

# BROKEN SAVIORS

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



## RULING AS KINGS.

Have you ever been driving, only to notice that you've been slowly but surely drifting to the side of the road, so you yank the steering wheel in the opposite direction and find yourself smack dab in the middle of the road? First of all, pay attention when you're driving! Secondly, that is called "overcorrecting" and it's a term with which Gideon was pretty familiar. Gideon fell after his great victory. He went from thinking he was nothing to thinking he was all that. When he died, the people of Israel were left in a vacuum, not knowing what to do. That's when Gideon's son Abimelech showed up. He was not called to be a judge to Israel but decided to take the honor upon himself.

It was not without dissent. One of his brothers escaped the death he gave to all the rest and prophesied against him. What happened indeed came true. Abimelech had hoped to unify Israel around himself. He instead ended up bringing even more division.

## IN THE BIBLE.

### **Judges 8:22-27**

22 The Israelites said to Gideon, "Rule over us—you, your son and your grandson—because you have saved us from the hand of Midian."

23 But Gideon told them, "I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. The Lord will rule over you." 24 And he said, "I do have one request, that each of you give me an earring from your share of the

plunder.” (It was the custom of the Ishmaelites to wear gold earrings.)  
25 They answered, “We’ll be glad to give them.” So they spread out a garment, and each of them threw a ring from his plunder onto it. 26 The weight of the gold rings he asked for came to seventeen hundred shekels, not counting the ornaments, the pendants and the purple garments worn by the kings of Midian or the chains that were on their camels’ necks. 27 Gideon made the gold into an ephod, which he placed in Ophrah, his town. All Israel prostituted themselves by worshiping it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and his family.

### **Judges 9:50-57**

50 Next Abimelek went to Thebez and besieged it and captured it. 51 Inside the city, however, was a strong tower, to which all the men and women—all the people of the city—had fled. They had locked themselves in and climbed up on the tower roof. 52 Abimelek went to the tower and attacked it. But as he approached the entrance to the tower to set it on fire, 53 a woman dropped an upper millstone on his head and cracked his skull.

54 Hurriedly he called to his armor-bearer, “Draw your sword and kill me, so that they can’t say, ‘A woman killed him.’” So his servant ran him through, and he died. 55 When the Israelites saw that Abimelek was dead, they went home.

56 Thus God repaid the wickedness that Abimelek had done to his father by murdering his seventy brothers. 57 God also made the people of Shechem pay for all their wickedness. The curse of Jotham son of Jerub-Baal came on them.

# QUESTIONS.

- 1.) Why is it that power corrupts good people?
- 2.) Have you ever seen or experienced this in your life?
- 3.) What qualities are needed in a good leader?
- 4.) How can you avoid mirroring Gideon and Abimelech's story?

**Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:**

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?