trying to take back the land. Jephthah declares that God will judge between them.

The Spirit of the Lord comes upon Jephthah to deliver Israel from the Ammonites. It's at this point that Jephthah makes a rash vow to God that if they are victorious, he will offer up as a burnt offering the first thing to come out of his house. When he returns home victorious, his only child comes out to greet him. Jephthah rips his clothes in despair but instead of repenting of his sinful vow, he follows through with it ending his family line.

These two guys are obviously not the examples we would want to emulate. They do however point us to a better judge, Jesus. Jesus did not grasp for power, prestige, or control. Instead, he willingly laid aside his authority and chose the role of a servant. He was

obedient even to the point of death on a cross. He also didn't let the culture around him influence his relationship with his Father. Many saw him for who he was, the messiah promised from the Old Testament. However, the belief at the time was that when the Messiah would come, he would enter as victorious king. There were at least twice where they verbally declared as much. Jesus, instead of buying into what the culture believed and use his authority for his own gain, he submitted to the will of the Father. The night of his betrayal, he even prayed to the Father that the coming cup of agony that was coming might pass, but he was willing to endure it anyway. Why? 1 Peter 3:18, "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God."

**Bible Reading for the Week**

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Proverbs 22	Proverbs 23	Proverbs 24	Proverbs 25	Proverbs 26	Proverbs 27	Proverbs 28

Reading from this past week's sermon: Judges 9:1-12:15

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Judges 13:1-24

**Family Worship**

Song - *Take you at Your Word*

<https://youtu.be/HDrPjtkowpl?si=8yLK5lleG5AIOOuU>

Gospel Project

Unit: Jesus Came to Earth

Story: Wise Men Visited

Big Picture Question: Who is Jesus?

Answer: Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who came to earth to save us.

Scripture: Matthew 2

New City Catechism

Question 11: What does God require in the Sixth, Seventh & Eighth Commandments?

Answer: Sixth, that we do not hurt or hate our neighbor. Seventh, that we live purely and faithfully. Eighth, that we do not take without permission that which belongs to someone else.

Verse: Romans 13:9

Judges 9:1-12:15

- What are the areas in your life where you are tempted to exalt to idol status? What are some things you can do to guard against this happening?
- How are you letting the loud voices in the culture influence your view of Jesus? What do you need to do to quiet those voices and instead hear God's voice more clearly?
- Have you ever let an idol go too far and done something you deeply regret? How can you know for sure that God has forgiven you?

Prayer

\*Pray that we would look to Jesus as King and not place our trust in human systems and rulers.

\*Pray for our outreach efforts during Easter, that we would share the Gospel, distribute our Easter books, and invite friends and neighbors to Easter service.