

~ABIMELECH 4 (306)

(A-bim'e-lech) [My Father Is King]

- A son of Judge Gideon born to his concubine at Shechem. After his father's death, **Abimelech** with presumptuous impudence sought to make himself king. Cunningly, he appealed to the landowners of Shechem through his mothers influential family. Upon obtaining their financial support he hired some ruffians, went to his father's house at Ophrah, and there massacred his half brothers upon a single stone. Of the 70 half brothers, only the youngest, Jotham, escaped the slaughter.
- **Abimelech** was then proclaimed king, but Yehowah allowed a bad spirit to develop between the Shechemites and their new **king**, in order to avenge the bloodguilt of all those connected with the conspiracy. A revolt was organized by Gaal.
- **Abimelech** quickly crushed it, captured and destroyed the city of Shechem, and sowed it with salt. Then he attacked the vault of the house, or sanctuary, of El-berith and set it afire, and in the conflagration about a thousand of his previous collaborators, the landowners of the tower of Shechem who had taken refuge there, were burned to death.
- Immediately **Abimelech** followed up this success by attacking Thebez to the North, only to have a woman on the city tower hurl an upper millstone down upon his head. **Abimelech's** three-year **reign** came to an end when his armor-bearer, in compliance with his dying request, ran him through with the sword, so that it could not be said that a woman had killed him.
- And Gideon came to have seventy sons that issued out of his upper thigh, for he came to have many wives. (**Judges 8:30**)
- As for the concubine of his that was in Shechem, she too bore him a son. So he named him **Abimelech**. (**Judges 8:31**)
- In time **Abimelech** the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem to the brothers of his mother and began speaking to them and to all the family of the house of his mothers father, saying; (**Judges 9:1**)
- Speak, please, in the hearing of all the landowners of Shechem; Which is better for you, for seventy men, all the sons of

Jerubbaal, to rule over you or for one man to rule over you? And you must remember that your bone and your flesh I am. (Judges 9:2)

- **So the brothers of his mother began speaking all these words about him in the hearing of all the landowners of Shechem so that their heart inclined toward **Abimelech**, for they said; He is our own brother. (Judges 9:3)**
- **Then they gave him seventy pieces of silver from the house of Baal-berith, and with them **Abimelech** proceeded to hire idle and insolent men, that they might accompany him. (Judges 9:4)**
- **After that he went to the house of his father at Ophrah and killed his brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, upon one stone, but Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left over, because he had hid. (Judges 9:5)**
- **Subsequently all the landowners of Shechem and all the house of Millo gathered together and went and made **Abimelech** reign as king, close by the big tree, the pillar that was in Shechem. (Judges 9:6)**
- **When they reported it to Jotham he at once went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim and raised his voice and called out and said to them; Listen to me, you landowners of Shechem, and let God listen to you. (Judges 9:7)**
- **Once upon a time the trees went to anoint a king over them. So they said to the olive tree; Do be king over us. (Judges 9:8)**
- **But the olive tree said to them; Must I give up my fatness with which they glorify God and men, and must I go to wave over the other trees? (Judges 9:9)**
- **Then the trees said to the fig tree; You come, be queen over us. (Judges 9:10)**
- **But the fig tree said to them; Must I give up my sweetness and my good produce, and must I go to wave over the other trees? (Judges 9:11)**
- **Next the trees said to the vine; You come, be queen over us. (Judges 9:12)**

- In turn the vine said to them; Must I give up my new wine that makes God and men rejoice, and must I go to wave over the trees? (**Judges 9:13**)
- Finally all the other trees said to the bramble; You come, be king over us. (**Judges 9:14**)
- At this the bramble said to the trees; If it is in truth that you are anointing me as king over you, come, seek refuge under my shadow. But if not, let fire come out of the bramble and consume the cedars of Lebanon. (**Judges 9:15**)
- And now if it is in truth and in faultlessness that you have acted and that you went making **Abimelech** king, and if it is goodness that you have exercised toward Jerubbaal and his household, and if you have done to him as the doing of his hands deserved. (**Judges 9:16**)
- When my father fought for you and went risking his soul that he might deliver you out of Midian's hand. (**Judges 9:17**)
- And you, for your part, have risen up against the household of my father today that you might kill his sons, seventy men, upon one stone, and that you might make **Abimelech**, the son of his slave girl, king over the landowners of Shechem just because he is your own brother. (**Judges 9:18**)
- Yes, if it is in truth and in faultlessness that you have acted toward Jerubbaal and his household this day, rejoice over **Abimelech** and let him too rejoice over you. (**Judges 9:19**)
- But if not, let fire come out of **Abimelech** and consume the landowners of Shechem and the house of Millo, and let fire come out of the landowners of Shechem and the house of Millo and consume Abimelech. (**Judges 9:20**)
- Then Jotham took to flight and went running off and made his way to Beer, and he took up dwelling there because of **Abimelech** his brother. (**Judges 9:21**)
- And **Abimelech** kept playing the prince over Israel three years. (**Judges 9:22**)

- Then God let develop a bad spirit between **Abimelech** and the landowners of Shechem, and the landowners of Shechem proceeded to deal treacherously with Abimelech. (**Judges 9:23**)
- That the violence done to the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might come and that he might put their blood upon **Abimelech** their brother because he killed them, and upon the landowners of Shechem because they strengthened his hands to kill his brothers. (**Judges 9:24**)
- So the landowners of Shechem set ambush men for him upon the tops of the mountains, and they would rob everyone that would pass by them on the road. In time it was reported to **Abimelech**. (**Judges 9:25**)
- Then Gaal the son of Ebed and his brothers came and crossed over into Shechem, and the landowners of Shechem began to trust in him. (**Judges 9:26**)
- And they went out as usual into the field and engaged in gathering the grapes of their vineyards and in treading them and in carrying on a festal exultation, after which they went into the house of their god and ate and drank and called down evil upon **Abimelech**. (**Judges 9:27**)
- And Gaal the son of Ebed went on to say; Who is **Abimelech**, and who is Shechem that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerubbaal, and is not Zebul a commissioner of his? Serve the men of Hamor, Shechem's father, you others, but why should we ourselves serve him? (**Judges 9:28**)
- And if only this people were in my hand! Then I would remove **Abimelech**. And he went on to say to Abimelech; Make your army numerous and come on out. (**Judges 9:29**)
- And Zebul the prince of the city got to hear the words of Gaal the son of Ebed. Then his anger blazed. (**Judges 9:30**)
- So he sent messengers by subterfuge to **Abimelech**, saying; Look! Gaal the son of Ebed and his brothers are now come to Shechem, and here they are massing the city against you. (**Judges 9:31**)
- And now rise up by night, you and the people that are with you,

and lie in wait in the field. (**Judges 9:32**)

- And it must occur in the morning that as soon as the sun shines forth you should get up early, and you must make a dash against the city, and when he and the people that are with him are going out against you, you must also do to him just as your hand finds it possible. (**Judges 9:33**)
- Accordingly **Abimelech** and all the people that were with him rose up by night, and they began to lie in wait against Shechem in four bands. (**Judges 9:34**)
- Later Gaal the son of Ebed went out and stood at the entrance of the city gate. Then **Abimelech** and the people that were with him rose up from the place of ambush. (**Judges 9:35**)
- When Gaal caught sight of the people, he at once said to Zebul; Look! People coming down from the tops of the mountains. But Zebul said to him; The shadows of the mountains are what you are seeing as though they were men. (**Judges 9:36**)
- Later Gaal spoke once more and said; Look! People coming down out of the center of the land, and one band is coming by the way of the big tree of Meonenim. (**Judges 9:37**)
- At this Zebul said to him; Where now is that saying of yours that you mouthed; Who is **Abimelech** that we should serve him? Is not this the people whom you rejected? Go out now, please, and fight against them. (**Judges 9:38**)
- So Gaal went on out at the head of the landowners of Shechem and took up the fight against **Abimelech**. (**Judges 9:39**)
- And **Abimelech** set out after him, and he went fleeing before him, and the slain kept falling in numbers as far as the entrance of the gate. (**Judges 9:40**)
- And **Abimelech** continued to dwell in Arumah, and Zebul proceeded to drive Gaal and his brothers out from dwelling in Shechem. (**Judges 9:41**)
- And it came about on the next day that the people began to go out into the field. So they told **Abimelech**. (**Judges 9:42**)

- Hence he took the people and divided them up into three bands and began to lie in wait in the field. Then he looked, and there the people were going out of the city. He now rose up against them and struck them down. (**Judges 9:43**)
- And **Abimelech** and the bands that were with him made a dash that they might stand at the entrance of the city gate, while two bands made a dash against all who were in the field, and they went striking them down. (**Judges 9:44**)
- And **Abimelech** fought against the city all that day and got to capture the city. He killed the people that were in it, after which he pulled the city down and sowed it with salt. (**Judges 9:45**)
- When all the landowners of the tower of Shechem heard of it, they immediately went to the vault of the house of El-berith. (**Judges 9:46**)
- Then it was reported to **Abimelech** that all the landowners of the tower of Shechem had collected together. (**Judges 9:47**)
- At that **Abimelech** went up Mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him. Abimelech now took an ax in his hand and cut down a branch of the trees and lifted it up and put it on his shoulder and said to the people that were with him; What you have seen me do, hurry up, do like me! (**Judges 9:48**)
- So all the people cut down also each one a branch for himself and went following **Abimelech**. Then they put them against the vault, and over them they set the vault on fire, so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died too, about a thousand men and women. (**Judges 9:49**)
- And **Abimelech** proceeded to go to Thebez and to camp against Thebez and capture it. (**Judges 9:50**)
- As a strong tower happened to be in the middle of the city, there was where all the men and women and all the landowners of the city went fleeing, after which they shut it behind them and climbed onto the roof of the tower. (**Judges 9:51**)
- And **Abimelech** made his way to the tower and began fighting against it, and he went on up close to the entrance of the tower to burn it with fire. (**Judges 9:52**)

- Then a certain woman pitched an upper millstone upon **Abimelech's** head and broke his skull in pieces. (**Judges 9:53**)
- So he quickly called the attendant bearing his weapons and said to him; Draw your sword and put me to death, for fear they should say about me; It was a woman that killed him. Immediately his attendant ran him through, so that he died. (**Judges 9:54**)
- When the men of Israel got to see that **Abimelech** had died, they now went each one to his place. (**Judges 9:55**)
- Thus God made the evil of **Abimelech** that he had done to his father by killing his seventy brothers come back. (**Judges 9:56**)
- And all the evil of the men of Shechem God made come back upon their own heads, that the malediction of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal might come upon them. (**Judges 9:57**)
- Who was it that struck down **Abimelech** the son of Jerubbesheth? Was it not a woman that pitched an upper millstone upon him from on top of the wall so that he died at Thebez? Why did you men have to go so close to the wall? You must also say; Your servant Uriah the Hittite died too. (**2 Samuel 11:21**)