

The slide features a light green background with two vertical stems of ivy. The stem on the left is positioned on the far left edge, and the stem on the right is on the far right edge. Both stems are covered in vibrant green ivy leaves and small, pale yellow flowers. The text is centered in the middle of the slide.

The Forgotten Prophecy

Judges 9:7-15

The Forgotten Prophecy

- Now when they told Jotham, he ... lifted his voice and cried out...to them: "Listen to me, you men of Shechem, That God may listen to you!"

The background of the slide is a light green color. On the left and right sides, there are vertical sprigs of ivy with dark green, heart-shaped leaves and small, light green flowers. The text is centered in the middle of the slide.

The Forgotten Prophecy

"The trees once went forth to
anoint a king over them. And
they said to the olive tree,

'Reign over us!'

But the olive tree said to them,

'Should I cease giving my oil,

With which they honor God

and men, And go to sway over

trees?'

The image features a light green background with several vertical stems of ivy leaves framing the central text. The leaves are vibrant green with some lighter, yellowish-green highlights, and they are arranged in a way that creates a natural border around the text.

The Forgotten Prophecy

"Then the trees said to the fig tree,
'You come and reign over us!'

But the fig tree said to them,

'Should I cease my sweetness and my
good fruit, And go to sway
over trees?'



The Forgotten Prophecy

"Then the trees said to the vine,
'You come and reign over us!'

But the vine said to them,

'Should I cease my new wine,

Which cheers both God and men,

And go to sway over trees?'



**"Then all the trees said to the bramble,
'You come and reign over us!'
And the bramble said to the trees,
'If in truth you anoint me as king over you,
Then come and take shelter in my shade;
But if not, let fire come out of
the bramble and devour the cedars of
Lebanon!'"**

The image features a light green background with two vertical stems of ivy. One stem is on the left side, and the other is on the right side. Both stems have dark green, heart-shaped leaves with prominent veins. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

RIDICULOUS: Majestic, Productive
trees ruled by ground clutter.

DANGEROUS: Dried up briars and
bramble created a fire hazard.

NONSENSE!!!

Jotham: Prophet to the Plants?

- ▶ But this prophecy was not really about trees.
- ▶ It was about the people of Shechem and a power-hungry son of Gideon named Abimelech.

Judges 8:22–23

- ▶ Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us, both you and your son, and your grandson also; for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian."
- ▶ But Gideon said to them, "I **will not** rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; **the LORD shall rule over you.**"

*Most people think of the days of Samuel as the first time Israel sought a king.

The TOTALLY Black Sheep

- ▶ And [Gideon's] concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, whose name he called Abimelech. - **Judges 8:31**
- ▶ Then Abimelech...went to Shechem, to his mother's brothers, and spoke with them... saying,
- ▶ 2 "Please speak in the hearing of all the men of Shechem: 'Which is better for you, that all seventy of the sons of [Gideon] reign over you, or that one reign over you?' Remember that I am your own flesh and bone." -**Judges 9:1-2**

Really BAD Reason to Choose a Leader

- ▶ And his mother's brothers spoke all these words concerning him in the hearing of all the men of Shechem; and their heart was inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, "He is our brother." **-Judges 9:3**
- ▶ **He's One of Us!** He belongs to our party. He's the same race as I am. He is from our state / region. He claims to be a Christian.

Judges 9:4–6

- ▶ **4** So they gave him seventy shekels of silver from the temple of Baal–Berith, with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless men; and they followed him.
- ▶ **5** Then he went to his father's house at Ophrah and killed his brothers, the seventy sons of Jerubbaal [Gideon], on one stone. But Jotham the youngest son... was left, because he hid himself.
- ▶ **6** And all the men of Shechem gathered together, all of Beth Millo, and they went and made Abimelech king beside the terebinth tree at the pillar that was in Shechem.

Really GOOD Reason NOT to choose someone as your leader


- ▶ He was a ruthless man with no morals... he was a murderer of his own brothers!!!
- ▶ None of our choices are perfect men... but would you support a murderer... or one who supports the murder of the innocent?
- ▶ **Ex 23:7** "Keep yourself far from a false matter; do not kill the innocent and righteous. For I will not justify the wicked."
- ▶ **Psalms 103:38** "And [they] shed innocent blood, The blood of their sons and daughters, Whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; And the land was polluted with blood."

Really GOOD Reason NOT to choose someone as your leader

- ▶ **Jer 5:28** They have grown fat, they are sleek; Yes, they surpass the deeds of the wicked; They do not plead the cause, The cause of the fatherless; Yet they prosper, And the right of the needy they do not defend.
- ▶ This verse sounds like it is speaking of politicians.



But I Thought God Chose Rulers




Romans 13:1 ¶ Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring



But I Thought God Chose Rulers

God Raised up the Good:



Ezra 1:1-2 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying,


Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.



But I Thought God Chose Rulers

God Raised up the Bad:

Romans 9:17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth."




But He Allows Man to Have a Say

- God wanted them to Choose Him!
- **Jos 24:15** "And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." [cf. Gideon: "The LORD shall rule over you."]





But He Allows Man to Have a Say

- But man rejected God!
 - **I Samuel 8:6-7** ...the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD.
 - And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them."
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A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide. The top portion features a light green background with a pattern of small white dots and several overlapping, semi-transparent circles in shades of green and grey. Below this, a vertical strip shows a detailed illustration of a brown, thorny vine with several small, dried, brown leaves.

Heed the Words of Jotham

- Jg 9:19 "if then you have acted in truth and sincerity with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you.
- 20 "But if not, let fire come from Abimelech and devour the men of Shechem and Beth Millo; and let fire come from the men of Shechem and from Beth Millo and devour Abimelech!"

That is EXACTLY what happened

- Abimelech and the men of Shechem turned on one another. Shechem was destroyed and, shortly afterwards, Abimelech was killed by a woman who dropped a mill stone on his head.
- **Judges 9:56-57** Thus God repaid the wickedness of Abimelech, which he had done to his father by killing his seventy brothers.
- And all the evil of the men of Shechem God returned on their own heads, and on them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.





What does the Forgotten Prophecy say to us?

- **Judges 9:19-20 Paraphrased** "if then you have acted in truth and sincerity with [God in choosing a leader], then rejoice in [that leader], and let him also rejoice in you.
 - But if not, let fire come from [that leader] and devour [you]; and let fire come from [you] and devour [that leader]!"
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