

April 5 Answers

- 1) The legacy of Gideon (Jdg 8:29–10:5). Israel turned their back on God after Gideon's **death**. This time their idolatry was revealed as the fruit of an **ungrateful** heart. They weren't thankful for the way God had delivered them from their enemies, and they didn't show kindness to Gideon's household. As Jotham said, they had dealt treacherously with the sons of the man who had risked his own life to save theirs (Jdg 9:16–18). This helps us to see wickedness and rebellion from God's **perspective**. When we refuse to obey God and insist on having our own way, we **scorn** the sacrifice of Christ and **spit** on His precious blood. Abimelech conspired with the men of **Shechem**, and with their blessing and their money, he led a team of assassins to Ophrah and killed all but one of his half-brothers. If only Gideon had never taken a **concubine** in Shechem! A life of sacrifice and service can be ruined by the legacy of a **single** sin. How important it is to obey God in all things! Jotham escaped the slaughter and called down a **curse** on Abimelech and Shechem: "Let fire come out from Abimelech and consume the men of Shechem and Beth-millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem and from Beth-millo, and consume Abimelech" (Jdg 9:20). Abimelech scoffed at Jotham's curse, and he ruled over Israel for the next **three** years (justice may seem slow at times). His wickedness, however, did not escape God's notice. Abimelech and the men of Shechem had **sown** treachery, and God made sure they both **reaped** a bloody harvest. God sent an evil **spirit** to sow discord between them (God intervenes in the affairs of men), and it wasn't long before the Shechemites went up in smoke and Jotham's curse came crashing down on Abimelech's head (literally). This teaches us that no one ever gets **away** with doing evil. Even if the wicked go to their graves in peace, God's fiery judgment will catch them in the end.