

GIDEON JUDGED FOR 40 YEARS

- Avimelech son of Gideon
- Gideon typical of a Judge: he delivered Israel from oppression
- People of Israel quickly forgot YHWH and went back to idolatry after the death of each Shophet
- *Yeruba'al* = Gideon
- *Chesed* = kindness, charity, mercy, out of loyalty and faithfulness

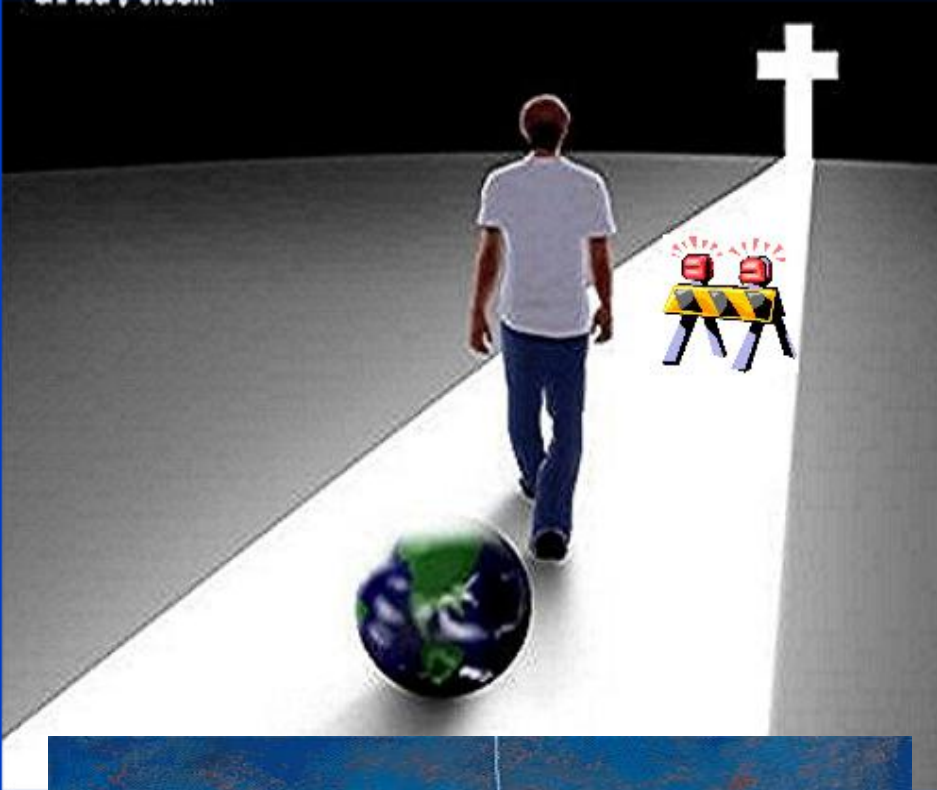




4 LESSONS

- **# 1:** When God leads, no man can prevail against Him or His people!
- 300 defeated 135,000
- Israel AND Believers have been hand picked by God to be soldiers for Him
- **# 2:** All positive things that come in our life are God's doing





THE WORLD IS NOT OUR ROADBLOCK

- **# 3:** Lack of faithfulness of Believers is the barrier to carrying out God's will
- Succoth and Penuel stood in Gideon's way
- Ephraim held themselves up as being the only worthy leaders
- **# 4:** Leaders will face great temptations
- Gideon could not resist living like a king and trying to be a High Priest



JUDGES 9: AVIMELECH WAS NOT A JUDGE!

- Avimelech the antithesis of his father Gideon
- Avimelech born to a concubine
- Concubines held a lesser status than legal wives
- NOT married under a Chuppah
- NOT given a Kethubah
- Avimelech's mother was a Canaanite (Hivite)



DIVIDED FAMILY LOYALITIES



- Avimelech must have been at odds with his brothers
- Identified more with the Canaanites than the Israelites
- Moses had a similar problem in Egypt
- Shechem a mixed city
- Canaanites and Hebrews lived side by side

STRATEGIC SHECHEM

- Shechem on the crossroads of major trade routes
- A place of spiritual and cultural importance
- Shechem would give Avimelech a good source of income through taxes
- Ba'als of Shechem referring to citizens of Shechem
- Ba'als a generic loan-word, used here for flattery



GIDEON'S SONS ASSASSINATED



- Avimelech's family takes 70 pieces of silver from the Ba'al Brit temple
- They hire thugs to kill Gideon's sons
- ***Yotam***, Gideon's youngest son, escapes the slaughter
- Avimelech formed a small kingdom consisting of Shechem, Beth Millo, Arumah and Thebez

AVIMELECH CHOOSES BA'AL



- The place of Avimelech's coronation has been excavated
- Avimelech gave loyalty to Ba'al to appease his mother's people
- InterFaith movement declares all gods are the same, worthy of respect
- No room for tolerance of other gods in the Word!

YOTAM USES MT. GERIZIM AS HIS PULPIT

- Yotam speaks a prophetic parable to the people of Shechem
- ***Shema*** = listen and DO!
- The parable is about a group of trees wanting a king
- Trees = people
- Olive Tree, then Fig Tree then the Vine refuse to take the job
- Finally at last resort the Bramble accepts



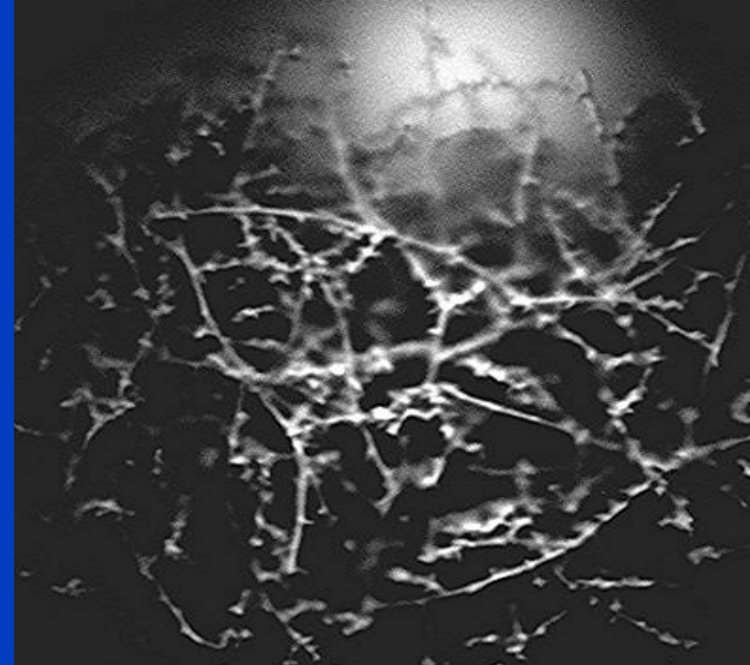
THE MEANING OF THE PARABLE



- OLIVE TREE produces oil for God and man
- FIG TREE produces wonderful sweet fruit for eating
- VINE produces grapes and wine to bring joy to God and man
- Trees were asking that Olive, Fig and Vine leave behind their God-given purposes to be their king
- Our value to God's Kingdom will always be in whom God made us to be!!

THE BRAMBLE

- Trees turned to the Bramble to be king
- It is a worthless plant, that produces no joy
- It is dangerous, and can catch fire, spread and endanger other plants
- The shade is an absurdity
- The Curse: Yotam says if what you did is NOT righteous, then the Bramble will destroy you and you will destroy the Bramble





GOD SENDS AN EVIL SPIRIT TO AVENGE

- Yotam flees from Mt. Gerizim to Be'er
- Soon, friction broke out between Shechem and Avimelech
- God sent an evil spirit to lead to Avimelech's destruction
- Murder (blood) must be dealt with by executing the murderer
- The thoughts of an evil man WILL eventually become known

