Introduction:
1. We must be careful in our actions; we reap what we sow – Ga 6:7-8
2. The story of Abimelech displays that the Lord repays the evil that men do
3. In this lesson we will examine the rise and downfall of Abimelech.

I. ABIMELECH’S RISE TO POWER -9:1-21
   A. HIS CONSPIRACY
      1. He desired to rule as king
      2. He convinces his mother and brothers to help him become ruler
      3. They give him seventy shekels of silver – vs. 4
      4. He uses the money to hire worthless men
         a. They round up and destroy the seventy sons of Gideon.
         b. They do this by sword on one stone
   B. THE PARABLE OF THE TREES
      1. This was spoken by Jotham, the only survivor of the sons of Gideon
         a. The trees were looking for a ruler
         b. The olive tree refused to leave his position
         c. The fig tree follow suit
         d. The vine responded the same
         e. The bramble however, took on the position as ruler
            1) Bramble was a worthless thicket of thorns (some thorns were like darts).
            2) Abimelech is the bramble
      2. The meaning:
         a. If the sons of Gideon deserved what they received and his intentions were good, all is well.
         b. Otherwise, his brutality would come back upon him.

II. ABIMELECH’S DOWNFALL -9:22-57
   A. THE MEN OF SHECHEM TURNED AGAINST HIM
      1. He reigned over Israel for three years – vs. 22
      2. God sent a spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem
   B. GAAL GAINED THE SUPPORT OF THE MEN OF SHECHEM
      1. Zebul heard this and sent word to Abimelech – vs. 30
      2. Abimelech defeated Gaal and the city of Shechem
   C. ABIMELECH TAKES OUT THE TOWER OF SHECHEM -9:46-49
      1. Men and women had taken shelter in the tower
      2. Abimelech cut down a tree and instructed others to do the same
      3. He lit the stronghold on fire and killed about a thousand men and women
   D. THE TOWER OF THEBEZ -9:50-57
      1. Men and women took shelter in the tower as before
      2. Abimelech was preparing to burn it down also as before
      3. This time a woman drops a upper millstone on his head, crushing his skull
         a. He asks his armor bearer to run him through
         b. He does not want anyone saying he was killed by a woman.
III. APPLICATIONS TO THE STORY

A. EVIL EXIST IN THE WORLD
   1. Although bad things happen to good people, it is never the will of God
   2. Evil will at times seem to prevail, but it only does so for a short period of time.

B. GOD IS STILL IN CONTROL
   1. He brings man’s evil back upon him
   2. With Abimelech, he is remembered as the one killed by a woman -2Sa 11:21

Conclusion:
1. People committed evil against the church hoping to destroy it.
2. Jesus said that the gates of hades would not prevail –Mt 16:18
3. It is therefore important that we remain faithful to God in times of ease and in times of distress.