

Judges: Abimelech and Jephthah

YouTube channel: [Chris Nazarian](#)

Previous series: <https://youtu.be/JF2NoJRshcg>

## Abimelech: a foreign king? 9:1-57

- Abimelech killed his brothers on a stone
  - Youngest brother escapes and tells a parable
  - Parable demonstrates idiocy of kingship: bramble bush
- Abimelech reaps what he has sown
  - Treachery and brutality sown, treachery and brutality reaped
  - Abimelech is the fruit of Gideon
- Yahweh repays Abimelech
  - Dies at the hand of a woman with a stone

## Practical Application: the parable of the bramble

- The bramble bush (least fit for leadership)
  - Not a tree
  - Cannot give shade
  - Produces no fruit
- Good leaders are appointed by God
  - No treachery, cunning, or brutality needed
  - Fruit is present (action)
  - Shade is given (revelation)
  - Compare Othniel and Abimelech

## Interlude: Tola, Jair and the Ammonites 10:1-18

- Tola and Jair demonstrate kingship
  - The descriptors used for these men lack Yahweh influence and demonstrate kingship paradigm
- Ammonite oppression
  - All the foreign gods are being worshipped, so Israel is given up
  - The downward spiral intensifies
    - Rehearsal of salvation stories up to this point
    - Israel still doesn't get it, yet they repent
    - Yahweh raises up a deliverer

## Jephthah: manipulation doesn't work 11:1-12:7

- Jephthah's pedigree
- Negotiating with the Ammonites
  - Mistaken history: the fruit of a prostitute
    - Doesn't know his history, foreign gods, or Yahweh's ways
  - Ammonite king is not swayed
- Yahweh is not manipulated
  - Jephthah's vow and his daughter's purity
- Israel fighting Israel... again

# Practical Application: vows are dangerous

- Don't vow
  - Matt. 5:33-37
  - You don't have the capacity to keep it
  - You don't need to promise God anything
    - He already gives you grace knowing your true nature
    - God is not manipulated by "making a deal"
- Jephthah's daughter (good example)
  - Keeps vow even to the point of death
  - Recognizes the seriousness of a vow to Yahweh

## Postlude: Ibzan, Elon and Abdon 12:8-15

- Recapitulation of judges being more like kings
  - Look at the descriptors used
  - Where is Yahweh in this?
- Setup for Samson
  - What should we be expecting for Samson in light of all this?
  - How much worse can it get?

## What we learned

- Abimelech is a foreign king
  - He reaped what he sowed
- Jephthah is an uninformed negotiator
  - He too reaped what he sowed
- Smaller judges setup kingship as the paradigm
  - Israel has made its choice of a human king in place of Yahweh

## Next time...

Character story: Samson

Read: 13:1-16:31

Think about:

- What has happened in Judges thus far? How is the Samson story the fruit of Israel's doing?
- Compare Samson's birth story (13:1-25) and Samuel's birth story (1st. Sam. 1:1-28) what are the similarities?